

CHAPTER SIX CASE STUDIES AND INTERVIEWS

6.1 Fishermen and Fry Collectors

1. MD. SULTAN AHMED

Md. Sultan Ahmed, son of late Khorshed Golder, is a fisherman. He lives in the village *Panjupara* of *Kuakata*. He was born in a village of Amtali Upazila. His family came to *Kuakata* in 1965. His father was a farmer. Availability of agricultural land having lower price was a key cause for his migration to *Kuakata*. He is now 50 years old and studied up to class nine. He has been involved in the fishing profession for having skill in fishing, (and also due to poverty) considering it as an easy means of livelihood as there is available fish in the sea. Limited agricultural land also forced him to this profession. Sometimes he collects shrimp fry from the sea. When the demand and price of shrimp fry is found to be higher (and there is inadequacy of fish in the sea), he collects shrimp fry. His economic condition is apparently sound and his family is now running well.



Md. Sultan Ahmed

Sultan and another fisherman named Delower Gharami first practiced *Hilsa* catching by *Hilsha* net and *Khuta* (a pole of bamboo penetrated onto the earth). The *Hilsa* net is of about 1250-1500 yards long and 6 yards wide. As the *Khuta* is used to catch *Hilsa*, the *Hilsa* net has been named as *Khuta Jal* (*Khuta* net). At present, anchors and floats are used with nets to catch *Hilsa* fish. Md. Sultan Ahmed goes to the sea to catch *Hilsa* or other sea fishes with a group of 6 men. It takes 5 men to drive the boat (by rowing) and one man as the helmsman to reach the sea. It takes around four men to pull the *Hilsa* net from the sea (two persons standing at each end of the boat). One acts as the helmsman and the other releases the *Hilsa* fish from the net and put them in the boat. His group can catch *Hilsa* fish on an average 40-50 kg during the peak season (*zoba*, the period when *Hilsa* and fry is abundant and the water level rises up) and 10-15 kg during dull season (*dala*, the period when *Hilsa* and fry is not abundant and water level is low).

Sultan Ahmed witnessed the devastating cyclone of 1970, which caused the death of innumerable people and livestock. They were even not buried. Dead bodies were barely covered by earth. Crops, houses, trees and physical infrastructures were destroyed.

He mentioned the economic crisis of people (of the area) during the pre liberation period (before 1971 war). A day laborer was then available only in return for 1 kilogram of rice. The price of one kilogram rice was about Tk. 1 or Tk. 0.75 at that time. His family would require 2 kgs of rice per day, which was rarely available. During the war of liberation, he was a student of class nine. He took part in processions and movement for the liberation war. He helped the freedom fighters by providing them with shelters and information. His economic condition is now sound and his family is running better than the Pakistan period. During Pakistan period, Government help was barely minimum. No school or college was there in the locality. But now, schools and colleges are available in the upazila and union.

2. ALEYA BEGUM

Mrs. Aleya Begum, wife of Abdul Rahman, is a fry collector. She lives in the village of *Kuakata*. She is a woman of 35. She studied up to class three. She has 2 children: one son and one daughter. Her son studied up to class IV and daughter up to class III. Before becoming a fry collector, she was involved in household activities. In 1995, her husband divorced her and since then, she has been earning her living by fry collecting.

Due to poverty and lack of awareness, she is unable to educate her kids. Her two kids are now day laborer. The average monthly income of her family during fry collection period is Tk. 3500/-. She has no savings. On an average, she spends 7 hours per day for fry collection. Her daily activity includes cooking, shrimp fry collection, firewood collection and other household activities.



Aleya Begum

3. MD. AYUB ALI

Md. Ayub Ali is a fry collector. He lives in the village of *Kuakata*. He is 37 years old. He studied up to class III. There are 5 members in his family. He has two daughters and one son. He is the only earner of his family. Among the three children, one goes to school and reads in class III. During fry collection season, his monthly income is around Tk. 2500/-. He is not able to save any money from his earning. He entered into this profession due to poverty and also considering fry collecting an easy means of livelihood. He has been in this occupation since he was 29 years old. On an average, he collects fry for about 15 days a month.

4. JAYNAB BIBI

Thirty-nine years old, Mrs. Jayanab Bibi is a housewife. She was born in the village Azimpur in Latachapli Union of Kalapara Thana. Her grandfather's family lived in Mathbaria Upazila of Pirojpur District. When she was only 7/8 years old, she was married to 24/25 years old Mr. Sultan Sheikh (her first husband) from the village of *Kuakata*. Sultan's grandfather lived in the village *Ladim Shah* of *Zahalakati* Upazila. Jaynab Bibi's eldest daughter was born 12/13 years after their marriage. Her name is Feroza Begum. She is married with Mr. Mustafa Mia, who lives in the village *Khajura* of Latachapali Union. Jaynab Bibi's son Jainal Sheikh, was born 5 years after of the birth of her first daughter.



