

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Jarul flower just before the breeze.

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

Summer Breeze

I am reminded again that a breeze in summertime is the sweetest thing.

Two hours after an unexpected but welcome early morning rain, the heat returns with a vengeance. It is not even eight am, but the sun glows hot, threatening another merciless summer's day.

Then the summer breeze begins to blow.

I see the breeze through my camera's viewfinder before I feel it, because the Jarul flower I am photographing stops sitting still for me. In seconds the breeze envelops me with its coolness.

The photographer in me dislikes the breeze because the slightest movement can upset my picture. But at this moment, my mind's photographic complaints are vetoed by my body's need for self-preservation. The breeze, you see, not only cools me, but it also confuses the nasty mosquitoes that see me as their all-you-can-eat breakfast. They are tiny and fast, creating large purple welts where they bite. The breeze throws them off their deadly trajectory.

This breeze has no set direction - it blows this way and that. The trees, which are full of new leaves after winter, respond with their own rhythm. Some leaves, like the small ones of a *menda* or *neem* tree, undulate like waves with the breeze. The branches flicker between the darker and shinier faces of the leaves. The tiny leaves growing from the trunk of *babla* trees look as if they are

about to wriggle free and fly away.

Next to the pond grows a coconut tree. The spine of its large leaf sways gently to and fro, but the long, thin strands of the leaf swing to their own beat. The languid motion conjures visions of blissful exotic islands. On a nearby field, puffy dry wildflowers called *pishach* disintegrate from their long stalks and drift away in the breeze.

Jackfruit leaves, being heavy, don't like to move in the breeze. The only concession this solid tree makes to the breeze is to drop a few yellow leaves. The mango tree will not allow its leaves and branches to be seduced by the breeze, either. But the green mangoes dangling from its branches are another matter. They are here for a short time and happily dance with the breeze.

In Italy in summertime, a harsh wind blows in from the North African desert. It even has its own name: Scirocco. People in the south of France dread the hot unpleasant summer wind called Mistral. Summer winds in other parts of Africa are called Harmattan or Khamsin and evoke fear because of their ferocity. In America, the summer wind called Chinook blows down from the mountains heating everything along its path.

But we are lucky. Our summers may be hot but our nameless breezes, antidote to the heat, are a pleasure of life.

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MAROONED IN KLANG

Ship owners promise to bring back 13 seamen

PORIMOL PALMA

Upon pressure from the Malaysian authorities, Bangladeshi company HRC Shipping yesterday promised to bring back home 13 seamen who have been in a detained ship at Port Klang for over a year due to legal tangles.

Malaysian branch manager of HRC Shipping Kazi Nurul Alam sought a week's time in this regard, said Musleh Uddin Ahmed, chief officer of the ship MV Banga Biraj, over the phone.

The 1,690-tonne ship was detained on May 4 last year following a case filed by the port authorities on charges of damaging a crane. The 13 seamen were not working in the ship when the accident happened in 2008.

General Manager of the owning company Capt Shahjahan Siraj said they are not getting anyone to replace the seamen.

The crew said they have been living in a dreadful condition as the temperature is very high at the port and air coolers in the cabins became dysfunctional.

Following a news item published in Malaysia's newspaper The Star on May 24, the

Port Klang authorities and representatives of International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) held a meeting yesterday and asked HRC Shipping to send the seamen home immediately and pay off all arrears to them.

If the shipping company fails to comply with the order, arrangements would be made to sell the ship and pay off the seamen, said Musleh Uddin Ahmed quoting ITF representative Ramu Rafiq.

James Nayagam, commissioner of Malaysia's human rights commission, in an email to The Daily Star said they tried to reach an amicable solution. They will appoint lawyers for the seamen, if necessary, to pursue a case so the company is forced to release them.

Banga Biraj's Captain AKM Alamgir's wife Kamruzzahan said the company has assured them of the seamen's return many times, but nothing happened.

The seamen said amid all the complexities, neither the Bangladeshi High Commission in Malaysia nor the shipping department in Dhaka took any steps to help bring them home.



