

KAPTAL LAKE

Number of guest birds on the decline

SHANTIMOY CHAKMA, Rangamati

Different species of migratory birds add beauty to the Kaptal Lake in winter, attracting the tourists with their melodious chirping every year.

The birds hover above the lake and its adjoining areas and stay there until beginning of summer to give visitors a magnificent sight. But, the number of migratory birds in the Kaptal Lake area is declining during the last few years.

Bird experts and environmentalists said increase in population, random poaching by hunters, deforestation, forest burn, destruction of habitations, increase in irrigation for agriculture, shortage of water bodies, inadequate rain, decrease in water level, use of pesticides on the croplands, food shortage, lack of conservation programmes and limitation of perching places have attributed to the decrease in guest birds.

There is no sanctuary for birds in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), although there is a lone sanctuary for wildlife under the CHT North Forest Division at Pablkhalu in Rangamati.

Guest birds are mostly seen in the water bodies at Hazaribagh, Balukhali, Longudu, Mynee, Bogachatar, Betchhari, Maishchhari, Hazachhara, Bilchhara, Dighalchhari, Bhusonchhara, Baranachhari, Kachalong and Sazekin in the lake.

More than 650 species of foreign birds migrates from



Migratory birds at Kaptal Lake.

Siberian region to some South Asian countries, including Bangladesh. Of them, eleven species of foreign birds are found in CHT, forest department sources said.

The birds that migrate from Siberian region to the CHT are bareheaded goose, Asian opendill, racket tailed, bronzed drongo, pintail, common teal, northern shovler, tufted poacher, ruddy sheduck, black tailed godwit, western curlew, white wagtail, white winglet duck, oystercatcher, common snipe, sandpiper and plover, they said.

There are some other local migratory birds too that dwell in the bushes in the CHT region. They are -- cotton teal (Balihans), lesser whistling duck (Chhoto Saralihans) and large whistling duck (Bara Saralihans), brown shrike, flycatcher, stonechat, pipe bushchat and kestrel, FD sources said.

Bird lovers said local waterfowls and migratory birds are being endangered for lack of sanctuaries and measures to conserve them by the forest department.

Md Sanaullah Patwary, deputy conservator of forest in Rangamati, said water sources and plantation of trees will have to increase in the lake areas to create habitations for birds, otherwise the number of birds will reduce remarkably in future.

Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of CHT North Uttam Kumar Saha said they have no programmes at the moment to conserve the migratory birds but always ask verbally the people not to poach guest birds as part of their motivational programme.

Conservator RK Mojumder said migratory birds are declining due to indiscriminate poaching and a sharp increase in localities in the lake areas.

He said awareness campaign among the people can help reduce the hunting of guest birds.

Bus driver's negligence shatters dreams of eight families

Bandarban road crash kills 7 college students, two guardians and injures over 30

DWAIPAYAN BARUA

Negligence and inefficiency of a driver and an unfit vehicle have shattered the dreams of eight families and left 25 other families in total disarray.

Seven students and two guardians were killed and over 30 students injured in a road accident at Bandarban on February 12 when a picnic bus of Economics Department of Chittagong College. The bus skidded off the road and fell into a 500-foot deep ditch at Kasapara in the district. Most of the dead or injured were the 3rd year students of the department.

The victims' families demanded the government take strict measures to prevent such accidents again.

"It was nothing but negligence and inefficiency of the bus driver occurred the accident, alleged Ratan Kanti Mallik, father of the victim Papri Mallik. He said the buses hired for the trip usually ply another route and the drivers are not familiar with the zigzag roads of the hilly district.

Chittagong College Principal Prof Abu Jafar Chowdhury said the five buses hired for the picnic usually ply Chittagong-Cox's Bazar route.

Dipankar Mutsuddy, a guardian, said government should take measures such as constructing safety walls at the risky spots on the roads in three hilly districts to avoid such accidents.

Ratan was talking to this correspondent on the college campus the following afternoon immediately after the body of his daughter was brought from Bandarban Hospital.

He said the accident has shattered our long cherished dream of seeing our daughter in an MA in a moment.

The family of Santa Chakrabarty, another victim, remained overwhelmed in grief. Santa always thought of doing something to help her

father, a staff of Bangladesh Railway and the lone earner of a six-member family.

Of four daughters, Shanta was the elder one who dreamt of becoming a teacher, who was qualified in the recently held Government Primary School Teacher Recruitment Test, said her father in a choking voice at his residence at Ambagan Railway Colony.

Chandan Barua, father of Kapil Barua Sunny, has become ill losing his only child. Sunny was a performer of a local band group Trondaj and was liked by all of his friends for his jolly nature.

Sahed, Anik, Nipun and Rubel, friends of Sunny, said they were together on the previous night and performed at a function in the city. It is unbelievable that Sunny is no more, they said.

The injured will also have to bear the injuries and the shocking memory for long.

At least 25 students have been admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) with injuries after the accident. Of them, six are undergoing treatment at the Neuro Surgery ward, six at orthopaedics ward, six at casualty ward and one at Intensive Care Unit (ICU) while others were given first aid.

