

Experts call for wildlife crime database

UNB, Dhaka

Wildlife experts at a workshop in the capital yesterday stressed preparing an inclusive web-based wildlife crime database aiming to effectively check wildlife poaching and smuggling in the country.

They said there are a number of laws in Bangladesh to protect wildlife, but these laws could not be properly enforced against the wildlife traffickers and poachers for lack of a wildlife crime database.

The Centre for Environment and Geographical Information Services (CEGIS) with financial support from the World Bank organised the inception workshop on 'Development of a Web-Based Wildlife Crime Database' under the Strengthening Regional Cooperation for Wildlife Protection (SRCWP) Project of the forest department at Bon Bhaban in the capital.

Chaired by the SRCWP project Director M Akbar Hossain, the workshop was addressed, among others, by Chief Conservator of Forests M Yunus Ali, Country Representative for IUCN Bangladesh Ishtiaq Uddin Ahmad, and CEGIS Executive Director M Waji Ullah.

Speaking on the occasion, the chief conservator of forests said the forest department frequently lodge cases against wildlife smugglers and poachers, but the desired results are not available in court due to poor prosecution for lack of database.

An inclusive web-based wildlife crime database should be prepared so that wildlife smugglers and poachers could be brought to justice, he added.

IUCN Country Representative Ishtiaq Uddin Ahmad suggested preparing a comprehensive wildlife crime database considering both local wildlife and trans-boundary animals so that wildlife could be protected across the region.



Fire breathing during Ashura celebrations last April, in the Islamic month of Muharram, at Chittagong city's Tiger Pass intersection. The performance was pictured by a finalist in the "festivals" category of The Daily Star's photo contest inPixel.

PHOTO: ARJIT CHOWDHURY



Obituary

CITY DESK

Selahuddin Ahmed, retired general manager of Bangladesh Krishi Bank



and the chairman of DSEF Securities Ltd, died at Apollo Hospital on Friday. He was 88.

He left behind three sons and two daughters to mourn his death.

His qulkhawni and doa mahfil will be held at Sector 3, Uttara Jam-e-Mosque after Asr prayers on Friday.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend.

Nurun Nessa Begum

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

Nurun Nessa Begum; mother of Nabibur Rahman Piplu, Ekushey Television and Somokal's Natore correspondent; died of old-age complications at her Alaipur residence on Sunday night. She was 82.

She left behind five sons and six daughters to mourn her death.

She was buried at Garikhana central graveyard in Natore town.

Blockade, hartals devastating Sirajganj handloom industry

UNB, Sirajganj

The handloom industry in Sirajganj district is having a hard time for the non-stop countrywide transport blockades and hartals called by the BNP-led 20-party alliance.

The weavers of the district are counting heavy losses with clothes, including saris, lungis and gamchhas (bathing cotton towels), worth several crores of takas, remaining unsold for almost a month.

The number of wholesalers who come to the district from outside for

buying clothes has decreased significantly due to unavailability of transports.

During a recent visit to the district's Shahzadpur, Ullapara, Enayetpur and Belkuchi upazilas, which have earned reputation for producing handloom items, this correspondent found the owners of the wholesale shops passing idle time with a huge amount of clothes on display.

Some local traders named Hazrat Ali, Abdur Rauf and Wares Ali said due to the political deadlock, they even failed to pay salaries of their

workers.

The political unrest has also forced some handloom operators to wind up their business.

Ramjan Ali, president of Shahzadpur Yarn Merchants' Association, said the cotton and yarn traders have suffered loss of several crores due to the blockade and hartal programmes.

Besides, yarn, worth Tk 25 to 30 crores, has also got damaged during this period, he said.

The handloom operators and yarn traders are also worried about

being unable to pay their huge amount of loan, which they had taken from different banks and NGOs, if this situation continued. Few of them have already gone away from their homes, failing to repay the loans.

Blaming the lack of transports for the situation, market sources said wholesalers from outside cannot send their consignments as vehicle operators refuse to carry those in fear of vandalism by blockade and hartal supporters.

Counter-terrorism confce starts in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A four-day regional counter-terrorism conference is being held in the capital's Police Staff College against the backdrop of recent terrorist attacks.

Experts from Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, the Maldives and the United Nations are attending the conference organised by the US Department of Justice, and Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development, Assistance and Training.

35 new books

From page 3 story and current address of the 1971 war rape victims, said Razzak.

The book is selling at bikroy.com for Tk 71.

Amina Begum, former assistant secretary of Nari Punorbashon Board, Sirajganj, hoped that this book would help the new generation researchers know more about the sacrifice of those women.

Some of the victims—Rahima Khatun, Bhanu Khatun and Kamala Bewya from Sirajganj and Rahima Begum from Chapainawabganj—were present at the programme.

INTERNATIONAL LITERARY CONFERENCE 2015

The first five sessions of the conference at the Bangla Academy hardly saw any crowd in the morning.

Only about 50 people were present in the Abdul Karim Sahitya Bisarod auditorium in the morning sessions.

The sparse presence did not escape the notice of even popular West Bengal writer Shirshendu Mukhopadhyaya.

"I expected the hall to be full but maybe it did not bring in much crowd because it is work day or due to the current situation of the country," he said at his session with Bangladeshi writers Selina Hossain and Syed Shamsul Haq.

Today the theme of the conference is contemporary poetry, and both national and foreign poets would read from their works in four sessions from 10:00am to 5:30pm.

NATIONAL POETRY FESTIVAL 2015

Meanwhile, the national poetry festival ended last night on the Dhaka University Central Library premises with the hope for violence-free, developed, peaceful and united country.

Aslam Sunny, general secretary of the National Poetry Council, said more than 300 poets from home and abroad took part, and 500 poems were recited in the two-day festival.

No structure on haors

Demand comes from National River Protection Commission, Poba, WBB Trust discussion

UNB, Dhaka

Green activists at a discussion yesterday demanded that development activities in haor areas be stopped to restore the lost panoramic nature of the country's landscape.

They said the resources, environment and biodiversity of the haors could be protected through implementation of the haor mega plan, and waterways in the haor region must be restored by demolishing bridges and culverts.

The National River Protection Commission, Poribesh Bachao Andolon, and Walk for Better Bangladesh Trust jointly organised the discussion on haor mega plan and its implementation at Dhaka Reporters Unity marking World Wetlands Day 2015. The commission Chairman Ataharul Islam said wetlands can not be protected through development works. Department of Fisheries Director General Syed Arif Azad said the original nature of haors has already been destroyed but the wetlands must be protected at any cost to conserve fish resources.



Visitors see paintings of Spanish artists Juan Llorens and Dulce Quesada Magro at Chittagong District Shilpakala Academy, where the four-day exhibition, "Colour of Bangladesh", came to a close yesterday. Art critics Abul Mansur and Alam Khorshed, Chittagong University Fine Arts Institute Director Nasima Akhter, artists Nazlee Laila Mansur and Subrata Barua Ronny, and poet Abul Momen attended yesterday's inaugural ceremony.

PHOTO: STAR

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