Participants at the preliminary test for the 31st Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examinations yesterday. The photo was taken from Eden Women's College in the city.

PHOTO: STAR

PM returns home

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina returned home yesterday from Paris via Dubai.

An Emirates flight carrying the PM and her delegation landed at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport at 7:45pm.

She left Paris for Dubai on Thursday night en route to Dhaka. Finance Minister AMA Muhiith, Deputy Leader of Parliament Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, LGRD Minister Syed Asharul Islam, Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury, Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain, PM's adviser HT Imam, chiefs of the three services and diplomats received the prime minister at the VIP terminal.

Earlier, Hasina left Dhaka on May 15 for Geneva, Switzerland.

31st BCS preliminary test held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The preliminary test for the 31st Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examinations under Public Service Commission (PSC) was held yesterday.

Some 1.63 lakh students took the one-hour test held in 118 centres in Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, and Sylhet divisions simultaneously at 10:00am.

The participants got confusion, as the mathematics part of the question paper did not carry correct answers to two questions.

Contacted, PSC officials said they will decide on the matter, and whatever is decided will go in favour of the examinees.

The participants were not allowed to carry mobile phones, scientific calculators, electronic devices, bags, and books in the examination halls.

On January 26 this year, the PSC published the advertisement on 31st BCS against the 2,108 vacant posts for general and technical or professional cadres.



Ministers, chiefs of the three services and diplomats receive Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the VIP terminal of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport last night on her return from Paris.

PHOTO: PID

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 40th death anniversary of martyred intellectual captain AKM Nurul Absar.

Shahid Buddhijibi Captain AKM Nurul Absar Shmrity Sanghad arranged a milad and doa mahfil in their office at house-30, road-11, at Baridhara in the city.

A discussion will also be held at Liberation War Museum in Shegunbagicha on June 3.

Martyred Nurul Absar damaged around 20 tanks of the Pakistani army in 1971 when he was in charge of a tank convoy.

The government released a postage stamp in 2001 with his profile, while a parade ground of Saidpur Cantonment was named after him.

Surgery patients suffer at govt hospitals

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years in this regard.

The ministry in 2005 decided to create 250 new posts after one such request, but no government order was issued eventually.

Brig Gen Shahidul Haque Mallick, director of Dhaka Medical College Hospital, said he sent a proposal for creating 2,000 new posts including 15 anesthetists for his hospital in last June. The ministry has yet to respond.

Health Secretary Mohammad Humayun Kabir says creating new posts is not easy. It needs involvement of the health, public administration (formerly known as establishment) and finance ministries.

"The process of creating new posts for anesthetologists is

underway," he told The Daily Star on Thursday.

Kabir, however, could not say when the process will yield result.

Surgeon-anesthesiologist ratio at DMCH is 25:1, which is usually 3:1 around the world, says Mozaffar of the society of anesthetologists.

The 1,250-bed DMCH, country's biggest public hospital, is running with 14 anesthetists. The number remains the same since 1974 when the number of patients was less than half the present volume.

Around 1,400 surgeries take place at DMCH every month. The number could easily get to 1,800 had there been adequate

anesthesiologists, doctors say, adding that it would have also reduced the number of casualties.

During a visit to the hospital yesterday, this correspondent found Subol Sarker of Satkhira waiting for a brain operation. He said he came 38 days ago.

"Doctors say they'll do an operation for my brain tumour. But they haven't fixed any date yet. I don't know how long I'll have to wait," said the 55-year-old day labourer.

Doctors at the neurosurgery department said they will not be able to operate on all the waiting patients even in the next three months.

"The backlog of patients

wouldn't have been such large had there been more operating theatres, neurosurgeons and anesthetists," said Asif Moazzam Barkatullah, associate professor of neurosurgery at DMCH.

The situation in other public hospitals, especially those in district headquarters, is even worse.

The 800-bed Mymensingh Medical College Hospital is running with six anesthetists since 1962.

Junior consultants from upazila health complex are working there on deputation, hospital sources told The Daily Star.

Patients have to wait for over a month for operation, they said over the phone.

