

Wild elephant found dead in Banskhali eco-park

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A female wild elephant was found dead in Banskhali eco-park in Chittagong yesterday early morning.

Abdul Matin, in-charge of the eco-park, said local people informed him of the incident.

The elephant was nearly 70 years old.

He, later, informed the upazila livestock office and the local forest department officials of the matter.

The livestock officials and Matin said the elephant might have been electrocuted there. There were three injury marks on its body.

An autopsy of the elephant was scheduled to be conducted by the livestock officials to ensure the main reason behind the death.

Missing youth's family seeks govt's help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Family members of a university student, who went missing in the capital four months back, yesterday urged the government to find out his whereabouts.

The victim, Md Mahbudul Hasan Saikat, 20, went missing on July 7 while he was returning to his family residence in Dhamondi from Bhuiya Academy where he studied, they said.

Family members organised a press conference at Jatiya Press Club yesterday, seeking help in tracing out Saikat.

Md Rafiqul Islam Mollah, the victim's father, said Saikat went out from home around noon on the day to attend a class and, later around 7:00pm, he informed over phone that he was on the way to home.

"But four months have passed, he did not come home," said Mollah, adding that, "We searched many places to find him, but failed."

Saikat's family have contacted Rapid Action Battalion and filed a case with Joydebpur Police Station in Gazipur in this regard.

Police arrested their private car driver, Nurunnabi, in this connection, said Mollah.

Nurunnabi admitted to police that he abducted Saikat in exchange of Tk 2 lakh and handed him over to some criminals in Tangail, he said, quoting police.

"But police are yet to find my son," he added.

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni receives her Pakistani counterpart Hina Rabbani Khar at the foreign ministry on the latter's arrival in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR



One-third of urban slum girls get married before 15 Says study

UNB, Dhaka

One-third of girls in urban slums get married before the age of 15 years while about 61 percent of marriages in the slums are arranged and 31 percent involve dowry, says a recent study.

The study found that 30 percent of the women were not asked for consent in their marriage and 28 percent did not want to marry.

It also identified a number of reasons behind child marriage -- acute poverty, insecure living arrangements, frequent forced evictions, weak social network, absence of civic society institutions and poor public services.

The study, "Addressing Sexual and Reproductive Rights and Violence against Adolescent Girls and Women in Urban Bangladesh" was jointly conducted by Population Council and International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh.

Although a common phenomenon in the country, child marriage is highly prevalent in the capital's slums, threatening a huge number of adolescent girls with severe health risks each year.

Despite considerable progress in gender equality indicators in education and health, child marriage and gender-based violence remain significant impediments to achieving gender equity in Bangladesh.

The situation is considerably worse for women living in urban slums. The study depicted some real scenarios of child marriage in urban slums.

Mariam Akter shifted to the capital's Malibagh slum at the age of 10 with her family from Mymensingh district in 2007.

This year, Mariam's family arranged her marriage with a youth without her consent and she was compelled to get married.

Mariam said she was not willing to get married before reaching adulthood, but she was forced to marry the youth for the sake of her family's reputation as her father had arranged the marriage.

"Our society does not support girls to resist such child marriage. Now I am fac-

ing a number of complications," she said.

Wishing anonymity, Mariam's father said he was facing hard times in maintaining his six-member family.

"I thought that since I had to arrange my daughter's marriage either today or tomorrow, I arranged it earlier. Now I think I was wrong," he said.

Another victim of child marriage, Bilkis Begum, a resident of Mohakhali's Karail Slum, grew up in slums.

After her father's death in 2009, her mother arranged her marriage with a boy of the same slum. She was aged 14 years at that time.

"I gave birth to an underweight child. As I got married before becoming an adult, both my child and I have been facing many health problems," Bilkis said.

The study's researchers said although laws were there to punish those responsible for the marriage of girls under 18 years of age, such incidents occurred with over 60 percent of the country's girls.

They recommended undertaking legal and policy reforms to address gender-based violence and providing financial support to poor families to check child marriage in urban slums.

Sajeda Amin, a researcher of Population Council, said poverty was significantly associated with multiple marriages, limiting females' consent and choice in marriage, while early marriage was associated with less consent, more dowry demand and multiple marriages.

Arifa S Sharmin, communications manager of Unicef Bangladesh, said girls in slums grow in an inhuman condition and live with insecurity and amid fear of forced eviction.

"As adolescent girls are deprived of their rights in urban slums, they are compelled to get married around 13 to 14 years of age and become mothers even before reaching 15," she said.

Sharmin stressed the importance of taking integrated steps, involving the government and non-government organisations, to improve livelihood of slum dwellers and help check child marriage.

Sunil will live in hearts of Bangalees Say cultural personalities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Indian well-known poet and novelist Sunil Gangopadhyay will be living in the hearts of people as long as Bangla language exists.

Poets and cultural personalities said this at a commemoration meeting organised by Jatiya Kabita Parishad (National Poetry Council) of Bangladesh at the Central Shaheed Minar in the capital yesterday.

Speaking on the occasion, eminent poet and playwright Syed Shamsul Haq recalled Sunil's contribution to Bangla literature.

Sunil was a hundred percent poet, he said.

"His [Sunil] works are shining like stars in our sky. And it will do so in future," he added.

Cultural personality Ramendu Majumdar, poets Kazi Rozi, Golam Kuddus, General Secretary of Sammilita Sangskritik Jote Hasan Arif and poet Rafique Azad, among others, spoke at the programme.

