



Rare bird spotted in Cox's Bazar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four rare woodpeckers have recently been spotted in the Dulahazara Safari Park in Cox's Bazar after many decades.

Eminent bird-watcher Enamul-Haque spotted and filmed the Great Slaty Woodpeckers on November 23.

The Slaty woodpecker, which stands out for its huge pale bill and unusually long neck and tail, is a rare bird species of the Indian subcontinent and can only be seen in the Himalayas between Arunachal and Himachal states.

In the Birds of the Indian Subcontinent (Oxford University Press, 1998), Grimmett and Inskip write, "The Great Slaty Woodpecker is a former resident of Bangladesh, but there is no recent record of the bird being spotted in the country. It might have survived in the Chittagong Hill Tracts."

Enam's observation means Slaty woodpeckers could now be included in the list of rare birds in the country.

8 Bogra JCD men expelled

A CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

The Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) central committee has expelled eight of its leaders and activists of the Bogra district unit for their anti-organisational activities.

The high command of the BNP also ordered the Bogra police to arrest the eight expelled leaders and activists of the JCD.

The expelled are: Sabir Hossain Babu, Moniruzzaman Moni, Alamgir Hossain, Afzal Hossain Nahid, Zakaria Shamim, ATM Mamun, Zitu, and Fine. Their pri

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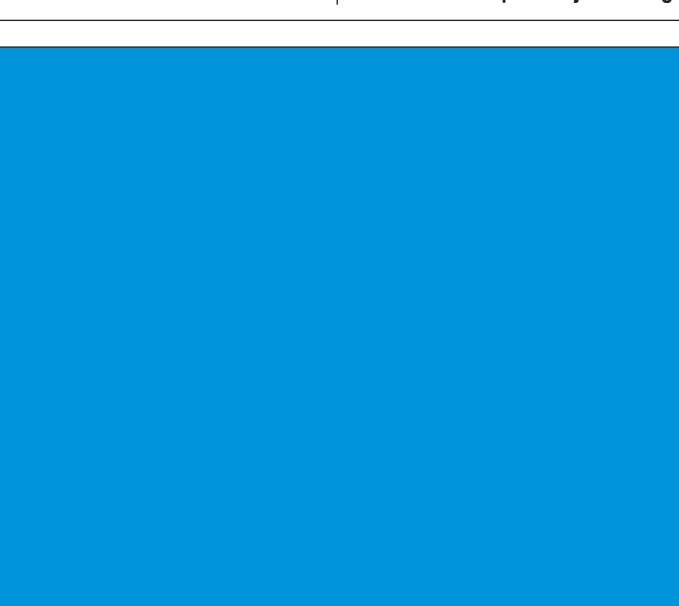
Last date for renewal of arms licenses Dec 31

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has asked the licensed firearms holders to renew their licenses from the firearm section of the District Magistrate's office by December 31.

Renewal of firearm licenses in Dhaka district for the year 2003 will start on December 1, according to a handout issued by the District Information office yesterday. Necessary renewal fees are to be deposited with the Bangladesh Bank and the original copy of the bank receipt submitted with the application form, the released a d d e d . During license renewal, the firearms have to be shown in an unloaded form to the concerned officials.

If the firearms have been deposited with the local police station as per government directive, the arms holders can renew their licenses showing the deposit receipts.



First group of UN arms inspectors in Baghdad

REUTERS, Baghdad

The first group of UN arms inspectors arrived in Baghdad yesterday to relaunch a search for weapons of mass destruction after a four-year absence, a mission that could trigger a US-led war.

Seventeen inspectors were aboard the flight from Larnaca, Cyprus, which touched down in Baghdad at around noon. Eleven are from the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) charged with searching for missiles and biological and chemical weapons.

The remaining six, from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), will investigate any nuclear weapons capability Iraq may have. The inspections are set to start on Wednesday. The last UN inspections team left Baghdad in December 1998, just before a US military strike on Iraq.

The inspectors are armed with a tough UN resolution that demands Iraq disarm or face "serious consequences". Baghdad has vowed to

"The real motive was to create

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meet a December 8 deadline to produce a full account of its weapons programme and said UN inspectors will be given free access to all sites. The inspectors must give their first report to the UN Security Council by January 27.

Meanwhile, Iraqi authorities made public yesterday an angry letter to the United Nations over a tough UN resolution ahead of the first weapons inspections in Iraq in four years.

