Food crisis drives Kaptai elephants into settlements

RIKORS CHAKMA, *Rangamati*

Asian elephants in Rangamati's Kaptai National Park are facing a severe food shortage as diseases have damaged bamboo and shrubs, while people continue to collect vines, foliage and other edible plants from the forest.

As a result, elephant herds are increasingly entering nearby settlements in search of food, raising the risk of human-elephant conflict.

The 200-year-old Kaptai National Park is one of the country's oldest reserved forests and has long been home to Asian elephants. According to the Forest Department, the park currently has around 40-45 elephants, including six to seven calves.

Locals said elephant intrusions were once rare but have become frequent, leaving residents fearful, particularly at night.

Sudatta Chakma, chairman of Jibatoli Union Parishad, said, "We cannot sleep when elephants roam around at night. No one ventures outside after dusk for fear of elephants, as it can become dangerous."

Omarfaruk Shadhin, former range officer of Kaptai Range, said food becomes scarce in elephant habitats during the dry season.

"In addition, some people harvest vines and foliage from elephant habitats, evading the watch of forest officials," he said.

Md Mamunur Rahman, Kaptai range officer, said elephants generally avoid human settlements if sufficient food is available in their natural habitat.

"By examining elephant dung, we have found that they are mostly consuming grass-based food. Elephants particularly like eating bamboo and bamboo leaves."

He said the Forest Department was establishing fruit orchards and bamboo plantations in areas frequented by elephants to address the shortage.

Prof MA Aziz of Jahangirnagar University's zoology department said an adult elephant needs around 150-200 kg of food and about 150 litres of water daily. Elephants feed on grass, vines, foliage, tree bark and fruits from 100-500 species.

He said the plantation initiatives might provide temporary relief, but protecting natural food sources was more important.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

An Asian elephant forages in Rangamati's Kaptai National Park. The reserved forest is a natural habitat for Asian elephants.

"However, the primary goal should be to stop humans from foraging food from elephant habitats, and keeping the forest's waterbodies and natural streams functional and protected. If adequate protection is ensured in the reserved forest, elephants will find food naturally. In that case, there will be no need for separate plantations," he added.



PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Women weave cloth on traditional waist looms at Rajban Bihara in Rangamati as part of the Kathin Chibar Dan festival. During the ceremony, they prepare robes for Buddhist monks within 24 hours, following a centuries-old tradition. The festival marks the end of a three-month period of seclusion, during which monks meditate inside their monasteries for self-improvement and atonement for mankind.

Of clay, fire and hope

Over 3,000 potter families in the north race to light up Deepaboli

S DILIP ROY, *Lalmonirhat*

Ahead of Deepaboli, or Diwali, the festival of lights to be observed today, more than 3,000 potter families across five districts of Rangpur division have been busy making earthen lamps, locally known as "diya", hoping to boost their incomes.

Each family has been producing 20,000-80,000 lamps, with some making even more.

For the potters, the festival offers a rare opportunity to earn more as demand for traditional earthenware rises. However, higher prices of clay, firewood and other materials have pushed up production costs this year.

At local markets, a set of 100 lamps sells for Tk 100-300, depending on quality.

"There are around 70 potter families in the village. We are selling diyas to wholesalers from different areas as well as in nearby markets," said Prabhat Chandra Pal, 65, of Sarpukur Kumarpara village in Lalmonirhat's Aditmari upazila.

Bishad Chandra Pal, 55, of Moghalhat Kumarpara village in Lalmonirhat Sadar, said making the lamps involves several stages.

"Producing 100 lamps now costs between Tk 20-50. The prices of clay and firewood have gone up. Then there is transport cost," he said.

All 45 potter families in his village are hoping for good sales, he added.



Potters across Rangpur division are busy making earthen lamps, known as "diya", ahead of Deepaboli -- the festival of light.

PHOTO: STAR

In Palpara village of Rangpur's Taraganj upazila, veteran potter Ajay Chandra Pal, 76, was tending a kiln.

