



The baby gharial netted from Padma River on Wednesday, and the recently caught fishing cat at Rajshahi Zoo.



PHOTO: STAR

Baby gharial caught from Padma lands in Rajshahi Zoo

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Young one of gharial, one of the most critically endangered crocodilians on the globe and a near extinct species in Bangladesh, was captured from River Padma in Rajshahi on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, a new fishing cat was brought to the Rajshahi Zoo recently after Atghoria Upazila Nirbahi Officer rescued the animal that was caught and injured by villagers.

After fishermen netted the two and a half feet-long baby gharial from Gohomabona under Godagari upazila on Wednesday morning, local youths Ariefuzzaman and Ismail took it and handed over to Rajshahi Zoo, said Forhad Uddin, veterinary surgeon of the zoo.

"It is too early to understand the baby gharial's gender. Male gharials have a knot on their snouts, and the knot develops in one year. It is being fed dead fishes

as per food chart prescribed by Dhaka Zoo," he said.

The creature is feigning dead in human presence, and seldom wandering in water as it is kept in the cage of tortoise, said Nawshad Ali, a staff of the zoo.

With its long and slender snout and needle-sharp interlocking teeth, the gharial has dark spots and cross-stripes against a light grey background. Its eyes are green, frosted with black.

"Size of the gharial tells that it would not be more than a couple of months old. The recovery indicates that breeding adults of the fish-eating reptiles are still surviving in the wild. A similar gharial, also captured from Padma River in January 2004, was sent to a wildlife organisation in Cox's Bazar," said zoologist Dr Altaf Hossain, also a former vice chancellor of Rajshahi University (RU).

RU Zoology teacher ABM Mohsin

wondered how these reptiles were surviving amidst massive sand-lifting, human disturbances, intense fishing, siltation and pollution.

"The recent accidental captures of gharials from the Padma suggest the river basin stretching from Godagari to Yusufpur in Rajshahi was virtually a breeding place for gharials that were regularly seen nesting on the banks till the early 90s," he said.

The gharial existed for 2,000 million years and is classified in its own taxonomic subfamily, Gavialis (Hindi word ghariyal or crocodile) gangeticus (of the Ganges River), say Internet sources.

Now it has been included in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red Data Book for endangered species headed for extinction. Rajshahi Zoo now has two grown up female gharials.

Seven deer, venison recovered

UNB, Satkhira

Forest staff seized seven deer alive and 25 kilogram venison from a boat in Satkhali area of Arpangashia River in Shyamnagar upazila in Sundarbans early Wednesday.

Rajesh Chakma, Assistant Conservator of Forest of the Satkhira Range, said acting on secret information they conducted a raid in the area at about 2am and recovered the deer and venison from the boat coming from the deep forest.

Sensing the presence of the forest guards, the poachers fled the scene leaving behind the boat. The deer are now under treatment at Burigoalini forest station in Shyamnagar upazila.

A case was filed.

SNIPPETS

AL men arrested in Bogra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Bogra Sadar police on Wednesday arrested three Awami League leaders and activists and recovered phensidyl and sharp weapons. The arrestees are district convenor of Bangabandhu Sainik League Asadur Rahman Sumon, 34, Gaziul Haq, 45 and Moniruzzaman Monzu, 36. All of them were sent to jail hajat yesterday morning. Police said, acting on a tip off, a team in a raid recovered a bag full of phensidyl, a few sharp axes from Puran Bogra area in the town at around 9.30pm on Wednesday. Officer-in-charge (OC) Jahangir Hossain told journalists that a good number of AL leaders and workers later thronged the police station for release of the arrestees. A high official of Bogra police said that a number of lawmakers including a top leader of AL Bogra district unit were also putting pressure on the OC to release the arrested party leaders and workers.

10 BCL leaders get bail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

The Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court yesterday granted bail to 10 Dighinala upazila Chhatra League (BCL) leaders who were accused of attacking and injuring police men on November 8. Chief Judicial Magistrate (CJM) Md. Ikhtiarul Islam Mollik granted the bail following submission of bail prayers by Advocate Md. Nasir Uddin Ahmed. Police sources said, a group of 10-15 BCL cadres led by its thana unit president Mohammad Zahangir Alam attacked police station and injured sub-inspector Mohammad Mizanur Rahman and constable Mostafa Mia at 10.30pm on November 8 during a clash between BCL, BNP leaders.

