

Greens worried as new safari park planned

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"Lathitila forest is a habitat of wildlife. The government should focus on preserving whatever forestland we have," said Ishtiaq Uddin Ahmed, former chief conservator of forest who also served as country representative of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

A century ago, the forest area was partially barren and partially a natural bamboo garden. Starting in the early '40s, the Forest Department planted Shegun trees (teak) on 2,596 acres.

For planting and conservation, the department brought in 87 families who have been nurturing and protecting the forest since.

The forest of Shegun trees still prevails but the natural bamboo forest was mostly destroyed during a mass flowering in 2000 and is now slowly regenerating, said SM Sazzad Hossain, divisional forest officer of Sylhet.

A forest official seeking anonymity said the regeneration process of a bamboo forest needs time. If the safari park uses the land for construction and other plantations, the area's biodiversity will be at stake.

In July last year, the Tk 4.50 crore project, "Preparation of master plan and feasibility study for establishment of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib safari park at Moulvibazar" was initiated by the Forest Department.

A tender request was published on October 6, 2020 and Dhaka-based BETS Consulting Services Limited was awarded the work of the feasibility study on February 28 this year.

The firm is currently conducting a study related to the environmental, physical and economic suitability for establishment of the safari park on the proposed site.

Since the survey of the forest began for the project, around 350 families of Lalchhara, Rupachhara and Jarichhara villages have started to worry.

Babul Miah, headman of the forest villages, said, "It's been three generations we're living in the forest. We've planted and looked after thousands of Shegun trees and we're using only a little land for farming fruit and other crops."

"It will be cruel if we are evicted from the forest."

Tofayel Ahmed, a youth of Lalchhara village, said the villagers came to know of the government's plans to construct structures in the village area only when the surveyors began their work.

"We urge the government to exclude our homes and use other open land," he said.

Other villagers said the Forest Department did not inform them about the plan and officials are not confirming what will happen to them.

"We will be very happy to have a safari park in Bangabandhu's name, but without removing us from where we have lived for three generations," said Fokhor Uddin, an elderly villager of Lalchhara.

Earlier, on April 12, villagers organised a human chain at Lalchhara demanding protection of their homes and fruit gardens from eviction.

WHY THIS SITE?
Lathitila is located in remote Juri upazila. The distance from Moulvibazar town to Juri Forest Office is around 50km with Google Maps showing an estimated travel time of between an hour and a half and two hours. And it is another 15km from Juri Forest Office to Lathitila.

Abdul Karim Kim, general secretary of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) in Sylhet, said, "Lathitila is part of a very deep forest and it is in a remote area. It will not be a good idea to select the site for a safari park, considering all aspects, including nature conservation."

He added, "It would be wise to plan a safari park in parts of the forest that is easily accessible, like Barshijora Eco Park in Moulvibazar town. But no matter where they plan it, nature conservation must be given priority over constructing structures."

"And it would be unfair if villagers are evicted."

The ministry concerned, however, maintains that the government will surely consider wildlife conservation and environmental issues.

"Compared to Lathitila, Barshijora is very small and impossible to expand. Lathitila is a suitable location as Hakaluki Haor and Madhabkunda waterfall are in close proximity so that tourists can visit three sites on a day's trip," said Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Md Shahab Uddin.

"But we'll decide based on the feasibility study," he went on.

"To the best of my knowledge, a vast floristic area can be suggested to retain as a biodiversity conservation zone there. So, nature and the existing landscape will not be changed at all," said Shahab Uddin, also the lawmaker of Moulvibazar-1 constituency where all these sites are located.

He added, "There is no intention to evict the villagers, who were really appointed by the Forest Department as forest villagers. If this place is finalised, some might be relocated within the forest beat."

Md Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, the divisional forest officer (Wildlife Management and Nature Conservation Division) in Sylhet, told this newspaper in May, "if it's feasible to establish a safari park in Lathitila, we'll go for designing the master plan."

