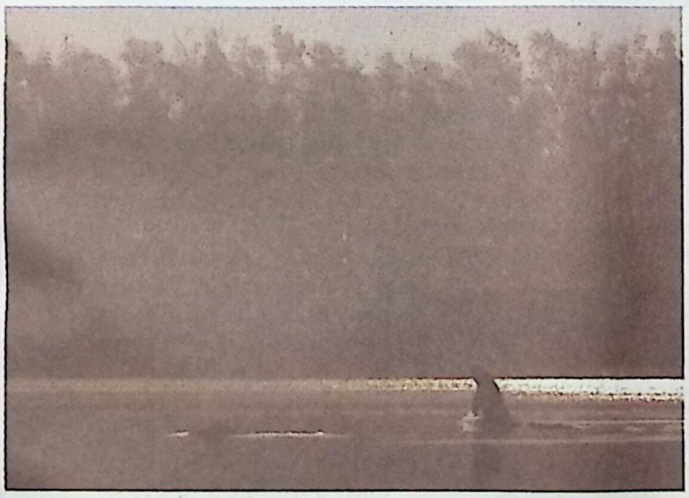
sea canyon waters where whales and dolphins inhabit in all seasons.

Mowgli thinks the protected areas should not exclude the fishermen who go there for their bread and butter, or rather, for their fish and salt. "We want a participatory, sustainable development, which will include all the stakeholders," he says. His organisation proposes three protected sites for *shushuks* and Irrawaddy dolphins centring on Katka. Another protected area he proposes for the Swatch, where four species of cetacean population can be found, of them three are dolphins and one is a whale. The first protected area that he proposes is a 12 kilometre channel from Ghagramari Forest Department Patrol Post to the Karamjal Patrol Post through Dhangmari creek on the Passur. The second area will stretch 15 kilometres from Jongra patrol post on the Passur to the confluence of Urubunia creek. The







A Group of Bryde's whale at the Swatch-of-No-ground.

third protected are in the Sundarbans will be 5-kilometeres long, starting from Dudmukhi post to the confluence of the Bhola River.

Besides monitoring the killings of dolphins, the government must also provide the fishermen with global positioning systems and depth sounders and train them their usage so that the fishermen can navigate safely. For their turn, the fishermen will safely release live dolphins that get caught up in the nets and collect samples from the dead animals to pass them on to the authorities concerned.

Creation of a protected area for the whales and dolphins seems a far cry for Mowgli and his team who have continually got the cold shoulder from the government. Apathy remains high. It so happened that many fishermen in the Sundarbans laughed at Mowgli and his crew when he asked them whether they had seen any whale in the water. Their laughter turned into smiles of recognition when he showed them some photos of Bryde's whale. He says, "Suddenly they screamed, 'We have seen it many a time'; imagine if this is the case of the people who live half their lives in water how apathetic the townies will be to the plight of the dolphins?"

To save the threatened life of the marine mammals the BCDP is organising an exhibition titled 'Introducing Whales and Dolphins of Bangladesh', the aim of which is to make people aware of the plight of these animals. "The interactive exhibition aims at introducing Bangladesh's cetacean diversity and the ongoing conservation efforts. Through photographs, film shows, games, and models we hope to create a sense of pride and foster support for the conservation of these unique aquatic animals," Mowgli says.

Introducing Whales and Dolphins of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Cetacean Diversity Project
Bangladesh Shishu Academy, Dhaka
October 9-12, 2008