Schoolgirl commits 'suicide'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Mystery shrouds death of a schoolgirl on Wednesday night at her relative's house at Paradise Para in the town. The victim was identified as Mousumi Akter, 11, daughter of Montaz Ali of Alishakanda village. Family sources said Mousumi, a class V student of Town Primary School, had been living at her aunt Jahanara's house for the last four years. Jahanara went to Dhaka on Wednesday morning leaving Mousumi in the house alone. On her return from Dhaka Jahanara found that Mousumi committed suicide leaving a chit holding nobody responsible for her death, family sources claimed. The family members, however, could not give any satisfactory reason behind her suicide.

4 BCL men hurt in clash

A CORRESPONDENT, Feni

Feni district Chhatra League vice president Abdur Rasul, 28, and three other leaders of the AL student front were beaten up by a rival group in Parshuram upazila yesterday noon and on Wednesday night. Three of the injured have been admitted to local upazila health complex. A written complaint was lodged with Parshuram police station against 10 people including the upazila Chhatra League president in connection with this incident. Police and witnesses said, three BCL workers Md Alamgir, 26, Lokman Hossain, 27 and Md Yusuf, 25, were beaten up by a rival faction yesterday noon because of previous enmity. Alamgir and Lokman were admitted to Parshuram upazila health complex while Yusuf was handed over to police as he was accused in a case.

Schoolteacher murdered

UNB, Jamalpur

A schoolteacher was stabbed to death at Sonakora in Sadar upazila on Wednesday night. The deceased was identified as Motiur Rahman of Boroikora village of Sadar upazila. He was a teacher of Joka Girls' High School and also owner of a pharmacy. Police said when Motiur was returning home from his pharmacy at Beruakhali bazaar at night a gang of criminals stabbed him, leaving him dead on the spot.

Firearm seized, 5 arrested

UNB, Comilla

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) members seized a light gun (LG) and arrested five people from a workshop at Paduar bazaar in Sadar Dakkhin upazila on Wednesday afternoon. The arrestees were identified as workshop owner Abul Khayer, workers Saifullah, Bashir Uddin, Milon and Abdul Awal. Acting on secret information, a team of Rab-11 raided Momin Engineering Workshop at about 2pm and held them along with the firearm. They also seized some arms making materials from the workshop.

Akhaura has its war memorial after 38 yrs

Tangail, Khushtia were freed on this day

STAR NATIONAL DESK

For the first time in 38 years of independence, the people of Akhaura upazila are going to celebrate the Victory Day on the premises of a Liberation War memorial this year.

Tangail and Khushtia districts will observe today as the day of liberation from the Pakistan occupation forces in 1971.

Awami League (AL) lawmaker Md Shah Alam formally inaugurated Muktijuddha Smriti Soudha at Akhaura upazila ground and Shaheed Minar at Akhaura Shaheed Smriti College ground yesterday as Akhaura Poursabha constructed the monuments under a Tk 20 lakh project, reports our Brahmanbaria correspondent.

On the occasion, a ceremony was held with Abdul Gaffer Kan, vice-principal of Akhaura Shaheed Smriti College, in the chair.

Among others, AM Md Ishaque, the founder principal of Akhaura Shaheed Smriti College, Upazila Parishad Chairman Sheikh Burhan Uddin, upazila AL Secretary Gazi Abdul Matin and upazila Jatiya Party President Nazrul Haque Dhanu addressed the function.

Several local people said now they will celebrate the Victory Day with great enthusiasm as their long-felt demand for Muktijuddha Smriti Soudha has been fulfilled.

Our Tangail Correspondent reports: Victorious freedom fighters entered Tangail town and took control of the region as the defeated Pakistani army retreated from the district on

