

ELEPHANT POACHING, KILLINGS Swept under the rug

MOSTAFA YOUSUF, Chattogram

To avoid animosity with locals responsible for the deaths of wild elephants in the Chattogram region, forest department officials manipulate autopsy reports by attributing the deaths to natural causes and rarely file cases, thus sparing the killers of a critically endangered species.

On June 28, a baby elephant was found dead within the periphery of a tea garden in Boilchari union of Banskhalhi upazila this year.

The tea garden authorities most likely installed the barbed wire fence to stop elephants entering the garden, according to villagers.

Though accounts of eyewitnesses and forest officers indicate that the elephant died of electrocution -- given the presence of metal wire and an electric pole nearby -- the autopsy report was inconclusive as to the cause of death.

Three elephants died in the last two months at the Kalipur range office of Banskhalhi upazila, which falls under the jurisdiction of Chattogram Divisional Forest Office (South).

They were all Asian elephants, which are classified as "critically endangered" in Bangladesh.

When a livestock official tries to portray the true cause of death in the autopsy, they come under pressure from forest department higher-ups, a livestock official who performs autopsies at the forest office, preferring anonymity, told The Daily Star.

In another autopsy of an elephant that died at Fasiakhali of Lama upazila in Bandarban, it was shown to be a natural death, though an electric metal wire was found close to the spot, according to eyewitnesses.

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A doctor at Labaid Specialized Hospital in the capital set up a glass wall in front of his table to keep both his patients and himself safe from the highly contagious coronavirus. The doctor behind the glass is also using two face masks. The photo was taken Thursday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

MAJ SINHA'S KILLING

Rab takes 3 APBn men into custody

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Rab yesterday took three members of Armed Police Battalion (APBn) into custody for interrogation in a case filed over the killing of Major (ret'd) Sinha Md Rashed Khan.

They are Assistant Sub-inspector Md Shahjahan and constables Razib and Md Abdullah. They were the members of APBn-16.

Around 9:30pm of July 31, they were on duty at Shamlapur checkpoint, yards away from the spot where Maj (ret'd) Sinha was killed, said Rab Director (Legal and Media Wing) Lt Col Ashik Billah.

Their involvement was found in primary quizzing and they have been taken to the custody for extensive interrogation, Ashik said.

A Rab team, led by Senior Assistant Superintendent of Police Khairul Islam of Rab, also the investigation officer (IO) of the murder case, received them from Cox's Bazar prison around noon.

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COVID-19 IN PABNA Poor testing, facilities result fewer cases

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPLU, Pabna

Five months after Covid-19 cases first emerged in Pabna, the district health authorities say it is much better placed than other districts in terms of number of cases.

The reality, however, is that extremely limited testing and treatment facilities means low number of Covid-19 cases and patients seeking treatment in hospitals.

Though Pabna was allotted three PCR machines early into the outbreak, according to sources in the district health department and the respective ministries which allotted these, the machines are yet to be set up due to the local health authorities dragging their feet over lack of manpower and high operating costs to start testing.

The first Covid-19 patient was reported in the district on April 16 and since then, a total of 916 Covid-19 cases have been identified as of August 22, according to the Pabna civil surgeon's office.

Nine people have died while 804 of the infected patients have recovered, said Dr Abdur Rahim, Covid-19 control room in-charge of the civil surgeon's office.

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

Bangabandhu anxious to come back home

August 23, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

BANGABANDHU INQUIRES ABOUT FOOD SITUATION
Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who is convalescing in Geneva had a telephone conversation with Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad the night before. He enquired about food and flood situation and the condition of the people in Bangladesh. Bangabandhu was very anxious to come back home early.

It is learnt that in view of the advice of the doctors for undisturbed rest during the period of Bangabandhu's convalescence in Geneva, the proposed conference of Bangladesh ambassadors in West and East European countries may be deferred for the time being. Bangabandhu receives Dr Victor Umbricht, chief of the UN Relief Operations in Bangladesh, and his predecessors Tony Hagen today.

