

Wildlife decreasing fast in Modhupur forests

Shrinking of forests, food shortage and poaching blamed

MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

With shrinking of forest areas, wild animals in Modhupur forests in Tangail district are decreasing.

Shortage of food, poaching and negligence of duties by the forest department officials are also responsible for the impairment of wild animals in the forests.

Many kinds of wild animals including leopard, wild buffalo, wild cow, wild hog, wild cock, peacock, spotted deer, jackal, wild cat, mongoose, wild goat, red mouth monkey, black mouth baboon, porcupine, squirrel, hare, pangolin, wild cat and bobcat etc were seen in Modhupur forests only three to four decades ago, said Forest Department officials and indigenous residents of Modhupur.

Besides, a large number of different varieties of birds including hawk, kite, vulture, mynah, nightingale, swallow, owl, pigeon, dove, skylark, sparrow, woodpecker, parakeet, parrot, different varieties of martin, dove and kingfisher were available in the forests.

There were also different varieties of reptiles and snakes including python and poisonous cobra, different varieties of frogs, numerous varieties of environment friendly worms including earthworm, ant and white ant, many varieties of butterflies in Modhupur forests.

Land grabbers have occupied total 20,000 acres out of 45,565 acres of forestland in Modhupur region by using forge documents. The grabbers, most of them local influential people, have raised different orchards including



PHOTO: STAR

Red-mouth monkey is one of the fast decreasing species in Modhupur forest.

banana and pineapple cutting and destroying forests, they said.

There is also 17,436 acres of forests under Modhupur Garh region in Mymensingh district.

The government raised a National Park covering 30,000 acres of forestlands in Modhupur region in 1962.

Forests in Modhupur region are shrinking fast due to indiscriminate cutting of trees, encroachment of forestlands, use of forestlands for rubber gardening and raising fruit orchards, forest department sources said.

Massive destruction of forests still continues while steps taken by the local administration and forest department are too ineffective, locals alleged.

Most of the wildlife of Modhupur forests including leopard, wild buffalo, wild cow, wild hog, peacock, wild goat, porcupine, hare and pangolin have already gone lost due to shrinking of forests, shortage of foods and poaching by a section of local residents.

Thousands of red mouth monkeys, black mouth baboons, hares,

squirrels, wild cocks, jackals and hundreds of spotted deer were seen in Modhupur forests several years ago.

But the number of these wild animals has greatly reduced following food crisis due to unusual decrease of trees and plants in Modhupur forests.

Often wild animals are seen moving near residential areas due to shortage of their foods in forests.

Many birds including hawk, mynah, nightingale, and parrot etc are seldom seen in Modhupur forests now. Besides, a variety of environment friendly worms, ants, butterflies and honey bees have been lost due to indiscriminate use of chemical fertiliser and harmful insecticides on banana and pineapple gardens in the forests.

Different kinds of snakes including pythons and cobras are also decreasing.

Police arrested Manik who was placed before a court later on.

When contacted, Kalmakanda Police Station officer-in-charge (OC) Abdul Wadud said Manik is a drug addict. He used to beat Hamida for dowry off on his head.

Over 70,000 people including 25,000 indigenous people living in forests under Modhupur Garh region in Tangail and Mymensingh districts, depend on the forest resources for their livelihood, forest departments sources said.

Most of the indigenous Garo and Coach people in Modhupur Garh, catch different animals including hare, monkey, baboon, squirrel, wild cock and porcupine in Modhupur forests to eat their meat, they said.

Local indigenous leaders, however, said a massive destruction of forests started during the 80s of the last century and the wildlife in Modhupur forests started decreasing since then.

Natural sal forests were destroyed to raise woodlot gardens with different foreign trees including eucalyptus in Modhupur forests in 1993, which caused acute food shortage for the wild animals and birds, they said, adding, "Huge environment friendly worms were destroyed as fire was set to clean forests."

