

Illegal nets, jatka catching behind hilsa decline

Says adviser Farida Akhter

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Hilsa production has seen a decline due to multiple factors including continuous use of illegal nets and indiscriminate catching of jatka (fry), Fisheries and Livestock Adviser Farida Akhter said yesterday.

She also pointed to several other reasons – loss of river navigability, climate change, and development projects along the riverbanks near hilsa sanctuaries.

The adviser was speaking to the reporters after attending a workshop on buffalo grazing at Barishal Club.

She said, “The government is taking strict measures including special drives to curb illegal fishing as well as to ensure jatka protection and uninterrupted breeding seasons.”

“We are conducting drives, and hopefully hilsa production will increase and prices will come down in the coming days,” she said adding that the government is also planning to regulate the chain of middlemen between rivers and retail markets.

Autorickshaws risky, yet vital for livelihoods

Says adviser Fouzul Kabir

UNB, Dhaka

Battery-run autorickshaws pose safety concerns and should be removed from the capital's streets, said Road Transport and Bridges Adviser Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan yesterday.

He, however, acknowledged their role as a vital source of employment for many people, highlighting the challenge of balancing regulation with livelihoods.

The adviser was speaking to reporters after a meeting at the Secretariat on the overall situation and condition of highways in Dhaka.

“Ideally, these vehicles are risky and cause traffic jams. They should be removed. But one thing must be remembered – they provide jobs for many people. We're not in a position to offer alternative employment. Behind every autorickshaw, there is a family whose livelihood depends on it,” he said.

The adviser also said battery-powered rickshaws are using electricity illegally, and the electricity department has been instructed to take action to stop illegal charging.

Local Government Division Secretary Rezaul Maksud Jahedi said they have made a regulation to control autorickshaws in Dhaka city. “We've also arranged training for the drivers so they understand and follow traffic rules,” he added.

Women sidelined by care duties, not education

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remain outside the labour force compared to just 20 percent of men, more women are taking up income-generating activities from home or nearby, as they juggle childcare, household management, and care for the elderly or sick.

The data show a sharp rise in women's home-based

work across rural areas.

Agricultural work outside the home dramatically fell from 64 percent in 2010 to 21 percent in 2016, as rural women shifted to agro-processing and informal activities.

Meanwhile, urban women's participation in outside work has declined.

Another key finding was

the positive impact of joint families. Unlike in India, women in Bangladesh living in joint households are more likely to work outside the home, as extended family members share childcare and domestic duties, reducing women's care burden and increasing productive hours.

The study also found

that tertiary education significantly improves women's chances of engaging in productive work and reduces time spent on unpaid chores. Secondary education, however, has limited effect due to persistent cultural and care-related barriers.

The report recommended recognising the care economy in labour policy, supporting agro-processing and rural enterprises, promoting marriage to enhance opportunities for young women, and encouraging equitable sharing of household responsibilities to address gender imbalances.

At the seminar, Prof A K Enamul Haque, director general of BIDS, said women's participation in the workforce drops sharply when they have children under five and stressed the need for accessible day care centres.

He noted that Western-style daycare centres in garment factories often failed because mothers could not bring their children to the facilities, even though the centres were well-equipped.

Accessible and well-located daycare centres are key to increasing women's workforce participation, he said, adding, “Evidence shows that centralised factory-based centres often fail, whereas location-based centres near homes are far more effective for working mothers.”

Prof Enamul also pointed to unreliable and unsafe urban transport system as another major barrier preventing women from taking up jobs.

Navanita Sinha, deputy representative of UN Women, said investing in basic care services can yield significant returns, citing OECD research that showed 30-40 percent gains in women's employment. She expressed hope for similar evidence from Bangladesh.

She also emphasised that care is a complex issue that requires both quantitative and qualitative research to be fully understood.



A fisherman casts a large net to catch native fish in an old canal in Rajshahi yesterday. With water receding from waterbodies, fishers are busy capturing as much fish as possible before levels drop further. The photo was taken near the new Bagdhani Bridge area in Paba upazila.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

Potholes and peril on Bagerhat road

PARTHA CHAKRABORTY, Bagerhat

Bagerhat's 52-kilometre-long Signboard-Sharankhola regional highway has turned into a nightmare for thousands of commuters and drivers, with around 16 kilometres of the road battered by countless potholes after the carpeting gave way.

Once a vital lifeline for the southern district, the highway has now become a source of daily misery and frequent accidents.

Rasheed Sheikh, a passenger travelling from Khulna to Dhaka, said, “The stretch from Amragachhia to Sharankhola is so dilapidated that no bus or vehicle can run smoothly. Every day one vehicle or another meets with an accident here.”