A few students are also

undergoing treatment at different private clinics in the port city.

Condition of 3rd year students Rashed and Tuhin at CMCH is still critical. Rashed who could not regain his sense after a major operation until Monday is under close observation at neuro surgery ward. His mother Manjula Begum is anxiously waiting for her son's recovery.

Tuhin got one of his legs broken in the accident but doctors could not go through operation as he was in comma at the ICU.

Lying on a bed at the neuro surgery ward, Amzad Hossain Sujan said he cannot not raise legs since he feels no sense in lower portion of his body.

Dr Joydip at the ward said Sujan got hurt in his spinal cord. His uncle Helal Uddin said better treatment is needed for the recovery Sujan.

Afsana Jannat, undergoing treatment at CMCH casualty ward, said their bus stopped while ascending a hilly road and was coming down back dangerously. The driver tried to stop the bus from going down but failed, she added.

"I might be recovered from the injuries in a few weeks but it is difficult for me to forget the shocking memory of the accident," Afsana said.



Students and teachers of Chittagong College bring out a mourning procession from the campus on Saturday.

the week that was

Education materials distributed

Prize giving ceremony of the Improvement of Living Standard of Hardcore Poor Project (ILSHO) of Caritas, a non-government organisation, was held at Sandwip upazila on Saturday.

Lawmaker from the constituency Mostafa Kamal Pasha was the chief guest at the ceremony with the organisation's Chittagong Regional Director James Gomez in the chair at the upazila complex auditorium.

Sports and education materials were distributed among 224 children from hardcore poor families at the function. The chief guest handed over the prizes among the winners of the annual sports.

Caritas Bangladesh Development Director Francis Atul Sarker, Chittagong Caritas RPEC Member Philip D' Rozario, upazila Vice Chairman Dilruba Shafiq, freedom fighter ABM Siddiqur Rahman and representatives from different NGOs attended the ceremony.

Meanwhile, 21 poor river-erosion affected families have been rehabilitated in two cluster villages under the project the same day. The Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Khan Mohammad Nurul Islam attended the rehabilitation programme.

CCC Computer Institute fair held

Speakers here on Monday said all should come forward to materialise the dream of the 'digital Bangladesh' with a view to driving the country towards prosperity.

They were addressing the inaugural ceremony of 5th fair of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) Computer Institute and Technology on the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB) Chittagong Centre premises.

Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) Computer Science Department Prof Dr Mohammad Kaikobad was the chief guest at the ceremony with Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury in the chair.

The speakers emphasised the need for information technology-based education to build proper leadership.



Industries Minister Dillip Barua gives away a medal to a student at the annual prize giving ceremony of Ispahani Public School and College in the port city on Friday.

Chittagong University former pro-vice chancellor Abu Yusuf Alam, CCC Chief Executive Mohammad Shamsuddoha, Chief Education Officer Prof Rawshan Akter Hanif, Education Standing Committee Chairman and Councillor Shahidul Alam and the Institute Director Mohammad Anis

Ahmed were present at the ceremony.

Khulshi Mart festival held

The third festival of Khulshi Mart, a

superstore at city's Zakir Hossain Road, was held on Friday.

Chittagong Press Club President Abu Sufian inaugurated the festival while Chittagong Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Monwara Hakim Ali, Chamber Vice President Gulshan Ali, the superstore

Chairman Mohammad Ali, Chief Executive Officer Mohammad Sarfaraz Ali and other officials of the store were present.

Khulshi Mart also organised a painting competition for the children.

Later, the guests handed over prizes among the winners of the painting competition and crests and gifts among 10 customers.

Canadian team visits Mostafa Industrial Complex

A delegation led by Canadian High Commissioner in Bangladesh Robert McDougall visited the Mostafa Industrial Complex of Mostafa Group of Industries at Bhatiar under Sitakunda upazila here on Tuesday.

The team visited different production units and ship-breaking yard of the company and expressed their satisfaction over the production and ship-breaking activities.

Mostafa Group Managing Director

and Chief Executive Zahir Uddin, Project Consultant Engineer Mohammad Hafiz Rashid, Plant Manager Anwar Hossain and Project Development Senior Manager Mohammad Ali Mansur accompanied the delegates.

HP for enhanced IT service

With emphasis on enhanced IT service and facilities Hewlett-Packard (HP), world's largest technology company based in the US, held a meeting with its distributors and resellers here on Wednesday.

HP AEC General Manager Philip Lau at a meeting at a city hotel gave guidelines and directions to offer improved service providing wide variety of configurations and support as per the customers' choice.

He also briefed about the features, facilities, future and other aspects of IT products offered by HP. HP Country Business Manager Imrul Hossain Bhuiyan and Channel Business Manager Alamgir Kabir also spoke at the meeting.



Bodhan Abritti Parishad takes out a colourful procession marking Basanta Utsab on the first day of Bengla month Falgun on February 13.

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Artistes perform songs at the 12th Jatiya Uchchanga Sangeet Sammelon organised by Sadarang Uchchanga Sangeet Parishad at Muslim Institute Hall in the port city on Thursday.

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