Jaynab Bibi

Sultan Sheikh was a *Habildar* in the police department of the then Pakistan Government. During the liberation war in 1971, he died at Pabna while fighting against the Pakistani soldiers. Then he was 35 year old. Jaynab Bibi was remarried with her present husband Md. Samsul Haque, about 6/7 years after the death of her first husband Sultan Sheikh. Samsul Haque has been living at *Kuakata* since his childhood. He came here with his father and grandfather. Md. Samsul Haque is now 62 years old. Jaynab Bibi gave birth to 3 sons and 6 daughters from her 2nd marriage with Samsul Haque. Mr. Haque was a freedom fighter too. However he is unable to work for the last 6 years due to heart ailment. He is now partially paralyzed. So Jaynab Bibi has to maintain a big family of 7 members with great hardship. She had a strong desire to educate her children and make them fit for income earning through better jobs or business. But due to her husband's inability to earn a living, her small children have to work to maintain the family. They collect fry from the sea. Her daughter Khushi (12), sons Hasan (11), Hossain (10), and Rubel (9) catch shrimp fry from the sea. The sons read in class I in the primary school at *Ghatla*. Mahinur is the 2nd daughter in this family. She was married (a year ago) to Mr. Manu Mia of *Khapra Bhanga* village of Kalapara Upazila. He works in a Fishery Company at Cox's Bazar. The daughter was living with them until her husband formally took her into his family. If the Government provides soft loan or any logistic support, Jaynab Bibi has a desire to earn money by rearing poultry, livestock, running small grocery shops etc.

5. NUR JAHAN BEGUM

Mrs. Nur Jahan Begum is a fry collector. She lives in the village of *Kuakata*. Her husband's name is Mr. Jalil. There are 3 members in her family. She is illiterate. She has one son who does not go to school. Earning members of her family are two. Their monthly income is about TK. 3000/-. Besides fry collection, she works as day laborer. She has to perform cooking, washing and other household works.

6. MD. JAYNAL ABEDIN

Md. Jaynal Abedin is a fisherman. He lives in the village of *Kuakata*. He is 50 years old. He studied up to class IV. There are 6 members in his family. There are altogether 3 earners in the family. One member (who is below 14) is studying in class V. The monthly income of the family is about Tk. 4500/-. The family has a monthly saving of Tk. 700/-. All the earning members are involved in the fishing profession. Poverty has forced them to this profession. They also consider it as an easy means of livelihood. Mr. Abedin has been in this profession since 1991. He also makes and repairs net and earns Tk. 2000/ per month.

7. MD. SIDDIQUE

Md. Siddique is a fisherman from the village of *Kuakata*. His father's name is Abdul Hossin. Md. Siddique is 35 years old. There are 5 members in his family. 3 are above 14 year old and the rest are below 14 years of age. He is the only earning member of his family. He earns about Tk. 3000/ per month. He maintains his family in great hardship. He has no savings. He has been involved in this occupation due to poverty. His father was also involved in this profession considering it as an easy means of livelihood. His daily fishing activities include catching fish from the sea, repairing nets and selling fish to the wholesalers (*aratders*).

8. MD. RIPON KHALIPH

Md. Ripon Khaliph, son of Md. Jafar Khaliph is a fisherman of *Kuakata* village. He is 32 years old and illiterate. There are 3 members in his family. He has a 3 years old child. Md. Ripon is the only earning member of his family. His monthly income is around Tk. 2000/. He has been in this profession since 1989. He spends about eight hours per day for fishing. Normally, he works from 8 a. m to 4 p. m during the *Hilsa* season. After catching fish, he sells it to the moneylenders (*dadanders*) and wholesalers (*arathdars*). He has been involved in this occupation due to poverty. He considers this occupation as an easy means of livelihood.



Ripon Khaliphah

9. MANG SAN

Mr. Mang San, son of Aung Hle Re is a fisherman. He is a member of Rakhain community and is a Buddhist. Fishery business is his secondary occupation. He is a man of 37 years of age and studied up to class V. He is unmarried. He is the only earning member of his 6 member family. 4 members are above 14 years and the rest are below 14 years of age. He earns around Tk. 3000/ per month. Poverty has forced him to this profession. He considers it as an easy means of livelihood. He has been in this occupation since 1991. He is involved in fishing for 6 days per week. During fishing period, he has to stay in deep sea. *Poma, Shapla Pata, Maad, Macchon* are the major marine fishes generally he catches. He often works as a hired boatman. Mang San catches fish in the deep sea and sells it at the fish trade centers in Khulna, Bagerhat and Barguna. His family is settled in *Kuakata* for about 218 years. They migrated to *Kuakata* in 1782 from the Arakan Estate of Burma.

