



# Fishery Ghat

## a market unlike any other

NAIMUR RAHMAN

From 4 to 9 every morning, different types of fish – caught from the Bay of Bengal and other sources – are brought to the port city’s Karnaphuli ghat from wholesale depots. The business is the busiest during night times, taking the numbers to millions.

At the break of dawn, hundreds of massive trawlers and fishing ships emerge from the seas and rivers at the shores carrying their catches for the day. Each large trawler can carry about a tonne of fish. About 220 bazars and six warehouses are set to sell their fish every day.

On the side of the bank of Karnaphuli river, this colossal ghat upholds the biggest fish market for marine and native fish in the port area known as the Chattogram Fishery Ghat. Almost every district of the country imports fish of different categories from here on wholesale and starts their trading amongst the locals.

Founded by the Portuguese almost 200 years ago, this fishing ghat is now thriving in the heart of this city. Located in Lusai Kanya, at the mouth of the Rajkhali and on the bank of the Karnaphuli, it has been made its official location recently from the former location on Iqbal road in Pathar.

During a recent visit to the ever-bustling market, this correspondent met Moktar, who just got back from the deep sea after 11 days. “We were out catching fish on the deeper ends of the waters and brought them

directly to the ghat to sell,” he said.

Hardly there are any species of fish that aren’t seen on the dock. Tuna, Coral, Laksha, Hilsa, Koi, Datina, red snapper, Surma, cuttlefish, desi squid, rupchanda, shrimp, salmon, lobster cod, Poa, Laityta, knife fish, etc, are the most popular among the buyers,

Hilsa makes a festive entrance to the markets of the ghat during its peak season. The ghat also sees the busiest trade at this time of the year. Fish weighing even up to 200 kilos are brought to the market and sold either in whole or in pieces.

The ghat portrays a unique range of occupations. A means of unique livelihood is

represented by this massive ghat of the port city. It’s not only the fishers making a living out of this market but also the ice keepers, bag sellers, wood keepers, net repairers, leaf sellers, tea sellers, oarsmen and many others who depend on the ghat’s fish market for their livelihood.

“This ghat consists of a total of four jetties, one of which is managed by Chattogram City Corporation and the others are under the maintenance of Chattogram Development Authority. The continuous loud bargaining on all sides bears proof of the lively trade,” said Mohammad Ali Sawdagar, president of Sonali Jantrik Motsho Shilpo Shomobay Somiti Ltd.



# A legacy of 105 years

## The journey of Boalkhali’s Kadhurkhil High School

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN

At first glance from the outside, it seems like a typical tin-shed school house set in a village. This seemingly common setup hides the history and legacy of more than a hundred years inside it, which is pretty much evident in its architecture once one steps inside.

Kadhurkhil High School of Boalkhali upazila’s Akubdandi village started its journey on January 1, 1917, during the first World War. The 203 feet long and 45 feet wide mud-made school is associated with legendary names from the British era. It’s almost as if every nook and corner of the structure holds a bit of history in it, representing this region’s transition between a colonised land and an independent state.

The presence of the historical “Parboti Charan Dighi” has increased the beauty of the school even more.

To provide high-school education to the children of the village, educationists of the region established the school. In the beginning, it was only a makeshift room with bamboo fences and mud, on 9 acres of land donated by Prankrishna Chowdhury. Bidhuvushan Chowdhury was the first headteacher of the school.

Sir Bidhuvushan Chowdhury, an All Bengal Teachers Association leader, served as the head teacher of the school from 1917 to 1921 and 1925 to 1957. At first, the school only took admissions for students in the seventh and eighth grades. Later, admissions for higher grades also started.

The original mud-made structure has eight huge rooms, accommodating hundreds of students.

Later, they decided to build the school building just using local materials like Bamboo fences, mud and other raw materials, in solidarity with the Swadeshi Movement. It took around two years to complete the structure from 1918 to 1920. Several buildings were built in the back of the

school premises afterwards to accommodate the increasing number of students.

According to the school authority, the school was first recognised by Calcutta University in 1919 and got permanent recognition from the same institute in 1946.

Four students and two teachers from the school became martyrs in the Liberation War in 1971.

