

MUSTAFA ZAMAN

IT is not until one reaches the riverside that the panorama presents itself in its full glory. Standing on the bank of the river Bangshi at Fordnagar, Savar, the quaint beauty overwhelms us. We, a mixed contingent of media personnel and visitors, have been bused to the riverbank. Before the ferry of the Bengal Foundation arrives to get us across, there is enough time to contemplate the danger triggered by the sight of the swelling water -- looking yellow-brown and restless.

As the steel-bodied boat arrives, many resort to mock-alarm to cheer the crowd. Though my photographer and I, both of non-swimming kind, put up a brave face, we have been apprehensive of the over-the-danger-mark flow of the water from the start.

We were also ready to conquer our fears. The ferry -- a motor-boat with plastic garden chairs for more than 20 people to sit with a tarpaulin roof on it -- seems like a stable structure. As the vessel rushes across the river, dodging the other regular boats plying along its flow, I see no sign of a rest house that is supposed to sit on the other bank. Blanketed by trees, the other side looks like a stretch of untouched land. As the boat draws near, a brick-built *ghat* with well-designed steps becomes visible, I realise the first sign of construction that strives to blend in with the rural setting.



Monir with the participants in front of the Bengal Shilpalaya.



The young meets the old: The conductor takes an interest in the works of the youngest participants.

Bengal Foundation Workshop