6.2 Businessmen and Traders in the Fishery Sector

1. MD. ANAYET HOSSAIN

Md. Anayet Hossain is the manager of *Amena Fish*, at Alipur, *Kuakata*. He is 38 years old. He is a man from Alipur, *Kuakata*. He studied up to class eight. He has been in this profession since 1996. Before being a manager, he was involved in fish carrying business (to different fish trading centers located in the southwestern part of Bangladesh). Khulna, Bagerhat, Swarupkati, Barisal, Patuakhali are the main fish trade centers (*mokams*) among them. Before involved in fish carrying business, he was engaged in fishing in the deep sea for about 8 years. As a manager of the fish depot, he has to carry out various duties like cash payment to the fishermen, cash receipt from the fish traders, liaison with the outside fish traders, liaison with the fishermen, accounts keeping, voucher making etc. During the peak season, he remains busy for 24 hours a day and in the off season, he is busy for about 12 hours a day. His depot mainly buys and sells sea fishes like *Hilsa, Rupchanda, Kangkon, Chatpati, Dhela, Maad, and Macchon* etc. He has chosen this profession to fight against poverty. Regarding problems of the fish trade, he mentioned about the absence of separate fish market at Alipur and *Kuakata*, syndication of ice producers, absence of nationalized banks and inadequacy of security measures for the fishermen community (who fish in the deep sea). The ice factory owners run a few ice factories (by rotation) through a syndicate. The fishermen and wholesalers (*arathdars*) can not get fresh ice due to this syndicate. The ice factory owners

are selling ice at higher price (saving electricity bills of the factory and management cost through the syndication). The fishery business is greatly hampered by this practice. The fishermen can not bargain while selling their fish to the *aratdars* (to get a higher price) due to the absence of a separate fish market.

2. MD. ABDUS SATTER

Md. Abdus Satter is a fish trader. He is 35 years old. He is illiterate. He lives in *Kuakata*. His family has 5 members. His seasonal income is about Tk. 5000/ per month and average monthly income is around Tk. 4000/. He is the only income earner of his family. He has three children – one son and two daughters. He started his business in 1990. His initial capital in the business was Tk. 50,000/ and current capital is Tk. 300,000/. He spends (on an average) 8 hours per day in his business and remains busy for all day in the peak season. The peak period of the season is for 8 months. It starts from October and continues up to June. His business activity includes going to the sea (up to 1-1.5 km) by boat, buying fish from the fishing boats, returning back to the sea shore, chopping fish, washing the pieces and hanging them on bamboo poles. It takes a minimum of 4 days to get the fish dried in clear weather. Other activities after drying are keeping the dried fish into store houses, packing them in sacks, loading the packed dried fishes on trucks, going to Chittagong and finally, selling the dried fish to the wholesalers (*aratdars*) at *Asadgonj* (wholesale market) of Chittagong.



Md. Abdus Satter

According to Mr. Abdus Satter, main problems of fish trading at *Kuakata* are bad transportation and communication system, load shedding of electricity, absence of banking facilities, lack of safety and security, syndication of ice producers and high price of ice. He mentioned that before the syndication, the prices per block of ice was Tk. 50/ and it has now been increased to Tk. 120/ after syndication. He called for development of transportation and communication system, banning the syndication of the ice producers, establishment of modern banking facilities and provision of adequate security measures for the improvement and development of fishery business and fishermen community at *Kuakata*. He says that if tourism at *Kuakata* flourishes, the land value of *Kuakata* will rise, all kinds of urban facilities will be agglomerated and the socio-economic condition of the fishermen community will improve.

3. MD. ABBAS ALI

Md. Abbas Ali is a hawker (of fresh fish and shrimp of the *Adarsha Gram/village*) at *Kuakata*. He is 35 years old and studied up to class V. His family has 6 members – 4 are above 14 years and the rest are below 14 years. He is the only income earner of his family. His average monthly income during the peak season is Tk. 3500/. He has been involved in this occupation due to poverty and considering hawking as an easy means of livelihood. He has been in this occupation since 1981.