Also the project director, Rezaul added the firm conducting the feasibility study will also consider Barshijora Eco Park.

Joly Paul, an environmental activist in Moulvibazar, said, "In the name of a safari park, they [authorities] will start construction in the forest, which will eventually destroy the environment. Two existing safari parks have already proved that this will not bring anything good for the forest and environment and that's why we're protesting the decision."

Dr Mohammed Abu Sayed Arfin Khan, associate professor of forestry and environmental science at Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, said, "If a safari park seeks to protect the existing and threatened biodiversity of a certain territory, it serves the environment effectively. But the practice of establishing and managing safari parks in Bangladesh is not good."

"As we see, the key objective of a safari park here is to bring in exotic wildlife from other habitats and promote tourism which is destructive for biodiversity and the environment. They [authorities] focus on establishment rather than management and that's why the purpose of safari parks failed in Bangladesh."

The professor further said a safari park can be effective only when the authorities focus on the protection of biodiversity, uses it for education and awareness towards nature conservation, and manages it properly along with controlled ecotourism.

Prof Monirul H Khan of Jahangirnagar University observed that in Bangladesh, both safari parks and zoos primarily serve the purpose of amusement. And the visits of a large number of people, together with necessary services, pollute the entire ecosystem.

"Therefore, areas that have rich biodiversity should always be avoided while establishing a safari park. Instead, those areas, like Lathitila forest, should be declared wildlife sanctuaries."

India's Covid

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Daily inoculation rates have since slowed again, however, averaging just over four million per day over the past week, according to government figures.

Meanwhile, Johnson and Johnson on Thursday said its single-shot Covid-19 vaccine is effective against the Delta variant, with an immune response lasting at least eight months.

The antibodies and immune system cells in the blood of eight people vaccinated with the J&J jab effectively neutralized the Delta strain, researchers found. A second study with 20 vaccinated patients at Boston's Beth Israel Medical Center had similar results.

The highly contagious variant has plagued Asia this week, with record numbers of infections in Australia and South Korea, prompting some countries to tighten curbs and others to hasten vaccination.

130 nations back

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once it comes into force, which the OECD said it hoped would be in 2023.

"The framework updates key elements of the century-old international tax system, which is no longer fit for purpose in a globalised and digitalised 21st century economy," the OECD said on Thursday.

The formal agreement follows an endorsement by the G7 group of wealthy nations last month, and negotiations now move to a meeting of the G20 group of developed and emerging economies on July 9-10 in Venice, Italy.

US President Joe Biden said the latest deal "puts us in striking distance of full global agreement to halt the race to the bottom for corporate taxes."

Painting

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"I thought it was beautiful," he said. After taking the painting down to examine it more closely, he found the word "Fragonard" written on the back in black ink, added Petit.

The owners, who'd had the painting in the family for generations without it being included in any will, gave it to Petit, who took it to be assessed by Cabinet Turquin, a Paris-based company of painting experts.

"I couldn't be absolutely sure myself," said Petit, adding that the team at Cabinet Turquin confirmed that it was an authentic Fragonard.

"Despite the buildup of dust and the yellow varnish on the canvas, the power of his painting remains easily recognizable," said Stephane Pinta, from Cabinet Turquin, in an auction catalog produced by the company.

According to the catalog, "the painting was passed down from generation to generation but over the course of time the attribution was forgotten."

Fragonard lived from 1732-1806 and is considered one of the most emblematic painters of the 18th century.

Bangladesh still in tier 2

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combat human trafficking.

The report said Bangladesh government does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is making significant efforts to do so.

The annual report ranks governments based on their perceived efforts to acknowledge and combat human trafficking.

Bangladesh had been on the Tier 2 Watch List from 2017 to 2019. In 2020 and this year, Bangladesh has been ranked among the countries in Tier 2.

As per the US law, countries on Tier 3 could trigger severe restrictions and even full curtailment of non-humanitarian and non-trade-related assistance.