He said the kiln fires around 3,000-5,000 lamps daily, which remain inside for another 12 hours before being taken out for sale.

Ashok Sarkar, 70, of Guptapara in Rangpur city, buys around 700-800 diyas every year to illuminate his home, shop and temples.

According to the Rangpur Puja Udjapan Parishad, around 2.50 lakh Hindu families across the five districts buy 300-800 lamps each to illuminate homes, temples, cremation grounds and businesses.

Dhiman Bhattacharya, convener of the Rangpur Divisional Priest Society, said, "Lighting 'diya' is not merely a decoration but a part of prayers for the peace of departed souls, and for well-being in the world."

New train planned for Dhaka-Noakhali route

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Noakhali*

Work is under way to upgrade Noakhali's railway infrastructure, including a Tk 40-crore project to rehabilitate the nearly 50km Laksam-Noakhali rail line and plans to introduce the Subarnachar Express on the Dhaka-Noakhali route.

Md Kamruzzaman Chowdhury, senior secretary to the Ministry of Public Administration, disclosed the plans to journalists on Friday while inspecting platform expansion work at Choumuhani Railway Station. The work includes a 300-foot-long and 15-foot-wide platform extension, floor paving, completion of the unfinished access control system, and improvements to station buildings and sheds.

Once completed, the expanded platform will allow passengers to safely board and get off 16-coach trains.

The secretary said the suspended Noakhali Express and the new intercity Subarnachar Express would begin operations soon, while the existing Upakul Express fleet would be modernised.

Bangladesh Railway Chief Engineer (East Zone) Tanvirul Islam said a tender was floated on November 5 for the rehabilitation project.

The work includes replacing worn-out rails and steel sleepers, laying fresh ballast, upgrading fittings, constructing bank protection walls and improving vulnerable level crossings. He said the Subarnachar Express launch had been delayed by a shortage of metre-gauge locomotives.

Tenders have been floated to procure 30 new metre-gauge locomotives within the next two to three years under the Chattogram-Dohazari project, he added.

Each locomotive is expected to cost around Tk 50 crore, bringing the total to about Tk 1,500 crore.

1,300 jars of banned cosmetics seized at Ctg airport

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Chattogram*

Customs Intelligence and Investigation Directorate (CIID) officials seized 1,300 jars of banned beauty cream, weighing around 40 kilogrammes, from the baggage of a Dubai returnee at Shah Amanat International Airport in Chattogram yesterday.

The seized products, branded as Fresh & White Beauty Cream, have an estimated market value of Tk 8 lakh, according to a press release.

Acting on a tip-off, CIID officials scanned and searched the baggage of Mohammed Jahed, a passenger arriving on Biman Bangladesh Airlines from Dubai to Chattogram, and recovered the product.

Import of the banned cosmetics violated the provisions of the applicable Import Policy Order since such products could pose risks to public health, said the release.

Nine killed in road accidents across four districts

STAR REPORT

At least nine people were killed and 52 others injured in separate road accidents in Jamalpur, Chattogram, Mymensingh and Lalmonirhat yesterday, according to reports from our correspondents.

In Jamalpur, four people, including three members of a family, were killed and three others injured when a truck hit a motorcycle before crashing into an easy-bike in Melandah upazila.

The deceased were identified as Morshed Alam, 25, his wife Ikrama, 20, their eight-month-old daughter Rifa, and motorcycle rider Shawkat Hasan Likhan, 45.

ATM Mahmudul Haque, officer-in-charge of Melandah Police Station, said the accident occurred on the Jamalpur-Dewanganj regional highway when a Jamalpur-bound truck hit an oncoming motorcycle before crashing into an easy-bike carrying the family.

The three family members died on the spot. Police detained the truck driver, he added.

In Chattogram, two people, including a teacher, were killed and at least 40 others injured when a bus carrying teachers, students and guardians on a study tour plunged into a roadside ditch in Satkania upazila around 4:00am.