Just six anesthetists have to work in 14 operating theatres of Chittagong Medical College Hospital. The hospital needs at least 10 more.

Despite having all surgical equipment, no operation takes place at Khagrachhari District Sadar Hospital except for caesareans. The 100-bed hospital has neither an anesthetist nor any surgery consultant, said district Civil Surgeon AKM Ali Ashraf.

Civil surgeons of Rangpur District Sadar Hospital and Madaripur District Sadar Hospital, among others, also said they could not do a single operation in the last one year for lack of anesthetists and surgeons.

NEWS IN brief

Fakhrul condemns PM's remark on Khaleda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP's acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday condemned the prime minister's recent comments that Khaleda Zia and her family were amassing a fortune 'through corruption'.

In Paris Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina reportedly said Khaleda and her family members have amassed a huge wealth through corruption.

Meanwhile BNP will accord a grand reception to Khaleda Zia on her return to the city tomorrow.

Fakhrul told reporters after a joint meeting of party leaders at BNP's central office in Nayapalton.

New Jersey Senate on May 23 honoured Khaleda Zia as a 'fighter for democracy' during her visit to the US, her first since she was defeated in the last general election.

Talking to the press, Alamgir also protested the killing of Kazi Abdur Rahman, a general secretary of BNP's unit in city ward no 39. He demanded the arrest and trial of those involved in the killing.

Party leaders Selima Rahman, Amanullah Aman, Ruhul Kabir Rizvi, among others, were present alongside presidents and general secretaries of BNP's front and associate units at the meeting.

Rahman murder: Police clueless

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police have yet to find out the cause of the murder of Kazi Abdur Rahman, general secretary of Dhaka city ward no. 39 BNP, who was shot dead by unidentified criminals at East Tejturi Bazar in the city Thursday night.

Investigators, however, said they were carrying out the investigation putting emphasis on the victim's political and business rivalry.

Abdur Rahman was an aspirant councilor for the upcoming Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) election and the organising secretary of Bangladesh Truck Owners' Association.

The victim's brother Mujibur Rahman yesterday filed a murder case with Tejtura Police Station in this regard accusing some unidentified people.

Tejtura OC Mahbubur said, "So far we picked up eight persons and interrogated them but found nothing significant."

He said they, however, have made it sure that about 13 attackers took part in the killing mission.

"As Kazi Abdur Rahman started campaign for his candidature as councilor in the DCC election, his rivals within the party might have a hand in the incident," said the OC.

Abdur Rahman, father of two children, used to live at his flat in Bashundhara in Badda but he used to spend most of his time in Tejturi Bazar area for his transport business.

Woman, grandson die in storm

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

An elderly woman and her grandson were killed after a tree uprooted during a storm fell on them at village Khamar Dhannaruha in Shaghata upazila yesterday afternoon.

Lazli Begum, 60, and her grandson Bipul Fakir, 5, were standing on the house yard when the tree fell on them, killing the two on the spot.

Two stalkers jailed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

A mobile court on Thursday sentenced two youths to six months' imprisonment on charge of sexually harassing a girl of class VI in Sundarganj upazila.

The convicted stalkers are Asadul, 18, son of Noor Mohammed and Farhad, 22, son of Mostafa of Monmath village in Sundarganj.

Upon complaint by the victim's father, Sundarganj Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) led a mobile court and arrested the two.

The UNO later convicted and awarded the stalkers six months' imprisonment.

Asadul and Farhad who used to stalk the girl on her way to and from school.



100% GLUCOSE

Change in temperature unlikely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Rangpur, Rajshahi and Dhaka divisions in 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6:40pm and rises tomorrow at 5:12am.

Country's highest temperature 36.3 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 28.05 degrees at Khepupara.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	32.8	27.0	80	76
Chittagong	30.8	25.8	76	76
Rajshahi	36.3	25.8	74	71
Rangpur	35.7	26.3	73	69
Khulna	34.3	26.1	78	72
Barisal	33.5	26.2	86	73
Sylhet	34.7	26.5	82	72
City's Bazar	31.0	25.8	85	80

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