Foreign Minister Naji Sabri said

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in a November 23 letter to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan that Baghdad accepted UN resolution 1441 in hopes of sparing its people war but felt that the resolution provided the United States with a pretext to launch an attack on Iraq.

In the first detailed response since Iraq accepted the Security Council resolution on November 13, Sabri gave an item by item reply and reiterated a continuing theme. The first i n s p e c

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PHOTO: AKM MOHSIN

Two vendors sell onion stems, used as winter vegetables, at Karwan Bazaar in the city yesterday. With winter setting in, seasonal vegetables started rolling in city markets from other districts like every year.

More structures along Buriganga demolished

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At 10.00am yesterday, three tug-boats of the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) anchored at the Sadarghat Launch Terminal and half a dozen officials, including Magistrate Anwar Hossain Chowdhury, ran final checks before going on a demolition drive.

Armed with heavy hammers and iron rods, about 100 labourers in headbands stepped into the boats. Sixty policemen, some in riot gear and with automatic guns, from the Millbarack police line, split into three groups and boarded the tugboats.

Ten minutes later, the BIWTA demolition team was heading off to Kholamora to clear encroachments off the foreshore and the channel of the Buriganga. On the fifth day of the six-day drive, it demolished 37 structures, including three factories.

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Along the Buriganga near Kholamora and Kamrangirchar, the first thing to be noticed is construction of the flood protection embankment by the Water Development Board (WDB).

According to BIWTA officials, the WDB has 'plundered the river' by taking up the embankment construction up to 100 feet into the river.

The WDB has visibly started the work to implement the latest project in defiance of all norms. The so-called embankment, about 50 per cent completed so far, has so audaciously extended its reach into the river that it created another channel between the embankment and the foreshore of the river. Sources said some WDB officials virtually 'sold out' the riverbank along Kamrangirchar.

The authorities faced the toughest challenge when demolishing village homes in Kholamora. The

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Police excesses?

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A Judo Dal activist, picked up by an assistant police commissioner of Khulna Metropolitan Police allegedly without any warrant or specific charge, is now in 'critical' condition at Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH), according to police and other sources.

Shafiqul Islam, also a football player of Young Boys' Sporting Club here, was picked up from Pabla area by Clarence Gomes, Assistant Police Commissioner (APC) in charge of KMP's North Zone and severely beaten at Khalishpur thana.

He was admitted to KMCH on Sunday. His condition remained 'critical' till 6 pm yesterday, hospital sources said.

The Officer-in-charge of Khalishpur thana said Shafiqul has been arrested under Section 54 and is under treatment in police custody. When asked, the OC said he does not know why Shafiqul was picked up and beaten by the APC.

When contacted, the APC became annoyed and refused to tell anything about his action against Shafiqul Islam.

But city BNP secretary Nazrul Islam Manju claimed that the APC acted on an instruction from APBN Commandant-in-charge Shahidul Islam Chowdhury.

Shafiqul is a neighbour of the APBN Commandant, it was learnt. The commandant could not be contacted as he was out of Khulna yesterday.

Sunset rule for youths in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

The district authorities have slapped a ban on the movement of youths after sunset to curb criminal activities.

The deputy commissioner (DC) of Pabna issued an executive order to slap the ban and the decision was announced by loudspeakers throughout the district yesterday.

When contacted, Police Super of Pabna Amir Uddin said the announcement was made as per the district's law and order committee's decision to improve law and order.

The decision has created resentment among students who take private tuition after dusk.

Retirement benefits bill for non-govt teachers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jatiya Sangsad yesterday passed three bills including one aiming to ensure smooth disbursement of retirement benefits to the teachers and employees of non-government educational institutions.

A 21-member board will be set up to disburse retirement benefits among the teachers and employees of private schools, colleges, schools, madrasahs and vocational institutions.

The education secretary will become the chairman of the board, according to the Private Educational Institution Teachers and Employees Retirement Benefits Act, 2002. The government will set up the board as soon as possible after the new law comes to force.

The DG and a director of the directorate of secondary and higher secretary education, the DG of the directorate of technical education, the board will raise its funds from government donation, subscriptions by the teachers and employees and other sources.

Subscriptions of the teachers and employees would be deducted from the source of their monthly salary.

