

Unabated deer poaching in the Sundarbans

Nexus between poachers and a section of corrupt forest officials alleged

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sathkhira

Deer poaching in Sundarbans, the world's largest mangrove forest, is going on unabated, violating law.

A large number of spotted deer were killed in the last two months, sources said.

On December 1, a team of officials from Kobadak Forest Station recovered a slaughtered deer from a boat in Palkati area of the forest.

On December 10, local people caught two alleged deer poachers -- Samir Gazi and Shahbaz -- from Parshemari ferry terminal area in Shyamnagar along with three slaughtered deer. They were handed over to Forest Officer Md Delwar Hossain Forest Guard Milon.

Local people later alleged that the forest officials released the poachers along with their prey after taking bribe. The incident created resentment in the area.

On December 4, a team from Kaikhali Forest Station in a raid recovered two slaughtered deer from a boat on Mathabanga canal in the Sundarbans. Sensing presence of forest officials, the poachers escaped.

On November 21, officials from Kaikhali Forest Office recovered 36 kilograms of deer meat from a shrimp enclosure owned by one Arshad Ali.

On November 23, one BM Harun of Datinakhal village in Shyamnagar upazila recovered two slaughtered deer from one Barik Kayal of the area but no case was recorded.

On November 1, Gabura Union Parishad (UP) Chairman Shaiful Azam Lenin recovered two slaughtered deer from poachers Abdul Mojid and Rouf. They were handed over to Burigoloin Forest Office officials but no action was taken against them, it was alleged.

Allegations have it that a section of leaders and activists of political parties and local government bodies in connivance with some corrupt forest officials and staff are poaching deer in the Sundarbans.

Witnesses seeking anonymity claimed that the poachers go to the Sundarbans by taking permission from forest officials as visitors.

About two years back, a local UP Chairman along with 10 people, most of them local government officials, went to Kakrajala area in the Sundarbans boarding three trawlers.

They stayed there for three days and killed 12 deer, local people claimed.

On return home, the UP Chairman arranged a function and entertained guests, reportedly with



Kaikhali forest officials recovered two slaughtered deer from a boat on the Mathabanga canal recently.

PHOTO: STAR

Forest guards trained, given sophisticated arms: DFO

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A two-day training for Sundarbans forest guards on use of sophisticated firearms ended at the Khulna police lines on Sunday.

This is part of programme to enhance vigilance in the forest to stop poaching of deer and tiger and pilferage of forest resources including timber, according to the Conservator of Forests.

Other steps are also being taken to check crimes in the Sundarbans.

Thirty-three SLRs and 20 Chinese rifles have been given to guards in the Eastern Wing of Sundarban Forest Division (SFD). The Western Wing got 70 SLRs and 180 Chinese rifles to contain crimes.

Local people claimed that law enforcers and forest officials are aware of sale of venison.

When contacted, Sathkhira Range Officer of the Sundarbans said, some of the poachers were caught and action taken. Forest guards guard the forest so stop poaching. But the manpower is too little to the need and they are not well equipped. Their number should be increased, he said.

High demand of horns and hides of deer are the prime targets of the poachers, local people said while talking to this correspondent during a visit.

Dear hunting in the Sundarbans is banned. Moreover, the UNESCO has been declared the forest a World Heritage Site to protect its flora and fauna.

It was gathered that a section of government officials posted in areas near the forest also visit the Sundarbans often and kill deer.

Besides, a section of licensed gun holders is also involved in it.

Venison is easily available in villages near the forest and trading in it is an open secret there. It is sold at Tk 150 to 180 per kilogram.

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Is it a day to rejoice?

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Some government and private establishments in Barisal city were decorated with kaleidoscopic lights on the Martyred Intellectuals Day on December 14.

The city dwellers expressed their surprise and resentment at this. Many of them talking to this correspondent questioned whether it was due to ignorance or audacity.

