

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Better to eat the neighbour's hay.

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

Can't Live With Them, Can't Live Without Them

Perhaps the title of this essay led you to believe we are discussing the opposite sex. Sorry to disappoint: today our topic is the cow.

They are barely noticeable in Dhaka outside of Bakra Eid time, but cows are an integral part of village life. Their uses are well-known. What is less obvious is that cows are also a nuisance for villagers. Put another way, my cow is (mainly) useful but your cow is (always) a nuisance.

Why, you ask? After all, don't we all have a soft spot for this gentle creature that among other things - helped us pass essay writing in Class IV? ("The cow has two eyes, two ears and one tail." Remember?)

Why should this docile, grass-chewing, herbivorous creature be a nuisance?

The answer is because he will chew the leaves of your trees before you can shout "Stop!"

Let's say after months of searching you finally locate a good Thai longan seedling at a nursery in Joydebpur. So, one morning, braving traffic jams and angry garment workers, you go there to personally inspect and buy it. You have prepared the ground with a hole and some rotten cow-dung to fertilize it. You plant the tree tenderly with your own hands as visions of sugary longans dance in your head.

A few days later, the neighbour's cow saunters over for a visit. He is feeling hungry from the exertion and checks out what is on offer. "Mmmm,

those leaves on that little tree look yummy," he thinks, and proceeds to chew up all the leaves of your longan tree. So now your precious tree looks no different than any other stick in the ground.

This need not be a total catastrophe. If you are lucky, the attack took place during rainy season and the tree will probably produce shoots again. Because of the attack, you are likely to take even better care of it and it might grow fine.

The problem is that the cow might strike again. Or he may wander over to the new jackfruit seedlings you have planted with tender loving care. There is nothing closer to the cow's heart than jackfruit leaves.

So, like other villagers, you protect your seedlings with the cylindrical fences called *Hupri*. Not to be outdone, the cow will use his head and shoulders to ram the *Hupri* into the ground so he can get to the leaves. Therefore, you must continually reinforce the *Hupri* with stakes in the ground.

There is a more drastic solution. It is called the *Khoar*. This is like a prison for cows in our villages. If you bring a cow to the *Khoar*, you get Taka 25. However, to release your cow, you pay Taka 50.

If all else fails, there is always Kebabs. But be warned: this might provoke your neighbor to sneak in and chop down that Rambutan tree of yours that is almost ready to bear fruit!

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3 electrocuted

METRO DESK

Three people were electrocuted in Dhaka and Lalmonirhat yesterday.

Our staff correspondent reports: A Jewellery worker was electrocuted at his workplace near New Market in the city yesterday.

Victim Mohammad Shohag, 16, of Comilla Jewellery Workshop, came in contact with a snapped live wire as he went to switch on an electronic device around 11:00am.

Seriously wounded Shohag was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where the doctors declared him dead, said Safiqul Haque Mandol, sub-inspector of New Market Police Station.

Lalmonirhat correspondent adds: Two people, including a woman, were electrocuted at separate incidents in Aditmari upazila yesterday.

They are Jagodish Chandra Burmon, 28, son of Shotish Chandra Burmon of Velabari village, and Farzana Begum, 25, wife of Shamsul Alam of Chandonpat village.

Jagodish was electrocuted in his house at around 12:00 noon when he was setting electricity cables in his room, said police.

Farzana was electrocuted at her room at noon when she was trying to connect electricity to watch television.

Woman dies taking pesticide by mistake

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A housewife died after she allegedly drank pesticide she mistook for water in the city's Dhalpur area yesterday morning.

Shilpi Begum, 25, is the wife of Saudi expatriate Lat Mia. Shilpi had prepared a solution of pesticide with water in a glass to spray inside her room the night before and forgot to discard it, said her brother Sanaulah.

She drank from the glass in the morning, mistaking it for water, and fell sick around 7:30am. She was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared her dead.

NEWS IN brief

Chittagong Biodiversity Festival begins today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Alliance Française de Chittagong in association with The Daily Star will organise a three-day long "Chittagong Biodiversity Festival-2011" at the organisation here beginning at 4:00pm today.

Editor and Publisher of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam will inaugurate the festival as the chief guest. The festival would feature quiz competition, painting exhibition, prize giving ceremony, screening of films Micro cosmos, Baraka and Le Vieil Homme qui plantait des arbres and presentation and discussion on "how to address biodiversity with photo media".

The festival will also be collaborated by Dainik Purbokone, Little Jewels, Chittagong Grammar School, Fulki and Dr Khastagir Government Girls' High School.

2 JCD men stabbed at SAU

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Two activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) Sylhet Agriculture University (SAU) unit were stabbed in an attack by Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) men on the campus yesterday.

Anwar Hossain Rana and Khaled Masud Sujon were admitted to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital.

A group of BCL men swooped on Rana and Sujon, students of second year of Fisheries Faculty, when they along with other students of the faculty were to start for an excursion trip to Khulna in the morning.

JMB man arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday arrested a member of banned Jamaat ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) from Kamarbari area of Bagmara upazila.

Motiar Rahman Bachchu, 57, was nabbed from Kamarbari Dakhil Madrassa at around 4:45am following an arrest warrant against him, said a Rab press release.

Woman dies after hit by train

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

A woman died after being hit by a train near Patgram Railway Station of Patgram upzila in Lalmonirhat yesterday morning.