Md. Abbas Ali

He spends (on an average) 7 hours per day in business activities. He buys fish fry from fry collectors and sells it to the *aratdars*. According to him, there are about 700 fry collectors in *Kuakata* and 4000 fry collectors in the Latachapli Union. He mentioned that gradually the people of *Kuakata* are moving to different tourism related activities. About 700 people have been (directly or indirectly) involved in tourism related activities in the year 2001. Activities related to tourism include construction works (brick breaking, earthwork, masonry etc.), jobs in hotels and motels (cooks, waiter, washing dishes and clothes etc.), driving vans, rowing boats, establishing tea stalls and running small hotels and restaurants. Among the problems of fishing business at *Kuakata*, he mentioned of the absence of separate fish market and wholesale point at *Kuakata*. He proposed developing *Kuakata* as a port with the provision for all kinds of facilities and services.

4. MD. SAMSUL ISLAM

Md. Samsul Islam is the manager of *Sewly Fish* (a fish trading company) at Alipur, *Kuakata*. He is 60 years old and passed Secondary School Certificate. He lives in the village *Nazibpur* of Mahipur, Kalapara. There are 8 members in his family. All are above 14 years of age. His family has 3 income earners. His average monthly income is Tk. 5000/ and savings is very meagre. Before 1980s, he was a Government employee. He worked as a storekeeper in the secretariat of the Ministry of Public Works. After retiring from this job, he was mainly involved in fishing and fishery business with a capital of Tk. 10,000/. He used to go to the sea with his team by boat and trawler, caught fish and supplied them to different areas of the country. As the manager of the *Sewly Fish*, his duties and responsibilities are buying fish from the fishermen, accounts keeping, managerial functions, liaison with fishermen and wholesalers (*aratdars*) (of Khulna, Faridpur, Dhaka, Magura, Jessore, Bagerhat, Barisal and other parts of the country), cash payment to the fishermen. Regarding problems of fishery business, he mentioned about the dirty and unhygienic environment of the market and depots, absence of hygienic cold storage and fish processing plants at Alipur and *Kuakata*. He also mentioned that there is no fish landing facility at *Kuakata* due to shallow water of the beach adjacent to the sea. The fishermen have to carry their boats and fishing gears from the sea by placing them on pushcarts. He proposed for establishment of cold storages and fish processing plants at Alipur, and *Kuakata* to ensure good quality of processed fish in the national and international market for sustainability of fishery business.

6.3 Hotel Owners, Managers and Workers

1. MD. M. A. MANNAN CHAUDHURY

Md. M. A. Mannan Chaudhury is a hotel owner. He is the owner of Hotel Sagor. He passed Secondary School Certificate. There are 4 members in his family. He is the only earning member of his family. His monthly average income is about Tk. 4000/ and savings is about Tk. 200/. He started his hotel in 1997. His hotel is a tin shed buildings having 12 seats. The rent per seat in peak season is Tk. 100-200/ and Tk. 50-100/ in dull season. He is constructing another 3-storied hotel having 36 seats. During peak season, tourists have to face severe accommodation crisis. Domestic tourists,

who cannot afford the high standard hotels, have to stay in small tin shed hotels like Hotel Sagor. Mr. Mannan converted the rooms of his residence to a hotel in 1997 (due to increase in tourists and demand for accommodation). Bad transportation and communication system, poor eating facilities, absence of lighting and seating arrangement along the beach, gradual deterioration of the beach (due to erosion) are the main problems of tourism development at *Kuakata*. Land value of *Kuakata* is gradually increasing with tourism development. The value of per *katha* (720 sq. ft.) of land within 0.5-km distance from *Kuakata* bazar was only Tk. 2000/ in 1990, which has increased to Tk. 5000/, Tk. 8000/, Tk. 10000/, Tk. 20,000/, Tk. 30,000/ Tk. 60,000/ respectively in 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001.

2. MISS KHEN WEN TALUKDAR

Miss Khen Wen Talukdar is the junior assistant cum receptionist of the Parjatan Holiday Home, *Kuakata*. She is 25 years old and unmarried. Her permanent address is Village Satan Para of Amtali Upazila of Barguna District. She is a Rakhain (Burmese) and Buddhist by religion. She is educated and a graduate. Her family has 4 income earner. Her monthly income is Tk. 4000/ and savings is Tk. 1000/. She has been with this job since September, 2000. Her duty is for 8 hours a day. Sunday is the weekend for The Holiday Homes. Her duties and responsibilities are to receive the tourists and assist in administration. She mentioned that the tourist season starts from the 1st week of October and continues up to last week of April. She prefers this job as it is a (government) secured job and she has scope to be acquainted with various arts, culture, and different types of tourists staying at the Hotel. She mentioned that in Hotel Holiday Homes, there is no telephone, gizzard and bar. She also mentioned of the problems faced by tourists due to lack of modern health care facilities at *Kuakata*.

