

IN BRIEF


Wolf seen after decades killed in Bangladesh

DHAKA
The first Indian grey wolf sighted in Bangladesh in eight decades has been beaten to death by farmers after it preyed on their livestock, wildlife experts said on Sunday. The grey wolf was last seen in Bangladesh in 1949, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature. Locals in a town near the Sundarbans captured and killed the wolf. **AFP**


Italian dupes people by posing as Clooney, held

BANGKOK
An Italian who allegedly posed as Hollywood superstar George Clooney to sell clothes online has been arrested with his wife in Thailand after years on the run. Francesco Galdelli and Vanja Goffi tricked people into sending them money. **AFP**

For U.S. war veterans, dogs offer some solace

Pet therapy useful for those with PTSD



Canine comfort: A U.S. Army veteran with his service dog at the Paws of War office in New York. **AFP**

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
NESCONSET**

Michael Kidd, now 84 years old, fought in the Korean War. His young German shepherd Millie helps calm him down when things start to swirl, usually at night.

Harry Stolberg — a 42-year-old former Marine — has a chocolate Labrador named Rocky who wakes him up from his troubled dreams.

The U.S. veterans suffer from Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and have sought solace through pet therapy — namely, a loyal dog to keep them company. The shelter animals are

either trained or being trained to help them through difficult times by Paws of War, an association funded entirely by private donations that then provides the service dogs free of charge.

“The biggest thing is he wakes me up from nightmares,” Mr. Stolberg said of three-year-old Rocky. “He can open the door, come in my room, turn on the lights, take my blinders off me... and lick my hands so I wake up.”

Mr. Kidd, who suffers from severe PTSD, has been able to reduce his intake of medication thanks to Millie.

G20 agrees to tackle ocean plastic waste

Japan offers to lead the world in efforts to reduce trash

**REUTERS
KARUIZAWA**

Group of 20 Environment Ministers agreed on Sunday to adopt a new implementation framework for actions to tackle the issue of marine plastic waste on a global scale, the Japanese government said after hosting the two-day ministerial meeting.

Environment and Energy Ministers of the Group of 20 major economies met this weekend in Karuizawa, northwest of Tokyo, ahead of the G20 summit in Osaka, western Japan, on June 28-29.

One of the top issues was ocean plastic waste as images of plastic debris-strewn beaches and dead animals with stomachs full of plastic have sparked outrage with many countries banning plastic bags outright.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has said that he wants his country to lead the world in reducing marine plastic trash, including developing biodegradables and other innovations.



Call to action: An aerial view of a whale artwork made from marine plastic waste at a harbour in China. **AFP**

The new framework is aimed at facilitating further concrete action on marine waste, though on a voluntary basis, after the G20 Hamburg Summit in Germany adopted the “G20 action plan on marine litter” in 2017.

Life-cycle approach

Under the new framework, G20 members will promote a comprehensive life-cycle approach to prevent and reduce plastic litter discharge to the oceans through various measures and international cooperation.

They will also share best

practices, promote innovation and boost scientific monitoring and analytical methodologies.

“I’m glad that we, including emerging countries and developing countries, were able to form a broad international framework,” Yoshiaki Harada, Japan’s Environment Minister, told a news conference.

Japan plans to host the first meeting under the new framework this autumn when officials of environmental ministers in the G20 countries are due to meet for the G20 Resource Efficiency Dialogue.

Dutch armed forces take part in Yoga Day

31 cities in the Netherlands host event

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
THE HAGUE**

A large number of people, including the representatives of Dutch armed forces, gathered in front of the Royal Palace on the prestigious Dam Square in Amsterdam on Sunday to participate in the largest ever yoga celebrations in the Netherlands.

The event was inaugurated by the Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh Jai Ram Thakur, a statement issued by the Indian Embassy said.

Himachal Industries Minister Bikram Singh, India’s Ambassador to the Netherlands Venu Rajamony, cricketer Suresh Raina,

Dutch actor, model and photographer Micky Hoogendijk, among others took part in the opening ceremony.

This is the first time the Dam Square is host to a public event related to India.

Dutch Ministry of Defense has introduced yoga exercises for armed forces to enrich their training programme and reduce stress. Representatives of the Royal Dutch army also joined the celebrations for the first time.

International Yoga Day was also celebrated across 31 cities in the Netherlands - which included yoga workshops, meditation sessions.



Health is wealth: Participants take part in a group session of traditional yoga at the Dam Square in Amsterdam. **AFP**

Assam temple bids adieu to rare turtle hatchlings



Hatchling of Indian roofed turtle displayed at Hayagriv Madhab Temple at Hajo in Assam. **SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT**

They are being shifted to a zoo for the greater cause of reintroducing the species into the wild

**RAHUL KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI**

For the first time since it was established 294 years ago, a temple in Guwahati has let its presiding deity play second fiddle to the offspring of its resident reptiles — the rare black softshell turtle (*Nilssonina nigricans*).

The Ugratara Temple, one of the city’s landmarks, organised a special *darshan* of

34 hatchlings of the freshwater turtle on Sunday.

Members of the temple committee and devotees turned up for what was essentially a ceremony to welcome and bid goodbye to these hatchlings.

The welcome was because the eggs of black softshell were collected from temple ponds for incubation at the Assam State Zoo. And the

goodbye was because these hatchlings will be reintroduced in the wild, never to return.

“It was a sort of homecoming for the progeny of the turtles that have been part of our lives in Jorpukehuri,” said Kailash Sarma, member of the temple committee.

Jorpukehuri translates into twin tanks, one of which

abuts Ugratara Temple that is dedicated to Goddess Tara, a ‘fiery’ avatar of Kali.

“The black softshell turtle is extinct in the wild. The few that remain are in the ponds of some temples in Assam. We started the conservation programme by involving the temples and collected the eggs in December last year. Of the 70 eggs, 34 hatched in the zoo about 10 days ago,”

Jayaditya Purkayastha of conservation NGO Help Earth told *The Hindu*.

“We were sad to let the hatchlings, the pride of our temple, go back to the zoo. But it is heartening to know they are going away for the greater cause of reintroducing the species into the wild,” said Parameswar Sarma, the chief priest.

He agreed that the ponds

are too crowded for the hatchlings to be brought back. A similar homecoming of 11 hatchlings of the equally endangered Indian roofed turtle (*Pangshura tecta*) and the Indian tent turtle (*Pangshura tentoria*) was organised at the Hayagriv Madhab Temple in Hajo. Help Earth members had collected 150 eggs of these two turtle species a few months ago.

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