In his statement about the bill's aims and objectives, Education Minister Dr Osman Farruk said paying retirement benefits to teachers and employees of private edu-

one deputy secretary each from the education, establishment and finance ministries, 11 representatives of the teachers and three of the employees will become members of the board.

Besides disbursing retirement benefits among the retired teachers and employees, the board will also pay retirement benefits to the serving teachers or employees in case of death. It would fix the rate, time-limit and other relevant issues relating to such benefits.

The board will raise its funds from government donation, subscriptions by the teachers and employees and other sources.

Subscriptions of the teachers and employees would be deducted from the source of their monthly salary.

In his statement about the bill's aims and objectives, Education Minister Dr Osman Farruk said paying retirement benefits to teachers and employees of private edu-

cational institutions in a planned way was not possible due to lack of a separate law.

The parliament also passed another bill amending Private Educational Institution Teachers and Employee Welfare Trust Act, 1990 under which retirement benefits were given earlier.

LRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan piloted the other bill seeking amendments to the Cooperatives Society Act, 2001, which was also approved by the House. The amendments aim to accelerate cooperatives movement in the country.

All the three bills were passed in the absence of the main opposition Awami League that boycotted yesterday's proceedings of the House protesting introduction of a bill that seeks to change the name of Bangabandhu Award for Agriculture into National Award for Agriculture.

Tinni's body exhumed for fresh autopsy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The body of Syeda Tania Mahbub Tinni, a model and actress, was exhumed from the Jurain graveyard yesterday two weeks after her burial.

Tinni's body was exhumed in presence of a magistrate, her father Syed Mahbub Karim and uncle Syed Rezaul Karim.

The body was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for a second autopsy.

Meanwhile, Safakat Hossain Piyal, Tinni's husband, was placed on a fresh two-day remand yesterday.

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) produced Piyal and his housemaid, Bina, before the First Class Magistrate's Court, Dhaka, seeking remand for the two.

The defence lawyers -- Masud Ahmed Talukder and Gazi Towhidul Islam -- opposed the remand prayer.

and said the two were implicated in the case as part of a conspiracy.

Referring to reports published in various dailies, the defence lawyers alleged that former lawmaker Golam Faruk Ovi is the main suspect in the Tinni murder.

The magistrate granted a two-day remand for Piyal alone. The court ordered the investigation officer to interrogate Piyal keeping in mind his sickness.

Earlier, Keraniganj police recovered the body of Tinni from the Buriganga on November 16 and handed it over to the Anjuman Mufidul Islam, a charity, as an unclaimed body.

Family members of Tinni identified the body as hers after her photograph was published in a daily. Piyal also claimed that the body was his wife's.

Later, Piyal was placed on a one-day remand.

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171 dailies in city

BSS, Dhaka

Information Minister Tariqul Islam yesterday said as many as 171 daily newspapers were now being published from Dhaka city.

"The number of weeklies and monthlies are 231 and 269 respectively that are published from the capital city," he said while replying to a question from Delwar Hossain Sayeedi of Jamaat in the Jatiya Sangsad.

He said all newspapers were being published under the 1973 Printing and Publication (declaration and registration) Act.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Nov 26		5-11 pm
Nov 27	6-22 am	

Prayer Timings

Nov 26

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-47	5-07
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	3-45	4-00
Maghrib	5-14	5-24
Esha	7-30	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

Complainant gets 5 yrs for filing false case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The First Special Court for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka yesterday sentenced a complainant to five years' imprisonment for filing a false case against a person under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act 2000 to harass him.

Judge Mohammad Daud Miah Sarker sentenced Nuruddin Ahmed for filing a false case against Abbas Uddin. Nuruddin, in the case filed with

Mirpur thana on June 21, 2000 under the Act, had alleged that Abbas Uddin abducted his minor daughter Sabrina Ahmed Rima and raped her.

The judge also sentenced her to one year's imprisonment.

This is the first verdict by the court against a complainant.

The investigation officer (IO) of the case submitted a final report to the Special Court as the charges brought against Abbas Uddin were proved to be "false, fabricated and

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Disciplined, still defiant

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Defying a government order, three officials of Bangladesh Television who have been withdrawn from BTV attended office yesterday as usual.

Official sources said BTV's director (news) AKM Hanif, executive producer (news) Muhammad Hashim Reza and producer (news) Muhammad Saiful Islam were withdrawn for negligence of duty. A cameraman and a sub-assistant engineer were also withdrawn.