3. SHYMAL KARMAKER

Shymal Karmaker is the manager of Hotel “*Smriti*” at *Kuakata*. He is 46 years old and passed Higher Secondary Certificate. His family has 4 members. He is the only income earner of his family. He has been in this occupation since May 1999. His monthly income is Tk. 3000/. His duty is for 18 hours per day. The daily duty includes supervision and monitoring of all activities of the hotel. He mentioned that November to March is the peak season for tourism at *Kuakata*. The rest of the months are dull period. During Ramadan, tourists are barely minimum at *Kuakata*. He mentioned that the income of the hotel in peak season is quite satisfactory, but during the dull season, it becomes very difficult to recover the management cost. As tourist attractions in and around *Kuakata* are not diversified enough, the tourists leave *Kuakata* just after enjoying the sunrise and sunset. Most of the tourists are found to reach *Kuakata* by afternoon. They enjoy sunset, then walk along the sea beach, return to hotel, take meal and then go to bed. They get up early in the next morning, enjoy sunrise and then leave *Kuakata*. He also mentioned that no separate zone for tourism at *Kuakata* has been declared. The fry collectors collect fry near to the beach and the tourists feel disturbed while walking along the beach. He recommended for declaration of tourist zone at *Kuakata*, development of transportation and communication system, development of surrounding tourist attractions with adequate service and facilities, and banning fry collection (within at least one km east-west side of the central beach). He also suggested for fisheries development at *Kuakata*.

4. MD. ABDUS SOBHN

Md. Abdus Sobhan is the manager of the restaurant, *Kuakata Khabar Ghar-2*, *Kuakata*. He is 29 years old and studied up to class four. He has been working as the manager since 1998. His daily activities include preparation of breads, vegetables, omelets, etc. for breakfast in the morning, cooking rice, curry and other food items for lunch and dinner (for the tourists). His restaurant has two helping boys. They serve food, water etc. to the tourists and customers. They make liaison with the tourists to take meal in the restaurant. They offer the tourists good quality food and breakfasts at cheap price who stay at hotel *Smriti*, Zilla Parishad Dakbanglow, Hotel Sunrise, LGED rest houses and other hotels. Bread, chapati, rice, vegetables, egg omelet etc. are the food items for breakfast. Rice, fish fry (*Hilsa*, *Rupchanda*, *Parse* etc.), fish curry, meat (Poultry, mutton, beef), vegetables, *dal* (pulse), lemon etc. are the items mostly prepared for lunch and dinner. The tourists are mostly fond of vegetables and spice less food. At *Kuakata*, vegetables are not produced adequately. The two boys sometimes supply prepared foods to the tourists staying in different hotels. The selling price of food items is not fixed in Abdus Sobhan’s restaurant. The prices are fixed based on the purchasing price of the food items. If the raw food is cheap in the market, the price of the served food items becomes cheaper. The price is comparatively higher during the peak tourist season. Foreign tourists, upper class domestic tourists are charged at a comparatively higher rate than the local tourists (students, small businessmen etc.). Mr. Sobhan’s monthly income in the tourist season is Tk. 3500/ per month and in the dull season, he can barely maintain his life with difficulties. The two helping boys are lowly paid. They are paid Tk. 400/500 per month in the peak season with 3 meals a day. But in dull season, they are not paid for the job. The boys have come from poor families of the villages of Pirojpur.

6.4 Tourists

1. ADAM HAYS

Thirty-one years old Adam Hays of Chesterfield, Derbys, U. K. is a designer and artist by profession. He is a graduate and a bachelor. He knew about *Kuakata* from his tourist guidebook, bought from Calcutta, India. He stayed 2 days at *Kuakata* in a hotel named “*Sunrise*” that has basic accommodation facility. At *Kuakata*, he enjoyed the sunrise, sunset, beautiful beach, local communities, fishing activities, ice manufacturing, peaceful environment and friendly attitude of

local people. Nothing specifically bothered him at *Kuakata*. He visited a number of resort areas in many countries of the world. The resort areas are namely Brighton, Cornwall (U. K.); Cairns Cavalier (France); Majoroa (Spain); Huguarda (Egypt); Colleugate, Ajanta, Goa, Puri (India); Cont. Na-Traug, Hue (Vietnam); Koh Pipi, Koh Samui, Koh Tao Phuket, Koh banta (Thailand), Pherintian Islands, Pauang (Malaysia); Gili Islands, Kuta Honsbok, Kuta Bali (Indonesia) and Cairns, Bondi, Surfery Paradise (Australia). He judged *Kuakata* as a nice undeveloped place compared with other resort areas, which he visited in different countries. Bad transportation, poor communication system and non-familiarity of local people with foreign tourists (speaking different languages) are the major problems at *Kuakata*, he mentioned. The fantastic beach, beautiful natural greenery, friendly and cooperative local people, fishermen community, fish processing and ice manufacturing etc. are the potentials for tourism development at *Kuakata*. For tourism development at *Kuakata*, he suggested for improvement of transportation and communication system, exploration and development of other attractions in the surrounding accessible areas, development of a tourist information center and publication of a guidebook on *Kuakata*. He told that the government should take initiative for tourism development at *Kuakata*.

