

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Osprey and half a Fish.

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

The Sundarbans Diary

Wednesday January 18: Noon. Leave Dhaka with friends on train bound for The Sundarbans. At 10pm, the train arrives in Khulna where we spend the night.

Thursday January 19: 6:30am. Board Guide Tours' launch MV *Aboshor*. Wait a few hours for passengers arriving by another train. *Aboshor* carries fourteen crewmembers. Passengers include foreigners from Austria, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Poland, Switzerland, Thailand and the UK, and forty Bangladeshis.

1:00pm. Depart for Mongla cruising the Bhairab river. See duck formations and fleeing dolphins.

2:30pm. Past Mongla, launch enters The Sundarbans, my second time here. Landscape and vegetation change gradually. After Shoronkhola (forest permit formalities) we turn into a narrower river as the forest builds up on both sides.

3pm. We spot our first wildlife, a crocodile sunning on the bank, and approach for a closer look with engine off. Crocodile gives us three minutes before ending the show and sliding into the water. Later, another crocodile bares its teeth before disappearing underwater.

4pm. An osprey flies from the riverbank carrying a half-eaten fish in its talons. Ospreys are legendary fish-eaters:

He'll be to Rome
As is the osprey to the fish, who takes it
By sovereignty of nature. (Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*)

5pm. Boat anchors for night at Kotka.

Friday January 20: 7 am. Bird-watching trip aboard a smaller boat. We enter a side canal, engine off, current carrying us. A thick, palpable mist envelopes everything, creating an enchanted land. Branches reach over the water at odd angles, giant *golpata*

flowers resemble prehistoric fossils, dome-shaped cobwebs hang from *kankra* branches and mangrove roots protrude in all shapes and sizes. We see a Lesser Adjutant, a woodpecker, kingfishers, herons, a *bhimraj*, deer and a jungle-fowl.

10am. Walk 2.5km to Kotka beach, crossing an open space dotted with *boroi* trees resembling giant mushrooms with perfectly even bottom. Deer have "pruned" them uniformly at the height they can reach.

11:30am. Sudden movement atop a tall beachside *gewa* tree: a kingfisher swoops sixty feet across the beach into water, catches its fish, and returns to the tree, all in about five seconds. How did it see its prey from so far?

1:30pm. While returning to boat, we see a *kalo guishap* (water monitor) sunning itself. Its languid eyes watch us, unafraid.

3pm. From deck we watch deer and monkeys playing on the bank against a backdrop of bright green *possur* trees.

4:00pm. Another boat ride for bird-watching on a clear afternoon. An otter family on the bank was preparing to cross the canal. Seeing us they return to the forest, emerging at a safer distance, and cross underwater. We also see shrike and plover birds and a wild boar.

7:00pm. Thick fog complicates navigation of our launch. I keep an eye on the life-vests until my friend points out they are useless in crocodile-infested waters. Fog forces launch to anchor early.

Saturday January 21
Morning. After hiking the boardwalk at Harbaria, where we see fresh tiger pugmarks on the mud and bright red fiddler crabs, we return to Mongla. Goodbye, beautiful Sundarban.

www.facebook.com/tangents.ikabir

AL-backed mayor assaults journo

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

The ruling Awami League (AL) activists of Kalai upazila in the district allegedly beat up a local journalist yesterday afternoon for covering a report on a clash between AL and BNP in the upazila early Thursday.

The injured is Md Shafiul Bari Russell, the district correspondent of Channel-i.

Sources said a group of activists led by Toufiqul Islam Talukdar, mayor of the upazila municipality and general secretary of the upazila AL, attacked and beat up Russell indiscriminately at Kalai Bus Terminal beside Joypurhat-Bogra highway at around 12:30pm.

Locals rescued Russell and took him to Joypurhat Modern Hospital.

Robbers kill schoolgirl in Narsingdi

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

Armed robbers killed a schoolgirl and looted valuables from her home at Ghorashal Urea Fertiliser Factory Staff Quarters in Narsingdi on Thursday night.

The victim, Abida Begum, 14, was a student of Class VIII of Ghorashal Urea Fertiliser Factory High School.

Taking advantage of absence of Abida's parents, a gang of eight to 10 robbers entered the home at about 8:30pm, said Atiqur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Palash Police Station.