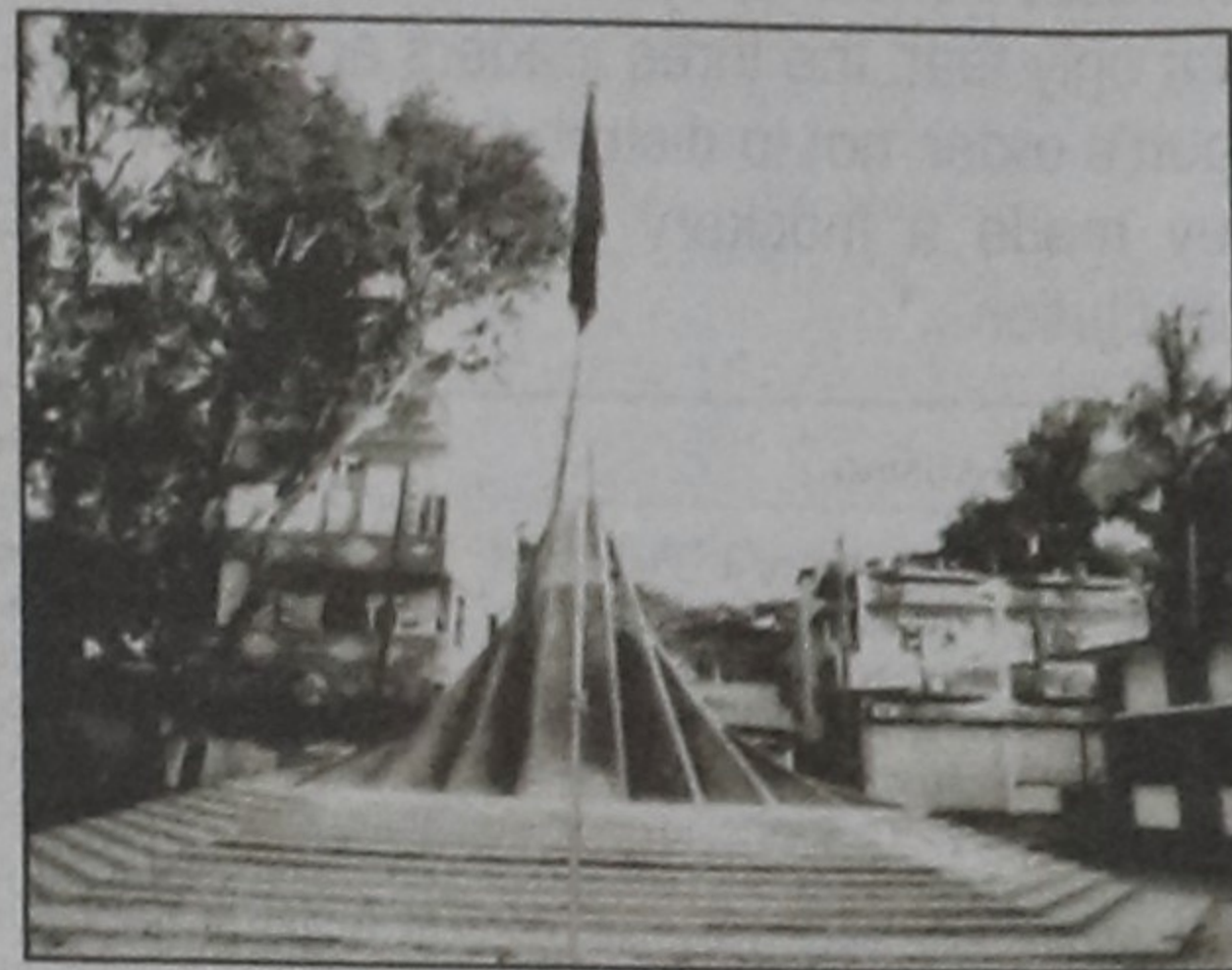


PHOTO: STAR

With inauguration of the lone Muktijuddha Smriti Soudha in Akhaura upazila of Brahmanbaria district yesterday, the locals will now celebrate the coming Victory Day in a more jubilant mood.

this day in 1971.

Earlier on December 10, about 2000 paratroopers of Indian allied forces landed in Poullee area near Tangail town.

Throughout the Liberation War, the brave freedom fighters of Kaderia Bahini, formed and led by Abdul Kader Siddiqui Bir Uttam, took part in a number of fights with the Pakistani forces at different places in the district.

On January 24 in 1972, Kaderia Bahini submitted to the Bangladesh government around 14,000 arms in presence of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on the ground of Bindubasini Boys High School in Tangail town.

Different political and cultural organisations have arranged various programmes including placing wreaths at the Shaheed Smriti Soudha, colourful rally, discussion

meetings and cultural functions on Shaheed Minar premises marking Tangail liberation day.

Our Kushtia Correspondent adds: On December 11 in 1971, heroic freedom fighters freed the district from Pakistani occupation forces after a three-day-long battle.

The district saw 22 fights between the freedom fighters and the Pak army from April 16 to December 11 when at least 46 freedom fighters borrowed martyrdom.

