



MAGIC OF THE MANGROVE

From September 1, following a closure of three months, the world's largest mangrove forest, the Sundarbans, has been opened for tourists, fishermen and those who live off the forest. Tourist vessels have been frequenting the forest since day one of the opening. With travel time substantially reduced due to the opening of the Padma Bridge, more and more tourists are taking the opportunity to visit the mangroves and experience the magic of the Sundarbans. Home to the majestic Bengal Tigers, the forest is a lifeline to many and its value extends far beyond its geographical boundaries. As per the recommendation of Integrated Resources Management Plan, since 2019 the mangrove forest has been closed to public from June 1 to August 31 every year to protect its rich biodiversity, especially its aquatic life—nearly 210 species of fish. According to Forest Department officials, nearly 2.5 lakh tourists visit the Sundarbans every year. The officials believe if a planned approach is taken towards eco-tourism, both biodiversity and tourism can thrive here.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