The latest report said Bangladesh government efforts to combat human trafficking included initiating more prosecutions, particularly of labour traffickers; beginning to operate its trafficking tribunals; and collaborating with foreign governments on a transnational trafficking case.

The government also opened an investigation into -- and parliament revoked the seat of -- a member of parliament involved in bribing a Kuwaiti official to fraudulently send more than 20,000 Bangladeshi migrant workers to Kuwait, said the report.

However, the government did not meet the minimum standards in several key areas, it mentioned.

The number of convictions decreased, while law enforcement continued to deny credible reports of official complicity in trafficking, it added.

Also, the government continued to allow recruiting agencies to charge

high recruitment fees to migrant workers and did not consistently address illegally operating recruitment sub-agents, leaving workers vulnerable to traffickers.

According to the report, Bangladesh investigated 348 cases under the Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act-2012, including 138 investigations continued from previous years, compared with the investigation of 403 cases including 29 ongoing investigations during the previous reporting period.

The government prosecuted 517 suspects (184 for sex trafficking and 333 for forced labor) -- an increase from the 312 individuals the government prosecuted the previous reporting period, of which 56 were for forced labour.

The government convicted seven traffickers, including one for sex trafficking, two for labour trafficking, and four for undefined trafficking crimes, but acquitted 14 defendants.

This was a significant decrease from courts convicting 25 traffickers the previous reporting year.

The government reported more than 4,000 trafficking cases remained pending investigation or prosecution as of December 2020.

The TIP report recommended increasing prosecutions and convictions for trafficking offences, particularly of labour traffickers and complicit government officials, while respecting due process.

It also recommended taking steps to eliminate recruitment fees charged to workers by licensed labour recruiters and ensure employers pay the recruitment fees.

17 Bangladeshis brought

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At least 568 such Bangladeshi migrants were rescued off the Tunisian coast in the past three months, according to the Bangladesh embassy in Libya which provides consular service in Tunisia.

In recent couple of incidents, the migrants were found adrift in the Mediterranean which is widely used by traffickers as a route for

illegal migration from North African countries to rich European countries, including Italy, Greece and Spain.

According to the UN, at least 760 people have died trying to cross the Mediterranean between January 1 and May 31, compared with 1,400 last year.

IOM yesterday said prior to the return of 17 Bangladeshis, the migrants underwent health checks.

Some districts likely

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Meanwhile, our Lalmonirhat correspondent reported that the low-lying and island areas in Lalmonirhat and Kurigram have been inundated due to the rise of river water level.

However, the water of all the rivers in the two districts, including the Brahmaputra, the Teesta and the Dharla, were flowing below the danger level since Friday morning.

Locals in the districts said they were facing trouble in movements as the roads were submerged in knee-deep water. Alongside, houses and croplands were also submerged.

Mizanur Rahman, executive engineer of the Water Development Board in Lalmonirhat, said they have prepared to evacuate the people living in the risky villages along the riverside and protect the flood control dykes.

Our Feni correspondent reported that the flood situation has improved slightly in Fulgazi and Parshuram

upazilas of the district while some seedbeds of vegetables and mangoes have gone under water.

Some village roads are also damaged and fishes of some ponds washed out.

Breaking of flood protection embankments on Muhuri and Kahuwa rivers at three points is the main reason for the flood at the two upazilas, according to locals.

Seven hundred families of the upazilas are marooned with floodwater due to the damage of the embankment.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer of Fulgazi Union Ferdousi Begum said authorities concerned are working to measure the amount of the damage and distributing relief to the victims.

Executive engineer of Water Development Board Zahir Uddin said they have taken initiative to repair the damaged portions of the embankment.

Freedom fighters will lead our future army

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a government formed abroad, and freed their motherland from imperialism."

He further said, "The basis for the future army of the country will be you. Those who shall excel in the freedom fight, those who will prove themselves to be the finest fighters, they will give the leadership to our future army."