During a recent visit to the school, this correspondent saw that room five was marked by the authorities as “Sukanta Room”. It was known that renowned poet Sukanta Bhattacharya wrote a poem “Chattogram: 1943” sitting in that very same room.

noticed several visible cracks and holes developed on the mud walls. Parts of the bamboo fences on the rooftop were seen falling off at different points.

Students said rainwater leaks from different points of the ceiling during the monsoon.

Md Amir Hossen, senior assistant teacher of the school, told this correspondent, “After issuing a gazette, workers from the archaeology department renovated some parts of the school rebuilding walls before the pandemic.”

“The renovation stopped during the pandemic. We have sent several letters to the department but to no avail,” he added.



The education ministry nationalised the school in 2018. Currently, around 906 students have been studying in the school. A total of 13 teachers have been teaching them. The school has an age-old library, where books from the British era are stored.

On December 3, 2015, the school was declared a protected monument by the government for being the longest ancient clay-made structure in the country.

However, during the visit, this correspondent

Current headteacher Biswajit Barua said, “We need regular renovation to maintain the structure’s archaeological value. We have done that multiple times using the school fund.”

Contacted, AKM Saifur Rahman Polin, Chattogram regional director of archaeology department said, “We mostly run renovation works on priority basis. Currently, no renovation is going on at the school. But we hope to initiate it under the plans for the next five years, after visiting the school first.”

# Red Chittagong cattle facing extinction

SIFAYET ULLAH

Red Chittagong cattle, a native cattle breed reared predominantly in Chattogram, is facing extinction for many reasons, especially due to hybridisation, according to experts.

Bangladesh Livestock Research Institute (BLRI) officials informed that the cattle will be nearing extinction soon if this trend of hybridisation continues.

Experts say this cattle breed has distinct characteristics than other Bangladeshi cattle.

They said rural farmers prefer this breed over others due to their high conception rate, disease resistance, high milk fat percentage and cost effectiveness.

Manirul Islam, a professor of Animal Science of Chattogram Veterinary and Animal Sciences University, conducted a research recently titled “Performance of Red Chittagong cattle in some selected areas of Chittagong district of Bangladesh.”

His research showed that a fully grown cow of this breed weighs 150-200 kg and gives 2-3 liters of milk daily without extra food. It’s also able to give birth to one calf per year. The milk’s fat content is very high, making it tasteful.

This breed of cattle survives on low quality feed, which is beneficial during feed shortage. Their kind thrives in Bangladeshi climate, finds Manirul’s research.

Nazim Haider, president of the Dairy Firm Association of Chattogram, said the number of this cow breed is decreasing day by day. If the government doesn’t intervene, this native variety



will be lost.

However, BLRI had conducted two projects titled “Red Chittagong Cattle (RCC) Improvement and Conservation Project”.

During a recent visit to Hathazari dairy and Chattogram’s Red Chittagong cattle breed development farm, which was set up under the “Expansion of RCC artificial insemination and activities and implementation of embryo transfer technology project-phase-3”, this correspondent saw that there were 238 RCC cows, which are being nurtured to improve the quality of this variety.

Malay Kanti Modak, deputy director of the Hathazari dairy and RCC breed development farm, told The Daily Star that under this project, 100 RCC bulls will be reared.

Devjyoti Ghosh, information officer of BLRI, said they’ve already completed two projects for developing the cattle’s variety.

“Research is still ongoing. After completion, we’ll publish information about the conservation and development of this species,” the official added.



# 11 pythons hatched using incubator at Chattogram Zoo

Eleven python eggs have been hatched using incubators at Chattogram Zoo.

“A python at the zoo laid 15 eggs two months ago. We collected the eggs and put them in our incubator under a controlled temperature for 65 days. Four eggs got damaged but the other 11 hatched on Friday,” said Shahadat Hossain, veterinary surgeon at Chattogram Zoo.

“The baby pythons will be kept in the incubator for at least a month until they shed their skin for the first time. After that, they will be fed and later the juvenile pythons will be released into their natural habitat upon consultation with the deputy commissioner,” he added.

There are two species of pythons found in Bangladesh – Reticulated Python (Malayopython reticulatus), and Burmese Python (Python bivittatus). The zoo, run by Chattogram District Administration and established in 1989, is located on about 2.5 hectares of hilly terrain in the city’s Foy’s Lake area.