

99.9pc of vultures have disappeared from South Asia !

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

About 99.9 percent of the vultures have disappeared from the South Asian countries, including Bangladesh, during the last two decades.

Sylhet Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) RSM Manirul Islam said this at a discussion on saving vultures in Habiganj town yesterday.

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the Forest Department in Sylhet organised the meeting marking the International Vulture Awareness Day 2017.

Manirul said vultures have become almost extinct in these countries as they ate carcasses of cattle that had been fed banned fattening drugs like Diclofenac and Ketoprofen.

Vultures are an ecologically vital group of birds that face a range of threats in many areas where they live. Populations of many species are under pressure and some species are facing extinction.

IUCN Country Representative Ishtiaq Uddin Ahmad in his speech as special guest said loss of habitat and scarcity of food were the main reasons behind the rapid disappearance of eco-friendly vultures.

Bangladesh Bird Club founder and renowned bird researcher Enam Ul Haque gave the keynote speech. He called for raising awareness among the people, including school/college students, to save vultures. Rabies, anthrax and other deadly tropical diseases are on the rise due to the disappearance of vultures, he added.

Divisional Forest Officer of Wildlife Management and Nature Conservation Department Mihir Kumar Doe said the extinction of vultures will adversely affect Bangladesh's biodiversity. Rabies and anthrax will become endemic due to the disappearance of vultures, he added.

Habiganj Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Emran Hossain was the chief guest. He said awareness building programmes about saving vultures should be taken up all over the country.

Innovative farmer's hydroponic tomato sees success



Shykh Seraj sees tomatoes of Mizanur Rahman's farm at Joypara in Dohar upazila of Dhaka.

PHOTO: HRIDOYE MATI O MANUSH

SHYKH SERAJ

Dear readers, a few days back I went to Dohar's Northern Joypara, located very near to capital Dhaka. I would like to talk about hydroponic farming system that has been increasingly growing in our country as a new approach to farming solutions. One of my articles was recently published in The Daily Star regarding hydroponics. In the developed countries, hydroponic agriculture is happening for a long time. An entrepreneur from Dohar, Mizanur Rahman, is mainly a textile businessman. He has got involved with farming. It's also great that relentless campaign of Hridoye Mati O Manush has inspired many businessmen to come forward towards farming and invest in this sector with new methods and innovative ideas.

Mizanur does his farming under a shed. Many refer to it as greenhouse where we see controlled temperature for the crops inside. He is cultivating tomatoes here with the technical help of local agriculture department and Agriculture Research Institute.

Already, you have seen a couple of examples of greenhouses based on modern technology in this show. Modern farming is basically turning this way. There is no use of soil in the first place. In Tin Dokan area of Dohar, on 3000 square feet, stands the farming field. Entrepreneurs say it is experimental. They plan to utilize these experiences for extending the farming in much broader areas.

The height of the greenhouse is 100 feet and the width is 30 feet, where they started off with 2000 tomato plants. Dear readers, I have already shown you earlier the local and foreign greenhouses. But, this one is more cost effective and easier to do. In that sense, it cannot totally be called a greenhouse. It is called a natural net house. Polyethylene is used to control the heat. It is not 100 percent controlled. In Europe, USA and Middle East countries, it is totally controlled.

The inspiring thing is that the size and production of tomatoes in this production system is very encouraging.

The trees were planted on the same day, Mizanur said. They are getting five tomatoes

from one bunch. This net house is also providing nutrient solutions to the plant accordingly which you have read in one of my articles published in The Daily Star.

These people are using locally made plastic boxes with holes under it so that the nutrients can easily enter the plants. And, they are planted over coco pit.

The entrepreneur, Mizanur Rahman, has become very optimistic already. He is saying after calculating space, investment and time, this is a very profitable initiative he took. They are in the mission of cutting the production costs as initially they had spent quite a lot. Most of their investments went behind nutrients. And the cost so far has been 6.5 lakh taka, however if the project goes successful they would be able to earn approximately 13.5 lakh taka.