2. MD. ZAHIRUZZAMAN (ZAHIR)

Md. Zahiruzzaman (Zahir) works in a private company. He is the Manager (Marketing) of Basundhara City Development Ltd., Dhaka. He is Master degree holder and 42 years old. He came from Dhaka to *Kuakata* and stayed for 2 days here in a hotel named “*Sunrise*”. He heard about *Kuakata* from newspapers and TV. He could not enjoy the sunrise and sunset due to cloudy weather. He only enjoyed the sea beach and the sea. Mr. Zahir praised the cooperation of local people and shopkeepers of *Kuakata*. Isolation of *Kuakata* and lack of tourists bothered him most at *Kuakata*. He visited Cox’s Bazar (Bangladesh); Pataia Sea beach (Bangkok, Thailand) and Singapore Sea beach (Singapore). Md. Zahir compared *Kuakata* sea beach as calm and quieter than the beach of Cox’s Bazar. He mentioned that the sea of Cox’s Bazar is better than the sea of *Kuakata* as the surf/wave of the sea of Cox’s Bazar is higher and more attractive to look at. The roaring sound of the sea of Cox’s Bazar is more rhythmic than that of *Kuakata*. Among the problems of tourism development at *Kuakata*, he mentioned of bad transportation and communication system, and absence of rent-a-car service from Barisal and Patuakhali to *Kuakata*. The accommodation facilities in hotel “*Sunrise*”, where he stayed are not up to the mark. But it is better than nothing. The beautiful calm and quiet sea beach, the green coconut groves, helpful local people are the potentials for tourism development at *Kuakata*, he added. He recommended that government should take initiative for development and improvement of transportation and communication system of *Kuakata*. The government can lease out the beach area to private companies for tourism development. Improvement of the residential hotels, restaurants and other facilities are also important for tourism development. The fishing and fry collecting activities can be restricted up to a certain limit from the center of the beach, as the tourists are bothered and disturbed by fishing and fish processing activities along the beach.

3. PROFESSOR M. SAMSUR RAHMAN

Professor M. Samsur Rahman, of the Department of Mathematics of Jahangirnagar University, Savar, Dhaka is 59 years old. He heard about *Kuakata* from Newspaper, and TV. He came to the Department of Mathematics of Patuakhali Govt. College as an external examiner. After completion of the examination, he visited *Kuakata* with some of the students and teachers of Patuakhali Govt. College. He stayed in Hotel “*Smriti*” and noted that its accommodation facilities are good. He stayed for only 14 hours. He reached *Kuakata* at 4.30 p. m., walked along the beach, enjoyed the sunset and surrounding greenery, then visited the market place of *Kuakata*, halted the night at the hotel. Next day, he got up early in the morning, walked along the beach, enjoyed the sun rise, went back to the hotel, and after having breakfast he left *Kuakata*. Nothing bothered him at *Kuakata*. But he mentioned that the transportation and communication system is very poor and inconvenient. He visited Cox’s Bazar, another resort area in Bangladesh. He compared *Kuakata* with Cox’s Bazar from different point of views. He mentioned that more foreign tourists visit Cox’s Bazar than *Kuakata*. Urban life and urban facilities are there at Cox’s Bazar which is not present at *Kuakata*. A tourism information center and a museum for the Buddhist Community, marine fishery and local culture can be developed at *Kuakata*. Improved transportation route, greenery along both sides of the route, improvement of tourism facilities, hygienic eating places, security measures for tourists (particularly for the female), establishment of diversified shopping centers and souvenir shops are needed for tourism development at *Kuakata*, as mentioned by Professor Rahman.