The buildings illuminated include the Barisal divisional office of T and T, Aswani Kumar Town Hall, Barisal City Corporation (BCC), Sazrani Supermarket, Venue Supermarket and some cinemas.

When contacted, Divisional Engineer of T&T Jagadish Mondol said, "It was a mistake. Preparations were made at a time for Martyred Intellectuals Day and Victory Day programmes. The lighting arrangement was actually made for the Victory Day."

Authorities of other government establishments were not available for comment.

Two 'muggers' lynched in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Two alleged muggers were beaten to death by mob in Baduratala Munshipukur in Panchlaish area of the city on Tuesday.

They were caught while exchanging fire with police. Police also recovered two guns from them.

Police said six armed muggers came to the spot by an auto-rickshaw. As patrol police challenged them, they opened fire resulting in a gunfight.

At one stage two muggers received bullet injuries while others managed to flee. Local people caught the bullet-hit muggers and beat them dead.

Forest Department sources said there are 20,000 acres of fallow lands under it in the areas, where rubber can be cultivated.

Idrish Ali, an industrialist in Sherpur, raised a rubber garden in Sandakura in 1983 on 54 acres of land. He is harvesting raw rubber from his Salma Rubber Project since 1998, about 15 years after plantation.

Talking to The Daily Star he said the soil of bordering hills in Sherpur is favourable for rubber cultivation. If Bangladesh Forest Industries Development Corporation (BFIDC) takes step to cultivate rubber in the 20,000 acres of fallow lands, 20,000 to 25,000 tonnes of raw rubber could

Bright prospect for rubber plantation in Sherpur

Idris Ali earns over Tk 1.5 lakh a month from 5000 rubber trees: Plantation in 20,000 acres of fallow land can meet country's demand

be produced annually.

Idrish Ali said, rubber cultivation is very profitable but raising a garden is time-consuming and expensive. He said he had to spend a huge amount of money in 15 years to raise the garden.

Now he is extracting 325 to 350 kilograms of liquid rubber from 5000 rubber trees per day and earns Tk 1,50,000 to 1,60,000 in a month from

the sale.

Salma Rubber Project is the lone such project in the private sector in greater Mymensingh.

Idrish Ali said he wants to expand his garden to 5000 acres. He has applied to the Forest Department for long-term lease of lands but is yet to get any response.

The country's annual demand for raw rubber is about 60,000 tonnes now, the sources at

Modhupur Rubber Development Zone office said. The production is 40,000 tonnes in BFIDC rubber estates. There are rubber gardens in greater Sylhet district also.

If BFIDC cultivates rubber in 20,000 acres of fallow land in Sherpur, the country's demand can be met, officials said.



PHOTO: STAR

12 die of diarrhoea in Bogra

Shortage of IV saline at Mohammed Ali Hospital

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Twelve persons died of diarrhoea in two weeks here, according to Acting Civil Surgeon office sources.

Hospital sources said, at least 170 diarrhoea patients were admitted to BMAH last week.

Two medical teams are working in Katur Basri area under Sadar upazila to combat the water-borne disease.

According to Acting Civil Surgeon office sources, more than 1,300 people were attacked with the disease in 12 upazilas including Sadar upazila.

Interest-free loans distributed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

A UK-based NGO, Muslim Aid Bangladesh (MAB) on Monday distributed Tk 4,000 interest-free loan to each of 50 poor families of Sadar upazila.

The loan was distributed at a function held at local Zilla Parishad auditorium under a micro-credit programme. Moulana Delwar Hossain presided over the function.

International Islamic University Director Prof Mohammad Ali Akbar, MAB Assistant Country Director Mahfuzur Rahman, Programme Co-ordinator Mohammad Obaidur Rahman and Programme Officer Nazmul Haque addressed the function.

Aman yield 5 lakh tonnes short of target in Barisal agricultural zone

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Aman production in 11 districts under Barisal agriculture zone is five lakh tonnes less than the target of 15.8 lakh tonnes this year due to recurring flood, official sources said.

