



An illegal bamboo fence is erected on the Laghata river in Gopinagar area of Patanushar union under Moulvibazar's Kamalganj upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

NATIONAL FISHERIES WEEK 2021

Bamboo fencing in Laghata, Palak rivers wrecks havoc on indigenous fish species

MINTU DESHWARA

When the government is observing National Fisheries Week countrywide, a section of unscrupulous fishers continues to catch native fish and aquatic lives erecting bamboo fences across the Laghata and Palak rivers in Kamalganj upazila of Moulvibazar.

According to the Protection and Conservation of Fish Act, 1950, setting up impediments to the flow of a river is prohibited and a punishable offense.

Although such a method of fishing is banned by law, it is going on flouting rules hampering the breeding and supply of native fish in the rivers.

According to the Fisheries Department, the Laghata river flows through the haors of Adampur, Alinagar, Shamshernagar and Patanushar unions in Kamalganj upazila and falls into the Manu river in Rajnagar upazila. This river plays a vital role in the increased production of native fish in haors, beels and reservoirs and has facilitated irrigation.

Sahadat Hossain, a resident of Adampur area, said the re-excavation work was completed last year as per the demand of the locals. As soon as the excavation work was completed, a section of unscrupulous fishers have erected bamboo fences in Srirampur and Gopinagar areas of the river.

Visiting the area, it was found that two bamboo fences have been installed in Srirampur and Gopinagar areas of Patanushar union of Laghata river and a few bamboo fences have also been installed in Palak river. As a result, the free flow of water is being disrupted harming the reproduction

of fish. Various species of aquatic lives including fish, frogs, snakes and kuchia are dying in the cages kept inside the net.

Residents of the area, including local teacher Ferdous Khan, said several bamboo fences are planted in the small rivers every year hampering drainage and fish breeding.

Farmer Akhter Mia said, "Even a few years ago, there were a number of varieties of indigenous fish in Laghata river and Keola haor, but those have disappeared now. They have been setting up bamboo fences and catching fish in flagrant violation of law, but no action is being taken against them."

Social worker Toabur Rahman said that if the illegal fishing by the influential sector could be stopped, the Laghata river would be full of fish in the current season. Because of the bamboo fences, fish are not able to move upstream. Many species particularly the small ones are on the verge of extinction because of the shrinking of feeding and breeding ground.

Locals alleged, Alta Mia erected a bamboo fence in Gopinagar area, Wahid Mia did it in Srirampur area and Jubair Ahmed, Sufian Khan, Anwar Khan, Arob Ali and Ismail Khan have installed the illegal bamboo fence in Polki river area.

Kamalganj Upazila Fisheries Officer (acting) Siddiqui Rahman said, "I have heard about illegal bamboo fences in Laghata and Palak rivers. However, during the National Fisheries Week, the bamboo fences will be removed and action will be taken against the accused."

Nurul Mohaimin Milton, general secretary of the Bangladesh

Environmental Journalists' Association, said there are many small rivers, canals and beels in the region, which now become green paddy fields every dry season due to massive siltation.

The huge number of water bodies could be one of the effective means of large-scale fish farming alongside protecting the endangered fish species, he added.

Contacted, Alta Mia and Wahid Mia said, "False allegations are raised against us to tarnish the image of the locality."

Sultan Mahmud, assistant project director, Hilsa Development and Management Project, Department of Fisheries in Dhaka highlighted the importance of the open water bodies in conserving the native fish species and said the open water bodies are also important for generating employment in the fish farming sector.

In addition to nutritional aspects, the open water fisheries have been contributing a lot to maintain ecological balance and wetland habitats along with aquatic biodiversity, he added.

He said excessive use of modern technologies in both agriculture and fish culture has contributed to the decline of the feeding and breeding grounds of the indigenous fish varieties.

He opined that frequent and indiscriminate use of pesticides and chemical fertilisers in agricultural land has directly or indirectly been destroying the open and cultured water fishery resources and fish food organisms of the wetland and floodplains.

Villagers themselves build dyke to save crops

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

People of Baghutia Uttarpara village in Kalihati upazila have constructed a temporary embankment through voluntary work to save their crops from flood water of the Jhenai river.

The water level of the Jamuna river has continued increasing for the last couple of days due to onrush of water from the upstream and heavy downpour, causing sudden rise of water level on its branch river Jhenai.

As a result, a portion of the Jhenai river protection embankment at Baghutia Uttarpara under Bangra union badly damaged, inundating vast crop fields at the village and other adjacent villages, locals said.

Finding no other way out, a group of villagers, mostly youths, took an initiative to build a temporary dam with bamboos and other available materials to protect the existing crops, they said.

They construct the dam two-feet above the river bank so that the flood water return to the river flow normally.

Yakub Ali, 75, of the village said the onrush of flood water submerged Aman paddy on about 135 acres of land.

He said existing crops on vast areas at many villages in the middle-east part of the upazila would have been inundated if we hadn't stop the flood water entering through the damaged portion of the river bank.

Another villager Atoar Hossain, 35, said failing to get any support from the authorities concerned and local public representatives, we have constructed the temporary dam by our own labour spending Tk 50,000, donated by the villagers.

Amzad Hossain, 55, said local administration constructed a makeshift dam with bamboo in 2019. However, that

dam was washed away during last year's devastating and prolonged flood.

Mohammad Shofi, a member of Bangra union parishad (UP), said villagers were trying to restrain the water flow by bamboos, straw and other materials to protect their crops, but it will not sustain if the water level increases further.

Hafiz Uddin 50, of the village alleged



PHOTO: STAR

Villagers, mostly youths, of Baghutia Uttarpara village in Tangail's Kalihati upazila constructed this temporary embankment through voluntary work to save their crops from flood water.

that they had urged the authorities concerned on several occasions to repair the damaged portion of the river bank with concrete blocks, but no step has been taken in this regard.


Bangra UP Chairman Hasmot Ali claimed that they tried to repair the damaged river bank by filling earth, but could not do so as there is no alternative way to carry the earth.

Kalihati Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Rumana Tanjil Antara said she will visit the spot and take necessary measures after holding talks with the departments concerned.



Flood water disrupts communications on Jalalpur-Rupshi road in Sirajganj's Shahzadpur upazila as the all-important road and a bridge have been submerged, causing immense suffering to people.

PHOTO: STAR



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Sl. No.	Tender ID & Package No.	Name of work	Tendering method	Tender/ proposal document last selling & submission date and time
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02	603119 & e-Tender/LGED/Gazi/GOBM/21-22/W-37.	Rehabilitation of Soliar More Bazar RHD – Kapasin H/Q Road Via Dolan Bazar (Kaliganj) Road ID No. 333342002.		
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