4. MS. WALLIUNNESA ENU

Ms. Walliunnesa Enu is the nutritionist of Ad-Din-Hospital, Dhaka. She is a graduate (B. Sc.) and 28 years old. She heard about *Kuakata* from magazines. She came to *Kuakata* with her husband and relatives from Dhaka. She stayed in the Zilla Parishad Dakbangalow, where the accommodation facility is quite satisfactory. She stayed at *Kuakata* for one day and one night (24 hours). She enjoyed the sunset, sunrise, sea beach, sea, waves, diving and bathing areas in the sea etc. She visited Cox’s Bazar, another resort area of Bangladesh. She mentioned that *Kuakata* sea beach is small, calm and quiet, lonely and beautiful with greenery. The beach of Cox’s Bazar is rather big, crowded, busy and is not calm and quiet, and have poor greenery. Sunrise at *Kuakata* is more attractive, which is not seen at Cox’s Bazar, but sunset at Cox’s Bazar is more attractive than *Kuakata*. The spicy food of restaurants bothered her most. Poor transportation system and spicy food in the restaurants are the problems at *Kuakata*, she faced. Such a short tour was quite insufficient for her to comment on the problems and prospects of tourism development at *Kuakata*. Greenery, attractive sunrise, sunset and the beautiful beach are the potentials for tourism development at *Kuakata*. She noted that *parota, ruti, dal*, (local food)

vegetables are better food items than rice, meat and spicy curry. Spicy food is harmful for health and it is to be discouraged in the restaurants. Food quality should be improved and vegetables should be a common food item, she added.

6.5 Transport Workers

MD. ISHA HAQUE

Md. Isha Haque is 24 years old and is an assistant of a private bus ticket counter at *Kuakata*. He lives in the village of *Kuakata*. He passed class eight level. He has been involved with this profession since 1999. He is engaged in this profession due to poverty, and for having skills and power to tackle the problems which originates in the transport sector at *Kuakata*. His monthly income is about Tk. 2500/ and savings is Tk. 1000/. His family has 2-income earner. There are 3 members in his family. All are above 14 years of age. He performs 6 days duty per month spending 12 hours per day. His duties and responsibilities include overall supervision of travel related affairs (i.e. ticket selling, handing over the cash to the supervisor or conductor). Narrow zigzag roads and presence of a number of ferries on rivers have made the transportation system of *Kuakata* inconvenient to the tourists and passengers. The impoverished transport system takes much more time to travel. It takes 2/3 hours longer to travel between *Kuakata and Patuakhali/Barisal*. If all the bridges are built over the rivers, it would save 2/3 hours. There are 30 buses (12 for *Kuakata-Patuakali*, 14 for *Kuakata-Barisal*, 2 for *Kuakata-Khulna*, and 2 for *Kuakata-Dhaka*) including 6 BRTC buses in this route. The BRTC buses move to and from *Kuakata-Barisal*, *Kuakata-Khulna*, *Kuakata-Dhaka* (2 for each route). It takes 3/4 hour to reach Patuakhali from *Kuakata*, 5/7 hours to Barisal, 13/14 hours to Khulna and 18/20 hours to Dhaka. 8 more local people are employed in the transport sector (bus service) of *Kuakata*.

6.6 Other Traders

1. MD. ABU SALEH

Md. Abu Saleh is 30 years old and is the owner of the souvenir shop “*Mathbaria Zhinuk Store*”. He is a graduate. He originally came from the village Patakata under Mathbaria Upazila of Pirojpur District. He started his trade at *Kuakata* since March 2001. He has taken this occupation as an easy means of livelihood. He visited a number of countries (Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, and India) and different tourist spots in Bangladesh. He gathered the knowledge to run this business while visiting the tourist spots in home and abroad. He started his business with Tk. 50,000/ as an initial investment. He has to spend 16 hours a day for his business. His family has 4 members. He is the only income earning member of his family. His monthly income is Tk. 4000/ and savings is Tk. 400/. His business activities include buying souvenir from Cox’s Bazar and Dhaka and selling them to the tourists, visitors and local customers. Mainly Burmese items are sold in his store. The souvenir items include shell (Zhinuk), shoe, three piece, bed sheet, shirt, lungi, towel, vest, shirt, trousers, dresses, necklace, Burmese soap, screen and different toys.

Among the problems of his business at *Kuakata*, he mentioned of the presence of fewer tourists during dull season. The business does not run well during the dull season due to poor demand. Tourists are fewer than expected. These phenomena do not support the business during dull season. There is no bank at *Kuakata* for money transaction, which is a necessity for business.