The deceased was identified as Renu Begum, 44, wife of Sekendar Ali, a resident of Station Para of the upazila's Patgram municipality.



People of low-income group through a dealer of open market sale (OMS) to buy flour at cheap rate in the city's Shewrapara yesterday as prices of essentials keep on rising.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Zohra Kazi's birthday today

METRO DESK

Today is the 99th birth anniversary of Dr Zohra Begum Kazi, who was the first female Muslim doctor in undivided Bengal.

Zohra Begum Kazi Janma Ujapan Parishad has chalked out elaborate programmes to mark the day, says a press release.

The veteran doctor served as the head of the department of Gynaecology of Dhaka Medical College for long and also worked for different government and non-government organisations.

In recognition of her outstanding contribution to medical services and the Language Movement, she was awarded Tamgha-e-Pakistan, Begum Rokeya Padak, Ekushhey Padak and BMA Gold Medal.

Zohra Begum was born on October 15, 1912 and passed away on November 7, 2007.

CU classes resume tomorrow

CU CORRESPONDENT

Classes at Chittagong University (CU) will resume tomorrow.

The university went on a 15-day vacation from October 1 due to Durga Puja and autumn vacation.

However, the university offices, which remained closed for eight days from October 3 reopened on Tuesday.

Three held with fake currency

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three men were arrested by Detective Branch (DB) of police after fake money worth Tk 25 lakh and the materials to produce them were found in a counterfeit currency factory in the city's Kaderia Housing of Mohammadpur yesterday.

The arrested Mohammad Humyun Kabir, 40, and his employee Abul Khayer, 42, resided on the third floor of House 1 on Road 1 of Kaderia Housing while his accomplice Palash, 35, lived in Mirpur.

The seized materials include several thousand sheets of paper, some partially printed; around 25 wooden frames to produce watermark, hot foil used in printing, toner, glue, two printers and a computer, said DB Assistant Commissioner Moshir Rahman.

Fake currency worth around Tk one crore could be made with the materials found, he said.

Form commission to control house rent

Urge tenants' council

UNB, Dhaka

Jatiya Bharatia Parishad (national tenants' council) yesterday demanded that a house rent policy be formulated as landlords in the city realise "excessive rents" from tenants.

The council also urged the government to form a high-powered commission to control and monitor the rented houses and shops across the country.

The council came up with the demands at a human chain formed in front of Jatiya Press Club at 11.30am.

Council president Dr Jalal Ahmed and general secretary Mir Mofazzal Hossain led the human chain formed to press for their

17-point demand.

Other demands include enforcement of the House Rent Control Act, 1991, reducing the existing house rent by 50 percent, making deals between landlords and tenants mandatory, providing rent payment receipts and legal support to tenants by the government in the case of any dispute with their landlords.

According to the House Rent Control Act, 1991, house owners cannot arbitrarily increase house rents and evict their tenants without prior notice, and signing agreement with the tenant before renting out a house and providing receipts for payment of rents. But the law is hardly practiced.



Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) forms a human chain before National Museum at Shahbagh in the city yesterday protesting cutting down of century-old trees on the roadside at Birishir of Netrakona ignoring a High Court order.

PHOTO: STAR

DHAKA TODAY

Mourning Procession

Dhaka University will bring out a mourning day procession. Time: 7:00am. Venue: Aparajeyo Bangla.

Report Launch

World Bank will launch World Development Report 2012. Time: 2:30pm. Venue: Hotel Westin.

Lecture

Asiatic Society of Bangladesh will host a lecture. Time: 4:30pm. Venue: The society.

Workshop

United Nations Development Programme will hold the closing session of a workshop. Time: 2:00pm. Venue: Bangabandhu International Conference Centre.

Roundtable

Saptahik will hold a roundtable. Time: 10:00am. Venue: Biam Foundation.

Eviction

Dhaka Water and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) will conduct an eviction drive. Time: 9:00am. Venue: Mohakhali Khal.

Discussion

Crime Reporters Association (Crab) will hold a discussion. Time: 12:00pm. Venue: Dhaka Reporters Unity.

Seminar

Bangladesh Bank will organise a seminar. Time: 6:30pm. Venue: Brac Inn Auditorium.

Cane Distribution

National Society of the Blind and Partially Sighted (NSBP) will distribute white canes. Time: 3:00pm. Venue: Birdem Hospital.

Rally

The daily Amar Desh will organise a rally. Time: 10:00am. Venue: Jatiya Press Club.

Cane Distribution

Physically Challenged Development Foundation (PDF) will distribute white canes. Time: 11:00am. Venue: Aparajeyo Bangla.

Rally

Karamjibi Nari (KN) will hold a rally. Time: 10:00am. Venue: Jatiya Press Club.

WEATHER TODAY

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

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

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:33pm and rises tomorrow at 5:56am.

Country's highest temperature 35.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 21.5 degrees at Srirangal.

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	34.0	25.0	62	54
Chittagong	32.8	24.3	70	72
Rajshahi	33.7	23.0	72	77
Rangpur	33.8	23.6	72	77
Khulna	33.8	25.8	92	73
Barisal	33.0	25.5	74	83
Sylhet	33.0	25.0	80	81
Cox's Bazar	34.0	24.0	65	66