

DOWN TO EARTH

Ending Callousness Towards Guest Birds

By A S M Nurunnabi

We are in the thick of the winter season. This is the peak season for the arrival of a large number of migratory birds of many varieties from colder climes in Siberia and Europe. According to ornithologists, the total number of species of birds in Bangladesh is about 580, out of which 200 species are said to be migratory birds. Of these birds, nearly 25 species are ducks, that fall prey to the poachers the most. The other duck species are pintail, brambling, bare-headed shoveler, common pochard, common ruddy shell, topped and log goose.

It is a matter of regret that a large number of the migratory birds fall victims to poachers and hunters. The poachers remain active in their main concentration areas like Hakaluki haor and Srimangal in greater Sylhet district. The netted birds are shipped to the capital and other major cities where they are objects of a lucrative trade. Hunting the guest birds is also a favourite sport with many. As a result of these depredations, the volume of influx of guest birds has become reduced in recent years, according to ornithologists. In their opinion, these birds are not only good intercontinental fliers, they are also very sensitive and remember the dangers of a climate and communicate it to following generations.

The ornithologists have identified the migration of birds of many species. According to them, most species of birds, because of their high metabolic rate, require a rich, abundant supply of food at frequent intervals. Such a situation does not prevail throughout the year in any given region. Birds have thus a highly efficient means for travelling swiftly over long

distances with great economy of energy. The migration flights follows specific routes some-times well-defined over long distances. The speed of migratory birds depends largely on the species and the type of terrain covered. Most migrations occur at relatively low altitudes. Some birds, however, fly much higher even to an altitude of 14000 feet. Many species of migrant birds are nocturnal (night time) migrants.

There are good and bad effects of the huge influx of the guest birds, but on balance, according to ornithologists, the good effects tip the scale. Among the bad effects may be cited the damage they cause to corn fields when they swoop on them for feeding. One redeeming feature in this respect is said to be that some of the bird species do not feed on corn. Another redeeming aspect is that in April when boro paddies are ripe for harvesting, it is time for most of the species of guest birds to leave.

The good effects mainly relate to their environmental impact. The droppings of such large numbers of birds in water areas turn into planktons which serve as food for different kinds of fish in water areas. As for those species of birds which are land-based, the dropping serve to enhance the fertility of the soil and enrich the vegetation. They also play a helpful role in pest control-in as much as they feed on different kinds of harmful insects and also field mice and rodents, etc. On the whole, their influence on the ecology of the regions where they temporarily settle, is held to be beneficial outweighing whatever evil effects their presence brings about.

Poaching and selling of guest birds continue despite

Prime Minister's directive issued a couple of years ago to apply the law prohibiting the hunting of winter birds. Raids by law enforcing agency men in the haor areas where poachers lay traps for the assembling birds are usually rare and when the law enforcers do appear, the hunters flee to remote areas of haors to avoid detection. The duck species are mostly found on sale in the city in the peak season of migration at such places as Elephant Road, Manik Mia Avenue, Panthapath, Baily Road, Mirpur Road, Mouchak areas. It is a pity that sales of guest birds at some of these places take place openly before the eyes of the law enforcing agencies. It is felt by observers that such callousness towards guest birds need be eliminated and the relevant law, which is felt to be rather lenient, need be made more stringent.

In this city, the guest birds find comparatively safe resting places such as the lakes in the BDR HQ at Peekhana, Mirpur Zoo, water areas at Bangabhaban and Jahangirnagar University at Savar.

The Bangladesh Wild Life Society has been reportedly campaigning for years to protect this winter birds from the hunters. But it seems that their efforts have not so far produced positive results. Otherwise we would not have witnessed open sales of guest birds on city streets without any hindrance.

It is widely felt that, in the interest of own existence in the context of maintenance of environmental balance, there is an urgent need for creating awareness among the people at large that the winter birds are a bounty of nature to us, apart from lending colour to the avian world.