2. MD. ANWAR HOSSAIN

Md. Anwar Hossain is a photographer of the Studio Mamoni. He owns a Burmese store too. He is 26 years old. He is a resident of *Kuakata*. He studied up to class eight. He has been with his occupation since 1996. He has chosen this occupation considering this as an easy means of livelihood and less risky. He started his business with an amount of Tk. 40,000/. Now, his capital has reached to Tk. 75,000/. His monthly income during tourist season is about Tk. 5000/. His yearly saving is about Tk. 4000/. He spends about 14 hour per day in his business. His business activities include buying the ornamental souvenirs from Cox’s Bazar and Dhaka and selling them to the tourists at *Kuakata*. He also sells films, cameras and batteries. He takes snaps of the tourists and visitors and delivers the photographs to them. He can deliver black and white photographs within a few hours but he has to take at least 2 days for delivering the color photographs. Photography is a hobby for him. Due to lack of capital, he is unable to set up a Color Photo Printing Laboratory at *Kuakata*. Still now, the tourists gatherings at *Kuakata* have not reached at a significant level to support a capital-intensive color photo-printing laboratory. If tourism develops at *Kuakata* with all the support services and facilities, more tourists will visit *Kuakata* all the year round and then a proper business environment will be established at this place. Transportation and communication system has to be developed with the surroundings tourist attractions around *Kuakata* to entice more tourists.

6.7 Local Leader

MAUNG CHU MIN TALUKDAR

Maung Chu Min Talukdar is a Rakhain leader at *Kuakata*. He is 50 years old. He is a business graduate (B. Com). His family has 7 members. He is the only income earner of his family. He looks after his family property and works for the

welfare of the Rakhain community. He mentioned that, now there are only 11 Rakhain families in the *Kuakata* and the total population is 60. The main occupation of the Rakhain is agriculture, while fishery is their secondary occupation. There are three Fishery dominated Rakhain family at *Kuakata*.

The Rakhains were the original inhabitants of the Rakhain Estate, Burma. In 1784, about 50 families migrated to *Kuakata*. They cleared the Sundarbans and made settlement at *Kuakata*. They excavated wells (*Kua*) at *Kuakata* for the availability of fresh water, and since then the area has been named as *Kuakata*.

He mentioned that fisheries and tourism at *Kuakata* are integrated. If tourism develops, the fishermen community will benefit both socially and economically. The fishermen community can not smoothly run their fishing and fishery business due to lack of capital. They should be supported through proper planning with soft loan and logistics from the Government banks, NGOs, CBOs and donors for their sustenance.

6.8 Local Newsman

MD. ANWAR HOSSAIN (ANU)

Md. Anwar Hossain (Anu) is a local newsman of *Kuakata*. He is 30 years old and a bachelor. He is the permanent resident of *Kuakata*. He has passed secondary school certificate. He has no fixed monthly income. He works as a newsman with the “*Daily Tetulia*”, the “*Fortnightly Methobarta*”, the “*Daily Sangram*” and organizes programs on *Kuakata* for BTV and ETV. He has been involved in this profession since 1997 for having skill in this subject, and considering it as a hobby and for welfare of the people. He collects news on the problems and prospects of *Kuakata* and publishes them in newspapers. He collects news and data on fisheries, tourism, health, mangrove forest, education and Rakhain cultures etc. Sea beach erosion, inadequacy of security measures (coast guard), absence of information and guide book about *Kuakata*, absence of man made tourist attractions and lack of initiative to expose *Kuakata* to national and international level are the problems for fisheries and tourism development at *Kuakata*. He recommended for GO, NGO and donors initiatives to control the beach erosion and save *Kuakata*. Preservation of other tourist attractions close to *Kuakata*, creation of new recreation spots (Shutki Palli, Palli Parjaton Kendro near Char Ganga Mati etc.), enhancing the security measures at *Kuakata* can be done both for the development of fisheries and tourism at *Kuakata*.

6.9 NGO Workers

MD. ZIAUL AHSAN

Md. Ziaul Ahsan is the central coordinator of Community Development Center (CODEC, a local NGO), *Kuakata*. He holds a master degree. He is 32 years old. He mentioned that motivation, skill development training, Micro credit, Prawn PL (Post Larvae) nursing etc. are the ongoing programs and activities of CODEC at *Kuakata*. Other NGOs at *Kuakata* are URBAN, ASA, CARITAS, BRAC, CCODA and Grameen Bank. “*Patuakali Mohila Unnayan Samity*” is a CBO at *Kuakata*. It has a project named “Coastal Embankment Rehabilitation Project”, funded by DANIDA. Coastal afforestation is the main activity of this CBO at *Kuakata*. Motivation and awareness building of the disadvantaged women are also its programs. Mr. Ahsan mentioned that most of the fishermen at *Kuakata* are poor. A significant number of them live from hand to mouth. They take money from the local moneylenders to run their fishing trade and fry collecting from the sea. He told that adequate amount of loan is very important for running the fishery activities at *Kuakata*. Other water bodies (of *Kuakata*) like ponds, ditches, canals, burrow pits and homesteads are not properly utilized for fish culture and vegetable production, mainly due to lack of capital and awareness and for not having improved technology (to the farmers), he added.