They have seedbeds where they grow the seeds. Then they shift the seedlings to another place, to be grown with the assistance of nutrients. The whole system is organic and because of the nets no pests can enter the net house. What is encouraging is that we are getting to see such works in Bangladesh now. It is a perfect bondage between technology and entrepreneurs. Mizanur is very much grateful to the Hridoye Mati O Manush campaign on advanced farming and he has followed every step of the broadcast. People living in the surroundings are keenly watching the progress of this net house modern technology. Some are interested to do this in future.

Dear readers, farming is going to the hands of large scale entrepreneurs and investors. Keeping that in mind, the policymakers should think about how these new inventions can also help the ordinary farmers. Ultramodern technologies are great for farming advancement, but we must not forget the cause of the general farmers of our country. Through this, commercial excellence of agriculture will rise along with production and quality, but farmers' stake should be evaluated. Tomorrow's agriculture means poison-free, pure and high yielding agriculture. Since net housing can increase productivity with almost no use of pesticides, small farmers can also make cash crops here under protected cultivation system. But, to end this, I would again say, they need the effective support for this and when these farmers will come up with ventures like these, Bangladesh will see the holistic development in the farming sector.

PHOTO: HRIDOYE MATI O MANUSH

Abducted madrasa girl rescued from brothel

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

Police rescued a 14-year-old girl from a brothel in the district town on Tuesday night, five months after her abduction.

The girl, a Class VIII student of a madrasa in Mahadan union of Sarishabari upazila of the district, was kidnapped by unidentified criminals on April 23 this year.

A farmer of Bilbalia village under the union adopted the girl around 10 years ago and brought her up along with arrangement of her schooling.

But woe befell her when criminals kidnapped her on way to her madrasa from home around 9:30am on April 23, Rezaul Karim, officer-in-charge of Sarishabari Police Station, quoted the victim's foster father as saying.

On April 25, the girl's father filed an abduction case with the police station accusing unnamed people.

"Since then we were trying to find the girl. Finally, acting on a tip, police rescued the girl from the brothel around 10:30pm, where she had been sold as a sex worker," said the OC.

Sardarni Rekha Begum, supervisor of a group of sex workers including the rescued girl, managed to escape, he said.

Rekha is also president of Surjer Hashi Samaj Kalyan Samity, an organisation meant for the welfare of the sex workers at the brothel.

"We produced the girl before a court for recording her statement this (Wednesday) afternoon," added the OC.



Vast tracts of fertile arable land in the villages of the Teesta and Dharla river basin areas in Lalmonirhat have been covered with sand carried by flood. The photo was taken a few days ago.

PHOTO: STAR

Arable lands under sand

Lalmonirhat farmers upset as fertile lands become unfit for cultivation after flood carried the sand

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

Vast tracts of fertile arable land in the villages of the Teesta and Dharla river basin areas in the district have been covered with sand carried by floodwater.

Farmers are worried as their arable lands have become unfit for cultivating crops as they are two to three feet under the sand.

Shahidul Islam, 35, a farmer at Etapota village in Sadar upazila, said five of his eight pieces of arable land have been buried under sand carried by water from the Dharla river. "My lands were fertile and produced all kinds of crops, especially paddy and vegetables," he said. "No crop can be cultivated on these sand-covered lands," he said, adding that at least 150 bighas of fertile arable lands in the village have turned into sandy tracts.

"We have no alternative for earning except farming, but our fertile arable lands are now covered with sand carried by floodwater," said farmer Jahir Ali, 55.

"Two to three feet of sand was dumped on our arable lands by floodwater from the Teesta river, and these lands cannot be used for cultivating any crops," said Yasin Ali, 56, of Khuniyagachh village.

"It is not possible to manually remove the sand from the land. If we get machines we will be able to remove the sand," said Shahedul Islam, 48.

Deputy Director of the district Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) Bidubhushon Roy told this correspondent that floodwater carried huge amounts of sand from the Teesta and Dharla rivers to the mainland easily as the dyke collapsed at many places this year.

"Farmers will have to remove the sand manually as DAE cannot provide machines," he added.

TEACHERS' RECRUITMENT 'Cancel test in Khagrachhari'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Students of different educational institutions staged a demonstration yesterday in Sadar upazila, demanding cancellation of the recruitment examination for primary school teachers.

Sammilito Chhatra Samaj held a rally at Swanirbhar Bazar.

A written test for 358 posts of primary school assistant teachers was held on August 25 under the Hill District Council.