When contacted, Rabindranath Adhikari, assistant forest keeper in Modhupur, told The Daily Star that they have been planting different kinds of local and wild fruit plants including mango, jackfruit, berry, guava, and haritaki, bhera and amloki species of myrobalan in the forests since 2003 to help the surviving wildlife of Modhupur forest, especially monkey, baboon, deer and squirrel.

Prompt action against the poachers cannot be taken due to shortage of manpower and logistics, he said.

"To save Modhupur forest resources including its wildlife, steps are to be taken to create livelihood for the local people and improve their economic condition. They should be made aware about the necessity of saving forests, its wildlife and biodiversity," he added.

Wife strangled by husband

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

A woman was allegedly strangled by her husband for dowry at Kalmakanda upazila town last night.

The dead has been identified as Hamida Banu, 22, wife of Manik Mia of Chandpur area in the upazila town.

Police recovered the body which was hanged with ceiling of Manik's room. Later, police sent the body to Netrakona Sadar Hospital for post-mortem.

Hamida, daughter of Akbar Ali married to Manik about eight years ago. During marriage, Hamida's father gave Tk 1 lakh to Manik as dowry, alleged victim's mother Hawa Begum, 50. Manik tortured her daughter to bring one lakh taka more as dowry from her parents, she said. About a week ago Manik threatened her with dire consequences for failure to bring dowry, alleged victim's mother. She claimed that Manik killed her daughter for failure to bring dowry. She also said that the killer hanged body of her daughter with ceiling of his room to divert the murder towards another direction.

Police arrested Manik who was placed before a court later on.

When contacted, Kalmakanda Police Station officer-in-charge (OC) Abdul Wadud said Manik is a drug addict. He used to beat Hamida for dowry off on his head.

Mystery shrouds death of police official's wife

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

Mystery shrouds the death of a police official's wife here Monday night.

The deceased was identified as Kalpana Biswas, wife of assistant sub-inspector (ASI) Shyamaprosad Biswas, in-charge of Laximpur police camp in Magura Sadar upazila.

Magura Sadar police recovered the body from her husband's official quarter in the early hours of Tuesday.

Police found the body hanging from cross-beam of kitchen.

The deceased's family members termed the death as 'murder' while her husband claimed it to be 'suicide'.

While talking to this correspondent, Kalpana's mother Anjoli Das complained that Shyamaprosad had strangled Kalpana. Several injury marks were also seen on her body, Anjoli claimed.

But, Shyamaprosad denied the allegation saying it a suicide committed by her mentally ill wife.

Magura Sadar Police Station officer-in-charge (OC) Sagir Mian said the fact will be unveiled after autopsy of the dead.

Kalpana's family members complained to this correspondent Shyamaprosad fell in extra-marital love with a lady at Madhukhali village in Faridpur district about five years ago which led to discontent in their conjugal life. Shyamaprosad very often used to torture Kalpana, they alleged.



PHOTO: STAR
Jatiya Abibasi Parishad forms a human chain at Shaheb Bazaar in Rajshahi yesterday demanding formation of a land commission for indigenous people.

Minor girl's kidney 'stolen' at Natore hospital

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A poor man has alleged that a kidney of his lone minor daughter was stolen at Natore Baptist-mid Mission Hospital where she underwent operation for removal of a tumor two years ago.

Day-labourer Md Sirajul Islam Sagar of Kodalia village in Atghoria upazila alleged that at a press conference held at Pabna Press Club yesterday, this was detected following an ultra-sonogram of Shyamoli done at Pabna Diagnostic Complex and Hospital on April 20 this year, he said.

Sagar said that he had admitted her daughter to the hospital for removal of a tumor as per decision of the hospital authorities on May 10, 2006. The operation was done

by Prof Bizoni Prova, he said. But after operation my child fell ill instead of recovery, he said. As her condition deteriorated, contacted the authorities of Pabna Diagnosis Complex and Hospital where they performed her ultra-sonogram on April 20, 2008. They found that the right kidney of the child was absent, Sagar informed.

The poor day-labourer has urged the authorities concerned to take action against the culprits who stole kidney of her innocent child.

Shyamoli's mother Sefal Khatun and other relatives were also present at the conference.