The deceased were Sohana Afroz, 45, a teacher at Bakshimul Sunnia Islamia Senior Madrasa in Cumilla, and Md Israfil, 56, husband of another teacher.

The Cox's Bazar-bound Tisha Paribahan bus was travelling from Cumilla when it skidded off the Chattogram-Cox's Bazar highway near Khuni Bottal in Keranihat, said OC Md Nurul Absar of Dohajari Highway Police Station.

The driver fled, while police seized the bus.

In Mymensingh, two unidentified men, aged between 28 and 32, were killed and five others injured in a head-on collision between a dump truck and a pickup van in Nandail upazila around 7:00pm.

In Lalmonirhat, an 11-year-old madrasa student was killed and four others injured when a truck collided head-on with a battery-run auto-rickshaw on the Lalmonirhat-Burimari highway in Aditmari upazila.

The deceased is Habibur Rahman, from Daksin Batris Hazari area of the upazila. The accident occurred near Khatapara Mazar in Saptibari Union, said OC Nazmus Sakib Sajib of Aditmari Police Station.

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INVITATION OF TENDER

East West University (EWU) invites tenders from bona fide and interested suppliers or firms for the procurement/service of the following items:

1. Procurement of 2800 pcs Table Crest (Souvenir/Gift) for the 26th Convocation 2027 of East West University.
2. Supply & Installation of Network Switches for East West University.
3. Procurement and Installation of CCTV Cameras along with accessories for the laboratories of East West University.
4. Procurement of Exam Answer Scripts (200,000 pcs General and 110,000 pcs OBE based) for the office of the Controller of Examinations of EWU.
5. Procurement of 02 (two) different types of Online UPS (6 KVA & 10 KVA) for different labs of the Department of CSE (Room No.215,431,435 & 436).
6. Procurement of 22 sets of Computer with Monitor and UPS for the Department of CSE (Hardware Interfacing Lab).

Detailed tender schedules, including terms and conditions, may be collected from the Finance & Accounts Department (1st Floor) until **25 November 2026**, during office hours (**until 2:30 PM**) on working days. Tender schedule of item sl no.5 & 6 will also be available through the e-tendering portal: **http://etender.ewubd.edu**

The non-refundable tender fee is Tk.500.00 (Taka Five Hundred only).

Interested bidders are requested to submit their tenders by **26 November 2026 at 02:00 PM**, either through the e-tendering system (as specified in the schedule) or by dropping hard copies in the tender box located at the Office of the Treasurer (Room # 316, 2nd Floor). Tenders will be opened **on the same day at 02:30 PM in** the Conference Room (4th Floor) in the presence of bidders' representatives.

All submissions must clearly mention the item name on the envelope. **Failure to comply may result in disqualification**.

EWU reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders, either in whole or in part, without assigning any reason. The University's decision shall be final.

Chief of HR & Logistics

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Memo No.: GMO/BOG/e-TENDER/OTM/2026/03 Date: 08.11.2026

e-Tender Notice (OTM- Framework Agreement)

This is to notify all concerned that the following e-tender is invited in the National e-GP Portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of goods as follows-

Tender ID & Ref.no.	Name of the Goods	Publication, Last Selling, Closing Date & time
1364348, SBPLC/GMO/BOGURA/OTM/PC/BOG_NORTH/2026/5	10 (Ten) Desktop Computer for Branches of Sonali Bank PLC, Principal Office, Bogura North, Bogura	Publication: 08-Nov-2026 10:15 Last Selling: 18-Nov-2026 15:00 Closing : 18-Nov-2026 15:30
1364427, SBPLC/GMO/BOGURA/OTM/PC/SIRAJGONJ/2026/6	10 (Ten) Desktop Computer for Branches of Sonali Bank PLC, Principal Office, Sirajgonj.	Publication: 08-Nov-2026 10:20 Last Selling: 18-Nov-2026 15:00 Closing : 18-Nov-2026 15:30

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted. Please visit the National e-GP system portal(https://www.eprocure.gov.bd) to submit e-Tender.

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