Bus driver Sukhranjan Das added, “Whenever one vehicle tries to cross another, it ends up hitting a tree or scraping against another vehicle. The whole road is broken, single-lane, and after Morrelganj the



situation becomes unbearable.”

Another driver, Habib, said mechanical failures had become a regular ordeal for those plying the highway.

Nearly 5,000 vehicles travel the route every day, putting thousands at risk, said locals.

Sharankhola UNO Sudipto Kumar Singha said he had spoken to officials responsible for maintenance and they assured measures would be taken soon.

Executive Engineer of Bagerhat Roads and Highways Department Md Ashrafur Islam said a tender had been floated to repair 15-16 kilometres of the road.

“Beyond that, there may still be damaged portions. You can see that rainfall has been unusually heavy this year and is still continuing. After it ends, we will repair it. One tender is under process, but final approval and contractor selection may take another month,” he said.

Set year-wise targets to boost exclusive breastfeeding rate

Says health adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Health Adviser Nurjahan Begum yesterday called for setting year-wise targets to increase exclusive breastfeeding, as the rate has gradually declined in recent years.

She also urged doctors to advise new mothers to breastfeed instead of recommending formula milk.

She made the call while addressing the inaugural ceremony of World Breastfeeding Week 2025 at the conference hall of the National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery in the capital.

The Institute of Public Health Nutrition, in association with several local and international NGOs, organised the programme.

According to the Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey, the exclusive breastfeeding rate was 65 percent in 2017-18, but declined to 55 percent in 2022.

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Exclusive breastfeeding means feeding a baby only breastmilk for the first six months of life. Breastmilk is vital for protecting children from various diseases and for their mental and physical growth.

World Breastfeeding Week is celebrated every year in the first week of August. Asked why it was being observed in the fourth week this year, Mohammed Eunus Ali, director of the Institute of Public Health Nutrition, said the programme used to be arranged under an operation plan in previous years.

As the tenure of the plan ended in June last year, there was a dilemma over who would arrange the programme. The ministry later assigned them, resulting in the delay, he said.

“But better late than never,” he told this correspondent, adding that they have arranged a weeklong programme to create awareness about the importance of breastfeeding across the country.



PHOTO: TITU DAS

Workers of the Roads and Highways Department repairing a section of the Barishal-Dhaka highway, which was badly damaged by heavy rainfall. They are filling potholes with stone, sand, and bitumen to ensure the road is safe for vehicles. Working from morning to evening, each worker earns a daily wage of Tk 800. The photo was taken yesterday.



Bangladesh Bank

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Inviting applications for establishment of Digital Bank

Bangladesh Bank recognizes the changed landscape of the global financial ecosystem leveraged by continuous technological innovation. It also notices the challenges of the changes and prioritizes its role in driving greater efficiency in the delivery of financial products and services as well as in widening the outreach of the financial system.

In order to effectively achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), capitalize on the transformative potential of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), and reaping from the waves of tech-driven future financial ecosystem, it is imperative to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth—particularly through the development of the Cottage, Micro, and Small Enterprises (CMSEs).

This requires fostering an innovation-led economy for accelerating employment generation and ensuring long-term food security. An enabler to expanding and streamlining access to credit and finance across all segments of society—especially underserved and marginalized groups—will be crucial in unlocking the full economic potential of CMSEs and advancing national development priorities.

Towards this end, BB, in principle, has decided to issue/award license(s) for Digital Bank (DB) in pursuant to section 31 of the *Bank Company Act, 1991* against suitable proposal(s).

Bangladesh Bank now invites sealed and fresh applications from eligible and qualified sponsors for establishing DB. As a processing fee, an application needs to be submitted along with a non-refundable pay order issued by any scheduled commercial bank in the amount of BDT 5.00 (Five) Lacs in favor of Bangladesh Bank. Failure to provide all required documents/information will result in automatic cancellation of the application.


Applications must be submitted to the address below during office hours from 01 September 2025 to 30 September 2025. Moreover, applicants need to submit all of their documents (soft copy) to the email address: apply.db@bb.org.bd

For details, please visit the **GUIDELINES TO ESTABLISH DIGITAL BANK, Version-2** in our website <https://www.bb.org.bd/en/index.php/about/guidelist>.



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Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

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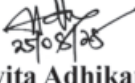
e-Tender Notice No. 2025-2026/06

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following works under EED Jamalpur as mentioned below:

Tender ID	Name of works	Publication date/time	Closing date & opening date
1142590	Construction of 4-storied Academic Building with 4-storied foundation in/c. Sanitary, Water Supply & Electrification Works at Batikamari High School, Sarishabari, Jamalpur.	25-08-2025 at 10:30	15-09-2025 at 12:30

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be acceptable in the National e-GP System Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tender(s) without assigning any reason whatsoever.



Joyita Adhikary
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GD-1864