PAKISTAN SEEKS US BOMBERS DESPITE EMBARGO

Pakistan President Mohammad Yahya Khan asked the United States to sell Pakistan seven B57 reconnaissance bombers on June 9, three months after the government imposed a ban on all military sales to his country, diplomatic sources said today.

Even though Pakistan was near bankruptcy because of the war that erupted in East Pakistan in late March,

Yahya apparently was willing to pay the \$1.25 million that each of the sophisticated jet planes would cost, or a total of \$8.75 million.

US state department officials, acknowledging Yahya's request, said it was being held in abeyance while the United States reviewed its entire military assistance programme to Pakistan.

OUTSIDE HELP NEXT TO NOTHING: INDIRA

India Prime Minister Indira Gandhi today regretted that though the Bangladesh issue was an international problem, no major help was coming from the international community. She said the help from outside was practically "next to nothing". But India was determined to face the problem with courage and confidence, she added.

BATTLE OF MOGUL HAT

Fifty guerrillas today crossed the Dharla River and attacked a Pakistani CAMP at Mogulhat, Lalmonirhat. The Pakistani army was caught unawares and lost 12 of their soldiers. Three Bangladesh guerrillas embraced martyrdom in the operation.

PAKISTAN SEVERES TIES WITH COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY

Pakistan declared today to sever ties with London's Royal Commonwealth Society temporarily. The Pakistani spokesperson criticised the Society for allowing the platform to be used against the interest of Pakistan. It may be mentioned here that earlier Justice Abu Sayeed Chowdhury, in a speech given at the Society, urged the world to stop the genocide in Bangladesh.

Shamsuddoza Sajen is a journalist and researcher. He can be contacted at sajen1986@gmail.com

RFP Ref. No.: LRPS-BAN-2021-9168217

Request for Proposal (RFP): LRPS-9168217: To conduct Alternative Care Study to understand the situation and demographics of children in institutional care arrangements in Bangladesh.

UNICEF-Bangladesh is inviting interested companies with a strong record and credibility of providing the above required service. To receive the detailed scope of work and procedure to submit the bid response, please email to "supplybangladesh@unicef.org"

Pre-bid Meeting Date: **Please see the schedule mentioned in the RFP**

The deadline to submit the proposal is **Sunday, 18 July 2021; Time: 11:00 Hrs**

Please note UNICEF does not charge any fee at any stage of the solicitation process.

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শাখা স্থানান্তর

সম্মানিত গ্রাহকদের অধিকতর সেবার লক্ষ্যে

রূপালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড, সাগরদী বাজার শাখা, বরিশাল

৩০ জুন ২০২১ ইং বুধবার থেকে

নতুন ঠিকানায় ব্যাংকিং কার্যক্রম শুরু করছে।

পুরাতন ঠিকানা	নতুন ঠিকানা
রূপালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড, সাগরদী বাজার শাখা, জেএল নং-৫১, মেজা-সাগরদী, হোল্ডিং নং-১১৯৮, সাগরদী বাজার, ডাকঘর-বরিশাল, থানা-বরিশাল, জেলা-বরিশাল।	রূপালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড, সাগরদী বাজার শাখা, ওয়াহেদ প্রাজা (২য় তলা) হোল্ডিং-১১৯৮, মেজা-সাগরদী, জেএল নং-৫১, ওয়ার্ড নং-২৩, সাগরদী বাজার, ডাক-বরিশাল, থানা-বরিশাল, জেলা-বরিশাল।

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Hilsa netting in sea

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Year Siktar, a local trader, said local fish, each weighing one kilogramme, generally go for Tk 60,000 per maund. However, most of the fish that were being sent were caught from the sea, and so, the one-kg fish were being sold for Tk, 27,000 per maund.

"Even though there's a 65-day ban on sea-fishing in place, many are catching fish, violating the law," he said.

Traders also said fish from the sea cannot be sold for that much, and are different in taste from river fish.