4-POWER RESOLUTION URGES BANGLADESH ADMISSION IN UN

A four-power resolution urged the UN Security Council to admit Bangladesh to the United Nations. The resolution backed by Britain, India, the Soviet Union, and Yugoslavia countered a Chinese motion yesterday which urged that Bangladesh's application to become the world body's member be shelved

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Flood worsens in 6 southern districts

STAR REPORT

The flood situation has worsened in at least six districts of the southern coastal region due to rainfall and high tide.

It may further deteriorate as rainfall is likely to continue.

"There is chance of moderate to heavy rainfall in the south-western and south-central coastal regions of the country in next 24 hours," said a bulletin of the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC).

"Rivers in this region may rise rapidly during this time," said the bulletin that was released at 9:00am yesterday.

Around 50 lakhs people of 160 upazilas under 33 districts are still affected by flood, said a report National Disaster Response Coordination Centre (NDRCC).

Our correspondents from different districts reported on their respective

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Gandhi's glasses sell for \$340,000



AFP, London

A pair of gold-plated glasses worn by Indian independence hero Mahatma Gandhi has sold in Britain for £260,000 (about 288,000 euros, \$340,000), the auction house said.

"We found them just four weeks ago in our letterbox, left there by a gentleman whose uncle had been given them by Gandhi himself," East Bristol Auctions wrote on Instagram after the sale late Friday.

"An incredible result for an incredible item! Thanks to all those who bid."

Gandhi was known for giving out old or unwanted pairs to those in need or those who had helped him.

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SI held for murder in Kurigram

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Police yesterday arrested a sub-inspector of police in a case filed over stabbing a man, who died the next day, in Kurigram's Rajarhat upazila on August 1.

Ratan Mostaq, the main accused in the killing, was arrested from Gaibandha police lines, said Raju Sarkar, officer-in-charge of Rajarhat Police Station.

Ratan was serving at Fulchhari Police Station before being closed and suspended, the OC said.

According to police, SI Ratan locked in an altercation with one Akkas Ali, 57, in Umar Majeed village following the Eid prayer.

Later in the evening, Ratan and his family members stabbed Akkas Ali and his niece Sumon Islam.

Locals rescued the two and took them to Rangpur Medical College Hospital where Akkas died on August

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Suspend postal DG

Lawyers serve legal notice for him visiting PM whilst infected
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two Supreme Court lawyers served a legal notice on the authorities concerned of the government yesterday, requesting them to suspend the director general of the postal directorate claiming that the DG met Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina despite testing positive for Covid-19.

In the notice, the two lawyers -- Md Humayun Kabir Pallob and Md Kauser -- claimed DG Sudhangshu Shekhar Bhadra met the PM at her official residence the Gono Bhaban on August 14, a

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A flood victim busy with handiwork on a sari in a makeshift flood shelter in Rupnagar area of Dhamrai on the outskirts of Dhaka. She earns Tk 150 for completing every sari. Several other female flood victims do the same to earn their bread in the area. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

'Weeks, months, maybe never'

Trump warns US vote count may be delayed as he doubles down on vote-by-mail fraud claims

AFP, Washington

US President Donald Trump warned Friday that the results of the November 3 presidential election could take weeks or months to determine.

Amid concerns that a wave of mail-in ballots could overwhelm the post office and local election bodies, Trump suggested the traditional election-night verdict could be delayed.

"You'll never have an election count on November 3," Trump said in a speech to the Council of National Policy, a conservative activist group.

"You're not going to be able to know the end of this election, in my opinion, for weeks, months, maybe never," he said.

The prospect of a slow count of an expected 50 million votes cast by mail -- one consequence of the coronavirus pandemic -- has raised concerns of political turmoil and mischief-making, and legal challenges that could further delay a result, for the presidential as well as congressional races.

Trump, who polls show is trailing challenger Joe Biden, alleged that Democrats were promoting universal mail-in voting to manipulate the results.

But he suggested a systemic problem as well. "We're not prepared for this, 51 million ballots. It will be a tremendous embarrassment for the country," he said.

"This is a very serious problem for a democracy."

On Wednesday, a top US official for election security said his biggest worry is of outside interference in a likely

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PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 23
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4:30 12:45 4:45 6:33 8:00
JAMAAT 5:05 1:15 5:00 6:36 8:30
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION