CUDS at St. Martin's

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"WE are bored. We need a break," said one of the members of CUDS (Chittagong University Debating Society). I have never been to St. Martin's. I really wanted to go there someday. So, I persuaded our president and he finally agreed. We all were excited and our joys knew no bound because several times the plans foiled due to our regular work pressure.

On 8th March we started our journey towards Cox's Bazar at 3 pm. As we were moving we felt that we were in a dream. We didn't even think that our dream would come true so early. After a while we requested the bus conductor



to play the music. It was really good to look at the countryside with music in the background. In the afternoon, as the bus stopped, we took some snacks and tea. After a while, as the sun dipped on the western horizon, we requested the driver to stop so that we could look at the setting sun that painted the sky with myriad hues of colour. The scene was breathtaking. At one point, the sun was just at the top of the trees and the rays like celestial ropes reached out to us to steal our souls and hearts. Literally, we even forgot to breathe. Thank God that some of us didn't forget to take photographs of the moment.

The bus stopped several times on the way to offer refreshments to the passengers. After a long journey we reached Cox's Bazar. We halted there for one night. We got to know that 'Pappu Bhai,' the then president of 'CUDS,' had managed a rest house where we could pass the night. We kept our luggage there and then immediately ran to the beach. Lots of people were roaming around the beach. We stayed there for one hour. The sea was calm and quiet. We had brought a football from the beach side market to play at 'St. Martin's, a coral island. The journey and walk had worked up our appetites and we went to 'Pousha,' a small restaurant at Cox's Bazar. We decided to have our supper there. After having our meal we went to the rest house to sleep. We all were gossiping and drinking tea and finally turned in at 1 am.

The next morning we headed for Teknaf. We booked a microbus for the journey. On the lonely road to Teknaf we felt a strange kind of lightheartedness. We stopped the bus for half an hour to take breakfast. And then we took off again. We looked at the natural beauty through the window and it satisfied both the eyes and mind. At 9 o'clock we boarded 'KEARI SINBAD,' a small ship, to go to St. Martin's. We couldn't imagine what was going to happen next. As we were getting nearer to the deep sea, all the passengers started to scream. It seemed to us that we were in a Hollywood movie. We couldn't help but be fascinated at the sight of the deep blue sea. Sometimes we thought that it was liquid blue sky or rather a mirror that reflected the sky. All on a sudden, we celebrated the birthday of Moon, a member of CUDS, as it was planned at Cox's Bazar. To refresh ourselves, Sazid bhai, ex-president of CUDS, entertained us with coffee. At 12:30 pm we got off at St. Martin's. We rented five vans to reach our dormitory.

It is always an exhilarating experience when you reach a place for the first time to explore. You have a lot to discover, a lot of expectations when you get there. Your voices echo round and the smell of emptiness fills up your lungs. You can feel the presence of the past and future, but never the present.

The dormitory had a huge veranda, open on all sides and then a big open deck like a terrace. We walked down to the edge of the roof and then held our breath. Straight ahead of us was the 'Bay of Bengal,' tranquil and calm, like the blue liquid sky. We all were really astonished looking at such a vast and blue sea with huge corals scattered everywhere. We the ten members divided into two groups and started to play football. Then we went for a swim in the sea and got back to the hotel. After taking tea, in the late afternoon, we again went to the beach. The sun looked as if it was about to get down in the deep blue sea. We took photos. It was surely a lovely scene to watch.

It was now quite dark .... the sun had set a few minutes ago. The sky was getting to be darker than before but it was illuminated with crimson and violet hues of colour across the western horizon that reflected on the sea to make the whole ambience utterly magnificent. We looked at the heavens, the stars were appearing in ones and twos.