Abdur Rouf Choudhury, the then sub-divisional chief of freedom fighters, led the fights under the supervision of Sector Commander Lt Col Abu Osman Chowdhury.

Different organisations have chalked out programmes to recall sacrifice of the valiant sons of the soil on the day.



PHOTO: STAR

Sushasaner Janno Procharabihjan forms a human chain at Nirala Intersection in Tangail town yesterday demanding steps to save Louhajang River from encroachment and pollution.

Save Louhajang river from land grabbers, polluters

Human chain in Tangail demands

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A human chain followed by a rally was held in Tangail town yesterday demanding immediate steps to save Louhajang river from the land grabbers and industrial pollution.

Tangail district unit of Sushasaner Janno Procharabihjan (Supro), a non-governmental organisation, arranged the programmes at Nirala intersection on the occasion of the World Human Rights Day.

Hundreds of people including students, professionals and representatives from different non-governmental organisations joined the human chain. They also held rally on the local Shaheed Minar premises.

Speakers at the rally welcomed the government's move to save rivers across the country and demanded steps

by local administration to free Louhajang river, flowing through Tangail town, from grabbers and polluters.

They alleged that a number of influential people have already occupied the shoreline of Louhajang river turning it into a narrow canal. The encroachers have farmed vegetables, raised fruits orchards and constructed concrete structures there to justify their rights, they alleged.

Citing example they said, a certain textile mills in Taratia and a yarn dying firm in Tangail BSCIC estate have been polluting the river water by releasing harmful untreated industrial and textile wastes for long.

The aforesaid textile mills have an effluent treatment plant (ETP) but its authorities never run it to cut costs while the yarn

dying firm has just started their ETP. These all are happening under the nose of the local administration and nothing was done to save the river from the pollution and grabbers so far, they alleged.

They demanded immediate move to ensure the natural flow of the river water.

Khandakar Nazimuddin, district unit president of Supro, presided the rally.

Among others, Tangail upazila chairman Abdur Rashid Lebu, secretary of district unit Supro Manju Rani Pramanik and senior researcher of Bangladesh Environment Lawyers Association (BELA) Somnath Lahiri spoke at the rally.

Later, a memorandum was submitted to the minister of water resources through Tangail deputy commissioner in this regard.

Tale of 18 'wealthy landless'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

At least 18 well-off people of Ulipur village under Gobindaganj upazila of the district have acquired ten acres of khas land identifying themselves as landless peasants.

The landless people of the village yesterday submitted a memorandum to upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) demanding cancellation of the allocation of government khas land, mostly waterbody.

Local lawmaker Engineer Monowar Hossain Chowdhury (Gobindaganj constituency) has asked the UNO to look into the matter and take necessary steps in this regard.

The landless alleged the well-off people,

who concealed their real identity, are involved in business and other professions and 15 of them belong to Jamaat.

They also alleged that the authorities concerned allocated the land, taking bribes from the so-called landless peasants and made five deeds on October 20, 12 deeds on October 25 and one deed on October 27.

The landless people are fishermen and had been fishing on the water body namely Satebel for long. Recently, the allottees imposed restrictions on fishing in the water body.

When contacted, Gobindaganj Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Abdul Wahed said he will investigate the matter and take necessary measures.

Workshop on heritage opens in Bogra today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

A four-day workshop on "Formulation of Draft Outline of National Plan for Management of Cultural Heritage of Bangladesh" begins at Mahasthangrah Museum site in Bogra today.

Department of Archaeology under the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and Unesco, Dhaka, have jointly arranged the workshop, aiming at capacity building of national staffs, assessment of impact of previous workshop held in May this year and formulating draft outline of national plan for management of cultural heritage.

Dr Malama Meleisea, director and country representative, Unesco, will join the workshop as the chief guest on the opening day with Md Saiful Islam, director general (DG) of the Department of Archaeology in the chair.

Former DG of the Department Archaeology Dr Shafiqul Alam, Prof Sayed Kamrul Ahsan of archaeology department of Jahangirnagar University (JU), Prof Mozammel Haque of JU archaeology department and former Programme officer of Unesco, Dhaka, Shahida Pervin will join the workshop as resource persons.

At least 15 scholars will attend the workshop from different sectors and take part in group discussion.

Alliance Française de Dhaka

Session starts: 4th January'10

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Children Course

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