A cultural function in honour of the women freedom fighters in front of the Engineers' Institute in the city yesterday. — Star photo

Hartal postponed

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League. In a statement after an emergency working committee meeting chaired by party chief Sheikh Hasina last night, said the meeting considered the fact that the EC revised the polls schedule to enable all political parties to participate in the polls. The AL meeting noted that only rescheduling of poll date would not suffice unless the government took the initiative of forming a non-party neutral caretaker administration. The meeting expressed the hope that the Prime Minister would step down and would advise the President to initiate the formation of a neutral caretaker government.

After the announcement of the revised election schedule, leaders of two other major parties — Jatiya Party and Jamaat-e-Islam — also echoed similar sentiments. They welcomed the Election Commission step and hoped that the Prime Minister would resign and create the scope for the President initiate formation of a caretaker government for holding the

EC extends time for erasing graffiti

The Election Commission (EC) yesterday extended the time frame for erasing graffiti relating to election campaign till December 25 from December 15 as announced earlier, an EC press release said, reports BSS.

The time frame for erasing the graffiti has been extended in view of the rescheduling of general elections.

The commission warned that stern action will be taken against any new writing on walls after the announcement of the elections schedule in accordance with law.

Ex-UP chairman killed in Bhola

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Dec 15: A former chairman of Deula Union under Borhanuddin thana of Bhola district was killed by some unidentified miscreants last night.

Police said Ali Hossain Bepari, 50, was called out of his home by some men at the dead of night and was missing since then.

His body was found near Napierverta about one kilometre from his home next morning. A case was filed.

FF dies at Victory Day function

SHERPUR, Dec 15: Adam Ali, a freedom fighter, died of heart attack at a Victory Day function here Thursday evening, turning it into a mourning one, reports UNB.

He was 45.

Adam Ali fainted at the venue at 4:45 pm, about an hour before the function was scheduled to begin at New Market area in the town.

Adam Ali, who had fought in Sector Number 11, left behind his wife, five daughters and one son.

Silver Jubilee of victory

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placing of wreaths at the national memorial in the morning by the people of different walks of life. A 31-gun salute at 12.01 hours in the capital will herald the day.

National flag will be hoisted atop all public and private buildings.

President and Begum Abdur Rahman Biswas will hold a reception at Bangabhaban today at 3:30 pm in celebration of the 25th Victory Day.

Different political and socio-cultural and professional organisations have taken up elaborate programmes in celebration of the day.

Official programmes have been chalked out to celebrate the day at national and district levels. Bangladesh missions abroad will also organise programmes to celebrate the Victory Day.

The national level official programmes include children and juvenile rally at the Dhaka Stadium No 1, playing of bands by the members of the armed forces, police and ansars, at different points of the capital, sessions of patriotic and mass songs at different places, decoration of roads and road islands and illumination of important buildings in the evening.

Radio Bangladesh and Bangladesh Television will broadcast special programmes while newspapers will bring into special supplements.

Improved diets will be served in jails, hospitals, orphanages and children centres.

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy will hold a session of patriotic songs in its auditorium with the participation of the artistes of Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra at 5:30 pm. As part of Shilpakala Academy's two-day programme a dance-drama based on the War of Independence was held yesterday.

Bangla Academy organises a session of patriotic songs at the Academy Batamul in the evening.

Mobile units of the mass communications department will present mass songs and organise film shows at different places including the Ramna Batamul in the city at public places across the country.

Nazrul Institute organises a seminar and a cultural function at the Kabi Bhaban at House No 330/B, Road No 28 (Old) at Dhanmardi. Eminent journalist Obaidul Haq will chair the seminar.

In celebration of the Victory Day, Bangladesh Nationalist Party has taken up a programme to erect seven arches at different points of city roads in memory of the seven Bir Shreshthas of the Liberation War.

The other programmes of the party include placing of wreaths at the National Mausoleum, hoisting of national flags at the party offices, *zearat* of the *mazar* of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman, and cultural functions and discussions at the Shaheed Zia Mancha.

The Victory Day programmes of Awami League include placing of wreaths at the National Mausoleum, hoisting of national flags at party offices and placing of wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the Bangabandhu Bhaban.

Muktijoddha O Swadhinatar Rajat Joyonti Parishad organises the opening function of its year-long programme on the Victory Day at Suhrawardi Uddyan at 3:00 pm.

Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) will hold a discussion and a cultural function in front of the federation building at 3:00 pm.