Speakers at the rally said the Hill District Council is being run by unelected and ruling party men, who are not accountable to the people. They said leakage of question papers, recruitment business and corruption are going on in the process of recruitment and demanded immediate cancellation of the examination.

Khagrachhari Parbatya Zilla Susama Union and Durniti Protirodh Committee at a press conference also demanded cancellation of the recruitment test. They said they will start a movement if their demand is not met.

Khagrachhari Hill District Council Member Mongsui Pru Chowdhury said the allegation of irregularities in the recruitment of teachers is motivated. The recruitment is being conducted transparently, he added.

80,000 ampoules of injection seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Customs Intelligence officials seized huge quantity of smuggled banned animal injection and detained a Bangladeshi national at Benapole Check Post on Tuesday night.

The arrestee, Hossain Mintu, 45, son of Amir Hossain, is a resident of Shariatpur town.

Deputy Commissioner Abdus Sadek of Customs Intelligence at Benapole Port said, a team intercepted Mintu while he was entering the country from India and seized 80,000 ampoules of banned injection from his possession.

Meanwhile, members of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) arrested an alleged drug smuggler along with Indian liquor and contraband Phensidyl syrup from Sharsha upazila of Jessore early yesterday.

The arrestee is Nazrul Islam, 45, son of Mojibur Rahman of Ghiba village.

Lt Col Ariful Haque, commanding officer of BGB 49 Battalion, said they detained Nazrul along with 15 bottles of Indian liquor and 180 bottles of Phensidyl from his possession.

Lightning kills 2 fishermen

A CORRESPONDENT, Sathkhira

Two fishermen were killed by lightning in Ashashuni upazila of the district on Tuesday.

The deceased are Jahangir Hossain Morol, 45, of Kadakati village and Bojhor Mondol, 50, of Tuadanga village.

Jahangir's wife Moyna Khatun said a thunder bolt struck her husband while he was catching shrimps in an enclosure in Patkhali village.

Bojhor's brother Probbash Mondol said his brother was killed by lightning while he was fishing in a local water body.

শাখা স্থানান্তর

উন্নততর গ্রাহকসেবা প্রদানের লক্ষ্যে অগ্রণী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড-এর খানজাহান আলী রোড শাখা, খুলনা। বর্তমান শাখা ভবন হতে প্রায় ১৫০ গজ দূরে নবনির্মিত ভবনে শাখাটি স্থানান্তরিত হবে। শাখাটি নতুন ভবনে ১৫/০৯/২০১৭ ইং তারিখে স্থানান্তরিত হবে এবং ১৭/০৯/২০১৭ ইং হতে ব্যাংকিং কার্যক্রম শুরু করা হবে।

শাখার বর্তমান অবস্থান ও প্রস্তাবিত নতুন ভবনের অবস্থান নিম্নরূপ :

বিদ্যমান শাখার অবস্থান/বর্তমান ঠিকানা	প্রস্তাবিত নতুন শাখার অবস্থান/ঠিকানা
অগ্রণী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড খানজাহান আলী রোড শাখা, খুলনা। ২৭৫, খানজাহান আলী রোড, খুলনা। মৌজা-টুটপাড়া, জে এল নং-৪, প্লট নং-৯৩৭ খতিয়ান নং-৯২৪/১১২৩, খুলনা সিটি কর্পোরেশন (৪ তলা ভবনের নীচ তলায় অবস্থিত)	অগ্রণী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড খানজাহান আলী রোড শাখা, খুলনা। এস.আর.সি.টি রোকেয়া মমতাজ টাওয়ার (২য় তলা) ৭৮, খানজাহান আলী রোড, খুলনা, দাগ নং-এসএ-১৫৭১ ডিপি-৮০৮, খতিয়ান নং হাল : এসএ-৯৩৬, ডিপি-৩৮৬৬ মৌজা-টুটপাড়া, খুলনা সিটি কর্পোরেশন, খুলনা।

সম্মানিত গ্রাহক, পৃষ্ঠপোষক এবং শুভানুধ্যায়ীদের নতুন ঠিকানায় যোগাযোগ ও প্রয়োজনীয় ব্যাংকিং কার্যক্রম সম্পন্ন করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

অগ্রণী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড

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