Kalam Majhi of Bhola's Charfasson upazila said fish caught in the last few days were brought to Barishal Port Road in fishing trawlers, as there was less demand in the local market.

Nirab Hossain Tutul -- president of Matsya Aratdar Samitee, Port Road wholesale fish market -- said some hilsa are being caught in Bhola and Kuakata now. Apart from this, fish are also coming from the sea. On Thursday, at least a thousand maunds of fish came in three fishing boats.

Bimal Chandra Das -- district fisheries officer (hilsa) -- said these days it is raining heavily, and so, it has created a favourable environment for hilsa fishing. As a result, some fish are being caught.

He said he did not know that sea-going fishing boats were bringing in fish. "We will look into it," he added.

Cattle smuggling on amid

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effective measures yet to stop cattle smuggling through bordering area to curb Covid-19."

Contacted, Lt Jamal Uddin, commanding officer of Kurigram BGB, said, "We have already launched a programme to create awareness among people about Covid-19, and if anyone notices illegal intruders, then they will be asked to inform BGB."

Although BGB is on high-alert, it is possible to smuggle two or three cattle after dodging the local administration, he said. Asked, Kurigram Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Rezaul Karim said, "Everyone should be aware of the deadly virus. All kinds of directives have been given to stop cattle smuggling, and action will be taken if negligence is found."

He also assured of taking necessary steps, after consulting with BGB and UNO.

A total of 1,697 people have been found infected with the virus, while 29 have died of Covid-19 in the district till Monday.

No progress in probe

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Women and Children Repression Prevention Act.

According to the case statement, Dihan tricked the victim into going to his flat when his family members were away from home and raped her. The victim bled profusely and fell unconscious. Dihan then took her to a hospital to deflect blame, the complainant alleged.

On January 8, Dihan gave his confessional statement before a Dhaka court. Dihan, who recently passed A-levels, is now behind bars.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Department of Public Health Engineering
Office of the Executive Engineer
Manikganj District, Manikganj.

Memo No- 1101

Invitation for e-Tender notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of

SL no	e-Tender ID	Work Name	Closing Date & Time
1	587402, 587398, 587394, 587392, 587409, 587430, 587454.	Installation of Deep Tube well 100X38mm with Submersible Pump at Sadar Upazila in Manikganj District under Safe Water Supply Through Out The Country Project of Department of Public Health Engineering.	18-Jul-2021 14:30:00

This is online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submitted e-Tender, registration in the national e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system Portal and form e-GP Help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

(Gazi Fatima Ferdous)
Executive Engineer
Department of Public Health Engineering
Manikganj District, Manikganj.

GD-1307

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Additional Chief Engineer, RHD
Road Zone, Boyra, Khulna
Phone: 041-761378
Email-acekhu@rhd.gov.bd

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of:

Tender Notice & ID No.	Name of work	Last selling, closing, opening & security submission date & time
e-GP/22/ADP/ACE Khu/2020-21 (WP-10) (ID No-588084)	Construction of 3 Nos PC/RC Girder Bridge in place of existing Narrow & Damaged Concrete Bridge/Baily Bridge on Highways in Jhenaidah Road Division under Sarak Zone, Khulna.	Last selling date & time: 01-08-2021, Up to 5:00pm Closing, opening date & time: 02-08-2021 At 12:30pm
e-GP/23/ADP/ACE Khu/2020-21 (WP-11) (ID No-588085)	Construction of 6 Nos PC/RC Girder Bridge in place of existing Narrow & Damaged Concrete Bridge/Baily Bridge on Highways in Kushtia Road Division under Sarak Zone, Khulna.	Security submission date & time: 02-08-2021 Up to 12:00pm

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration required in the National e-GP System Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd). The fees for downloading the e-Tender Document from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank branches up to above mentioned date & time. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Md. Shohtul Islam
ID No. 602026
Assistant Engineer, RHD Road Zone, Khulna

Syed Aslam Ali
ID No. 001049
Additional Chief Engineer, RHD Road Zone, Khulna

GD-1306