Bulbul Academy of Fine Arts arranges a cultural function in its central auditorium at Wiseghat at 10:00 am.

Chief of Eastern Command of the Indian Army Lt General Jagjit Singh Aurora and the chief of Eastern Command of Pakistan Army Lt General Ameer Abdullah Khan Niazi signing the historic Surrender Document on surrender of the Pakistan Army to the Joint Command of Bangladesh and India at Race Course (now Suhrawardi Uddyan) in Dhaka on December 16, 1971. — File photo

The Midnight File

Chechen rebels kill 22 Russian soldiers

MOSCOW, Dec 15: The toll rose to 22 Russian soldiers killed and 41 wounded in fighting with Chechen rebels in the town of Gudermes, the Russian Interior Ministry said today. A further 38 soldiers were listed as missing in action, the ministry was quoted as saying by Interfax news agency, reports AFP.

Traffic system at Aricha, Nagarbari ghats collapses

ARICHA (Manikganj), Dec 15: Traffic system at Aricha and Nagarbari ferry terminals again collapsed today disrupting ferry services between the two ghats, reports UNB.

The BIWTA sources said all the ferries were being operated with full capacity, but due to poor traffic control system at the terminals, one ferry took 3-4 hours instead of 45 minutes to load or unload vehicles.

As a result, more than 2,431 trucks and buses with thousands of passengers were stranded at Aricha and Nagarbari ghats to cross the river Jamuna. Some 4,220 vehicles were ferried in 36 hours till 6 pm today, the sources said.

4 shops gutted

From Our Correspondent

KHULNA, Dec 15: A fire at the city's Nixon Market this evening completely gutted four garments shops and partially damaged six others.

No one was hurt.

The fire, which started at around 7:00 pm, was brought under control within an hour by the local fire brigade.

The cause of the fire could not be ascertained till writing this report, but it is assumed to have been originated from the "Shanta Garments." The shop was, however, closed at the time, according to witnesses.

College student

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in the neck with a pointed iron rod, police said.

He was first taken to the National Hospital nearby and then to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

It was alleged that the attackers could be Nobin's former friends who later developed enmity with him.

Nobin was the eldest of four sons of one Selim Miah of South Moismundi at Narinda.

Manju : Polls

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Turning to violence, he said the built-in social system encourages it as people in power take advantage of this.

Getting elected with popular votes do not give a party the right to manipulate the administration for political gains, he asserted. What is the harm in trying an election system which had been lauded by all sections of the people, he asked.

Heroines

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Women freedom fighters from Dhaka, Tangail, Sunamganj, Sherpur and Dinajpur attended the gathering. They were garlanded along with the Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendro artists.

Polls date

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had announced elections schedule for the sixth Parliament fixing January 18 as the polls date, taking into consideration the 90-day limit (till February 21) and Ramzan and Eid-ul-Fitr.

The EC expected that by that time the political parties would reach an understanding and would take part in the elections. But as they (political parties) were yet to reach a consensus and majority of the parties have requested the EC either in writing or verbally for the re-fixation of polls date, the EC acted accordingly, explained the gazette notification.

"After 25 years, I don't want money, or fame ... I'd like to fully understand the meaning of the term Bir Pratik," she said.

Later, the artists of the Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendro and Nataraj rendered songs.



Children taking part at an art competition organised by the Sonargaon Hotel in the city yesterday. — Star photo

Three major parties

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for Establishment Barrister Aminul Haq represented BNP at the meeting.

In his address, Justice Sadeque said EC is a constitutional institution and that is why it can not take any step outside the purview of the Constitution.

He said it is mandatory for the EC to conduct elections within 90 days after the dissolution of Parliament. He said the meeting was convened as many political parties requested the EC to shift the election schedule.

"I seek all of your assistance and inshallah I will be able to give the nation a free and fair election," hoped Justice Sadeque.

Md Irshadul Haq told the meeting that after the announcement of election schedule on December 3, the EC took up the control of the general administration, state-run media and law enforcing agencies.

He also urged all parties to abide by the 34-point code of conduct during the elections and said a complain centre in this regard would soon be set up at the EC Secretariat.