This correspondent tried to contact the hospital authorities several times yesterday for their comments through land phone and cell phone but in vain.

Fifteen children hurt as school house collapses

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

At least 15 children were injured as the roof of South Dhankali Saleha Memorial Registered Primary School in Kalapara collapsed on Tuesday.

Three of the injured, identified as Rahat, Sajid and Sirajul -- all students of class two -- were admitted to Kalapara Upazila Health Complex.

During class hours at about 10:00am on the day, the roof of a room collapsed and the children, mostly of class two, were injured, eyewitnesses said.

Low quality construction materials were used when school building was built four years ago, locals also present at the conference.

2 SIs suspended for extortion

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Two sub-inspectors (SI) of police of Rangpur were suspended yesterday on charge of extortion and unjustified detention of a farmer of Bujruk Hazipur under Baderganj upazila.

They are SI Azizul Islam of Baderganj Police station and SI Alfaz of Kotwali Police Station.

SI Azizul Islam of Baderganj Police Station arrested farmer Ahsan Ullah on June 1 and quizzed him for two days at the police station without any valid ground, sources said.

The victim, farmer Ahsan Ullah, lodged a case against Officer-in-Charge Pradip Kumar and SI Azizul Islam of Baderganj Police Station on June 21 with Rangpur Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court.

He alleged that he was arrested and kept detained at the police station for two days as he refused to give the police officers Tk 50,000.

The superintendent of police (SP) formed a probe body led by ASP Shahjada Mohammed Asaduzzaman and the body suggested taking action against the two SIs, ASP Asaduzzaman said.

Hold national election before local govt polls

AL leaders tell Thakurgaon meet

A CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Leaders of Awami League at their extended district meeting in Thakurgaon yesterday urged the caretaker government to hold general elections before local government polls.

At the meeting held at district Shilpakala Academy Auditorium in the town, they urged the government to withdraw the state of emergency and create a congenial atmosphere for free, fair and credible election.

They also urged the government to implement the six-point demand earlier announced by the central committee.

Criticising the government for failing to control price hike of essentials and ensure food security, they said common people enjoyed a happy time during the tenure of Awami League as prices of essentials were within their reach.

The speakers called on the government to cancel the decision to increase the price of fertilisers.

Former lawmaker district Awami League President Ramesh Chandra Sen chaired the meeting while former state minister and central committee Treasurer HM Ashiqur Rahaman, former lawmaker and central committee member Mostafizur Rahaman Fizer, Maj Gen (rtd) AMS Amin and PA to party chief Khaled Hasan attended as guests.

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Knowledge of Oracle database in order to be able to create SQL, SQL scripts to aid in verifying data, editing (VI), viewing files, setting up directories, etc.

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INNOCENT MOKOR CHAKMA'S IMPRISONMENT

Khagrachhari DC asks SP to take quick action

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Khagrachhari Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Shahad Hossein yesterday asked Superintendent of Police (SP) Qatiuzzaman Khan to take quick action about Mokor Kanti Chakma, who has been in jail for over two years, he said.

The incident violated human rights and legal justice and tarnished the prestige of police and administration as well, he added.

Additional Superintendent of Police Osman Gani admitted about the letter from Deputy Commissioner. Besides this he has also got another letter from his SP, which letter with daily star news cutting from police headquarter to investigate the matters again, he said.

He has started investigation and after completing it he will submit it to the higher authorities through the SP, he said.

Sealed tender shall have to be addressed to the Deputy General Manager, Common Services Division, Sonali Bank Limited, Head Office, Dhaka and dropped in the tender box in chamber No-608, 5th floor Sonali Bank Limited, Head office, Dhaka on 14 July 2008 up to 2.00 p.m.

Tender will be opened on 14 July 2008 at 3.00 p.m. in presence of the tenderers (if any) at conference room 2nd floor Sonali Bank Limited, Head office, Dhaka. If the tender cannot be received / opened on the scheduled date and time due to unavoidable circumstances the same will be received / opened as per time stated above on the next working day.

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