The farmers alleged that most of the field-level DAE staff in different areas did not take up rehabilitation programmes in their areas in time. The most serious problem was scarcity of seedlings. Local DAE staff should be prepared seedbeds in time on high lands for supply of seedlings. But they did not do that, the farmers claimed.

Sources said the DAE should not go all out to offset the Aman shortfall by increasing the production of ARRI-Boro in the current season.

Barisal is considered as a rice bowl in the country and any shortfall also affects supplies in other regions.

SNAPS
Torture on woman: SI, cop closed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A

elite anti-crime force Kobra arrested Chuadanga Jayatabadi Chhara Dal (JCJD) General Secretary Sarifuzzaman Sijor Tuesday. Police said a Kobra team raided at his house at Bagapara in the town and nabbed him. He was an accused in several cases including some for extortion. He was being interrogated till filling this report yesterday.

20 injured in Patuakhali clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

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At least 20 persons were injured, five of them critically in a clash over damage of paddy field between two rival groups at Chakamoya village under Kalapara upazila on Tuesday. According to villagers, the clash ensued when six buffaloes of Adam Ali damaged aman field of Aminullah Howlader. Both the groups equipped with sticks locked in a clash. Critically injured Aminullah Howlader, 80, Abdul Latif, 35, Adam Ali, 65 Zafar Howlader, 20, and Kamal, 22, all of Chakamoya village were admitted to Kalapara Upazila Health Complex for treatment.

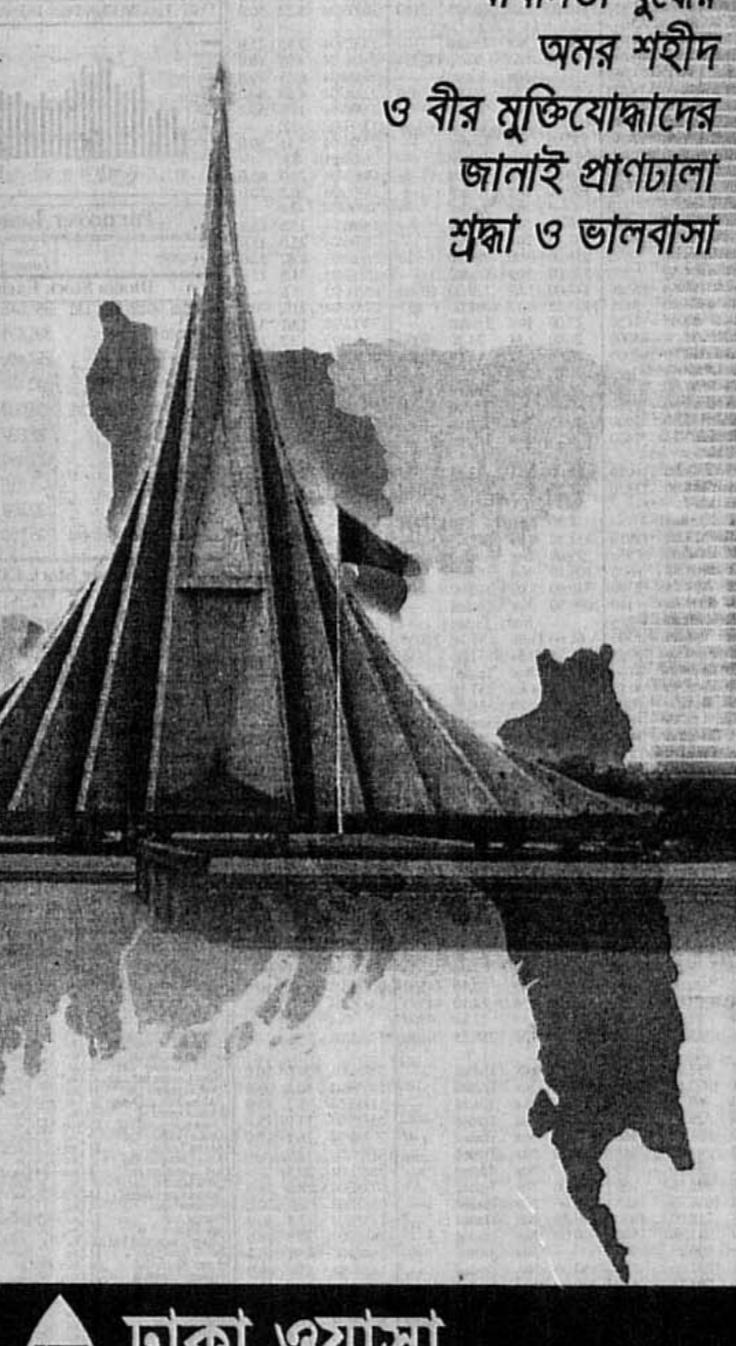
Body of youth recovered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