Earlier, a minute of silence was observed as a tribute to Sunil Gangopadhyay.

On October 23, the stalwart of Bangla literature died of cardiac arrest.

Road crashes kill seven

METRO DESK

Seven people were killed and two others injured in separate road crashes in Rangpur, Panchagarh, Sirajganj and Chapainawabganj on Thursday and yesterday.

Our Rangpur correspondent reports, three rickshaw passengers were killed as a bus ran the rickshaw over in Sheikherhat area of Badarganj upazila in Rangpur district on Thursday night.

The deceased were identified as Abdul Halim, 50, of Barura village in Nilphamari; Rezwan, 30, of Santashpur village in Badarganj upazila; and Hamidul, 48, of Shalbagan village in the upazila.

Police said the speeding bus crushed the rickshaw on Sheikherhat Bridge at about 8:30pm when the driver lost control over the steering.

Halim died on the spot while Rezwan succumbed to his injuries at Rangpur Medical College Hospital on Thursday night and Hamidul at the same hospital yesterday morning.

Badarganj police said they seized the bus from the spot but its driver and helper managed to flee.

Our Thakurgaon correspondent reports, a freedom fighter died instantly as he fell down onto Panchagarh-Dhaka highway after his motorbike hit a dog in front of Shaheed Police Smriti School near Karatoya Bridge in Panchagarh town yesterday.

The victim was identified as Md Rashidul Islam, 63, son of late Jasimuddin of Mirgarh village in Panchagarh sadar upazila.

In another accident, a college student died instantly on Tunirhat-Haribhasha road when his motorbike collided head-on with a battery-run three-wheeler at Majhpara village in Panchagarh sadar upazila around 1:00pm yesterday.

The victim was Sujan, 23, a student of Tunirhat Degree College, of Debijadu village in the upazila.

Our Sirajganj correspondent reports, a boy was killed as a Sirajganj-bound bus of Palky Paribahan ran him over while he was crossing the road in KG mor area under Enayetur Police Station of Sirajganj district yesterday noon.

The deceased was identified as Walid Hossain, 7, son of Ramjan Ali of same area.

Agitating people blocked the road for a while.

Our Chapainawabganj correspondent reports, a motorcyclist was killed and two co-riders were injured when a human hauler hit the motorcycle on Chapainawabganj-Sonamasjid land port highway at Kansat of Shibganj upazila on Thursday night.

The deceased was identified as Rabiul Awal Saju, 32, son of Khairul Islam of Kansat village in Shibganj upazila.

The injured were identified as Arif and Zasim of the same village.

Police and locals said the accident occurred at around 1:30pm, killing the man and injuring the two.

The injured were taken to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.



Police stay vigilant on the streets around Baitul Mukarram National Mosque in the capital yesterday after the Juma prayers to stave off any violence by Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Chhatra Shibir. Jamaat-Shibir men recently attacked police across the country.

PHOTO: STAR

Humayun remembered through photo exhibition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A good number of fans and admirers of the late eminent litterateur Humayun Ahmed again expressed their love for the popular Bangalee playwright while visiting a photo exhibition in the capital yesterday.

Anyadin, a popular magazine, organised the eight-day photo exhibition on Humayun Ahmed at Gallery Chitrak marking the legendary filmmaker's 64th birth anniversary on November 13.

A total of 82 photos of Humayun Ahmed from the collection of acclaimed photographer Nasir Ali Mamun will be exhibited till November 16.

The money generated through the sale of the photos will be donated to Shaheed Smriti Bidyapith, a school founded by Humayun Ahmed at his village home in Kutubpur of Netrakona.

The photos brought to life Humayun Ahmed to his fans, who rediscovered the way he saw life through its different angles and perspectives.

Addressing the inaugural function, noted educationist Prof Emeritus Dr Anisuzzaman of Dhaka University said Humayun Ahmed approached his admirers through the photos as a living person who will be remembered forever.

Cultural personality Ali Zaker said the characters of Humayun Ahmed's literary works were not segregated from the reality of life.

As Humayun Ahmed's mind walked towards the different sides of life, his literary works always enthralled the readers, he said.

He played a significant role in enriching Bangla literature, turning the reader's attention from the literary works of West Bengal, added Ali Zaker.

Humayun Ahmed's wife Meher Afroz Shaon said the litterateur passed away but he still existed around his admirers.

Anyadin Editor Mazharul Islam also spoke on the occasion.

The Daily Star
Star Campus
COMING OUT TOMORROW
LINKING YOUNG MINDS

This week's Star Campus, a weekly publication of The Daily Star, has some interesting articles for the readers. The Spotlight is on the need to release energy for young students all over the country and how it is the job of the society to nurture that need. The Campus Trends this week is on the importance of the ever-so-neglected socks and how this season, they are as helpful as anything else. The Star Chat is with singer Alif Alauddin as she shares stories on her childhood, inspirations and aspirations. Do not forget to grab your copy of Star Campus, as it hits the country tomorrow, Sunday. And, as always, have a great read!



Humayun Ahmed's youngest son Nintith touches a portrait of his father at a photo exhibition in the capital's Gallery Chitrak yesterday. The exhibition was organised by Anyadin, a Bangla magazine, marking the litterateur's 64th birth anniversary on November 13.

PHOTO: STAR