It was informed by the EC officials at the meeting that transfer of government officials and all government and non-government grants were stopped after the announcement of the election schedule.

Speaking on behalf of BNP, Barrister Rafiqul said his party will agree to whatever decision the EC takes about the election schedule and assured BNP's full support to EC in holding a free and fair election.

"EC is not under the control of the government. No authorities other than the Supreme Judicial Council can remove the CEC from his

3 killed in road accidents

Star Report

At least three persons were killed and five others injured in separate road accidents — two in the city and another in Comilla — yesterday.

One Shaiful Islam, 32, of Mohammadia Housing Society, was killed when a speeding minibus ran over him in Noorjahan Road area under Mohammadpur thana at about 8 am.

In another accident, one Abdul Hamid, 70, was killed as a bus hit him in Mirpur-2 at about 9 am.

Both the bodies were taken to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

UNB adds: A man was killed and five others were wounded when a mini-bus hit a truck on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway yesterday, police said.

The deceased was identified as Nazrul Islam, 26, of village Kazipur in Muradnagar thana of the district. He was a passenger of the bus.

Attack on Faiz Ahmed condemned

A joint meeting of the leaders of all student organisations of the Dhaka University, executive committee of the Sammilite Sangskritik Jote and other organisations yesterday condemned the attack on eminent journalist Faiz Ahmed and other leaders of the Jote.

The meeting called upon the people to resist any attempt to foil the Victory Day festivals.

Anti-independence elements were out to foil the festivals taking opportunity of the current political situation of the country, the meeting said in a statement.

আয়োজকঃ

ঢাকা জেলা ভূমি ও অর্থনৈতিক উন্নয়ন বিভাগ

প্রথম, দ্বিতীয় এবং তৃতীয় পুরস্কার যথাক্রমে ১ টকা-হুকে-ঢাকা, ঢাকা-করালী-ঢাকা এবং ঢাকা-করালী-ঢাকা বিমান টিকেট। এই পুরস্কার প্রদান করা হবে বিমান বাংলাদেশ এয়ারলাইন্স-এর পৌছাতে।

প্রতিযোগিতার নিয়মাবলীঃ

- ১। 'ভিওএ'র প্রোগ্রাম এবং ক্যান ক্লাব সদস্যদের বাক্যসমূহ অবহানকারী যে কোন ব্যক্তি এই প্রতিযোগিতায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে পারবেন।
- ২। প্রতিযোগীদেরকে চারটি উত্তরের মধ্যে সঠিক উত্তরটির বাম পাশে চিহ্ন দিতে হবে।
- ৩। ঢাকার যার্মিন্দুতবাসের কর্মীবৃন্দ, তাদের পরিবারবর্গ এবং ঢাকা জেলা ভিওএ ক্যান ক্লাবের কর্মকর্তাবৃন্দ এবং তাদের পরিবারবর্গের কেউ এই প্রতিযোগিতায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে পারবেন না।
- ৪। পুনরুক্ত করমটি (ফটোকপি গ্রহণযোগ্য নয়) 'ঢাকা জেলা ভূমি ও অর্থনৈতিক উন্নয়ন বিভাগ, ১৯/১, নয়াপল্টন, ঢাকা-১০০০' এই ঠিকানার মাধ্যমে ১৫ই জানুয়ারী, ১৯৯৬ তারিখের মধ্যে ডাকযোগে পৌছাতে হবে (সেরাসরি গ্রহণযোগ্য নয়)।
- ৫। প্রাথমিকভাবে নির্ধারিতদের নামের তালিকা মাধ্যমে ২৫শে জানুয়ারী, ১৯৯৬ তারিখে এই পত্রিকায় প্রকাশিত হবে এবং ডাকযোগে জানাম হবে। পুরস্কার বিতরণের তারিখ এবং স্থানও তখন জানিয়ে দেয়া হবে। একই ব্যক্তি একাধিক কৃপন পাঠাতে পারবেন। একাধিক সঠিক উত্তরভার ক্ষেত্রে লটারীর মাধ্যমে বিজয়ী নির্ধারণ করা হবে।

[কৃপন এপার-এর পাতায় দেখুন]

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