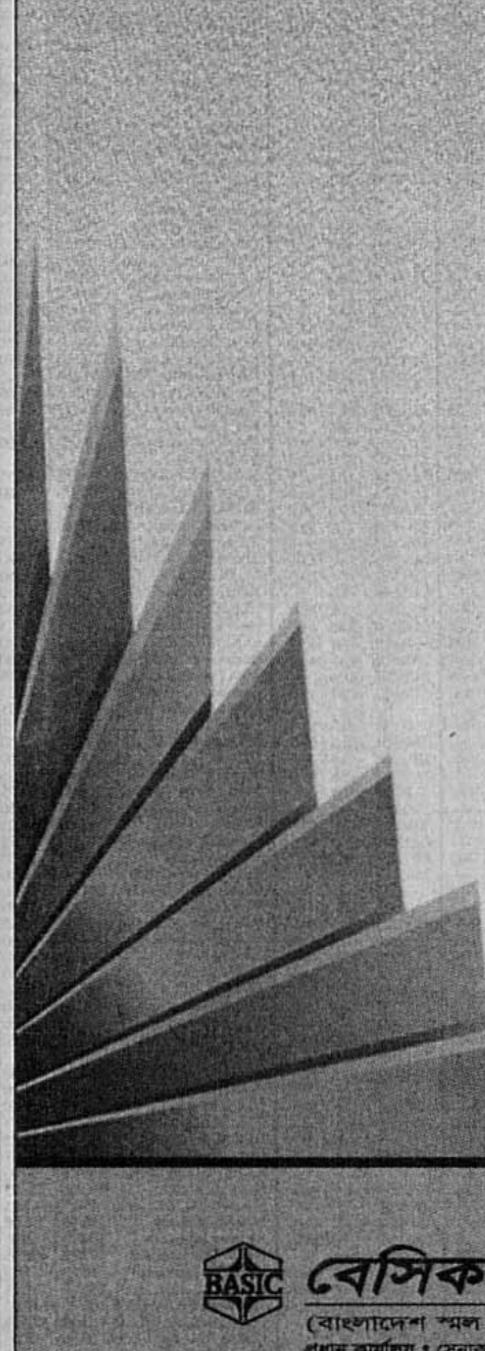
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Body of an unidentified youth was recovered from the Baba Shoe Centre here on Tuesday. According to police, the ill-fated young man was roasted alive in a devastating fire that broke out in the shoe centre on Thursday. Shoe and other valuable items worth Tk 3 crore were gutted completely. The cause of fire could not be known.

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বিজয় দিবসে

আমাদের সম্মানিত
প্রাহক, পৃষ্ঠপোষক ও উন্নয়নাদের জানাই
অন্তরিক্ষ শৈলোচ্চ



বেসিক ব্যাংক লিমিটেড

(বাংলাদেশ মূল ইত্তাবিদ্যা এবং কর্মসূচি ব্যাংক লিমিটেডের)
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