They looted cash, gold ornaments and other valuables taking her hostage at gunpoint, the OC said.

As Abida cried out for help, it angered the criminals. They slaughtered Abida, kept her body inside a bathroom and fled.

Abida's father Alamgir Hossain, a sales assistant of the factory, was at a pharmacy shop while her mother was visiting a neighbour's house at the time of the incident, OC Atique added.

Police recovered the body and sent it to Narsingdi Sadar Hospital morgue for an autopsy. A case was filed.



Sramik Front brings out a protest procession before Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday demanding amendment of Bangladesh Labour Act 2006. PHOTO: STAR

NEWS IN brief

BSTI gets Indian accreditation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

In a step that will facilitate Bangladesh's exports, National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB), a constituent of Quality Council of India, granted accreditation to Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI) for its product certification.

The accreditation covers a number of food products and adherence to good hygienic/ manufacturing practices, hazard analysis and critical control point methodology (GMP/GHP/HACCP) based on international standards of Codex Alimentarius Commission.

With this accreditation, BSTI will be able to claim recognition of its certification by Bangladesh's trading partners which in turn would help bring down costs for its exporters and increase their competitiveness in the international market.

BSTI, which applied to NABCB in October, 2010, underwent a rigorous process of assessment as per the applicable international standard, ISO Guide 65.

Couple held for torturing domestic help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A couple was arrested yesterday in connection with torturing a seven-year old domestic help in the city's Sabujbagh area.

Meanwhile, the victim, Shova Akhtar alias Buchi, daughter of Mohammad Babul of Thakurgaon, was admitted to One Stop Crisis Centre (OCC) of Dhaka Medical College Hospital with several marks of injury.

The couple, Shohabur Rahman Salam, 32, a government official, and his wife Poly Begum, 21, was arrested around 3:00pm from their residence at Navana Tower in Uttar Maniknagar following a case filed by the victim's father yesterday, said Kolinda Nath Goldar, investigation officer of Sabujbagh Police Station.

Poly appointed Shova as domestic help around a year back, he said.

Shova's family members noticed the injury marks on her body when she went to visit them in Thakurgaon on Tuesday.

Trader's body found in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered the decomposed body of a businessman at Mohammadpur in the city yesterday afternoon, nine days after he went missing.

The deceased was identified as Abul Based, 35, hailing from Gopalpur of Tangail.

On information, Mohammadpur police recovered the slaughtered body from under a sand field at Dhaka Udyan at about 5:30pm.

He was a micro-credit entrepreneur at Kaderabad Housing in the area, said the police station officer-in-charge Mahmudul Islam.

Police arrested Sharif, a business partner of Based, from his office and took him on a two-day remand following a case.

Robi to help DMP in e-traffic

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mobile telecom operator Robi Axiata Ltd signed an agreement with Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) as an exclusive network operator for their e-Traffic project on Thursday to provide mobile phone service as a tool for traffic management.

Chief human resources officer of Robi Matiul Islam Nowshad and deputy commissioner (DC) Headquarter of DMP Habibur Rahman inked the agreement on behalf of their respective organisations at a city hotel, Robi said in a statement.

Under this agreement, Robi will provide mobile related services to DMP to automate their internal value chain and offer different traffic related services.

At the signing event, Benazir Ahmed, commissioner of DMP and Mahmudur Rahman, executive vice president of Robi were also present.

SCB's lifestyle fair begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A three-day fair to exhibit high-end products and services took off in the city yesterday with a view to offer a platform to bring together the utmost in prestige and luxury under one roof.

Jim McCabe, chief executive officer of Standard Chartered Bank (SCB), Bangladesh, inaugurated the exhibition "Showcasing Lifestyle 2012" at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre.

SCB organised the fair for the second time where 25 top companies showcase their high-end products and services for the city's affluent segment.

Co-sponsored by Asset Development & Holdings Ltd, Amin Mohammad Foundation and Navana Real Estate, the fair will remain open from 10:00am to 9:00pm today and from 2:00pm to 9:00pm tomorrow.

Exhibitors at the event include various companies and industries of real estate, automobile, furniture, electronics, and other high end lifestyle products.

SCB will also showcase their range of banking products and loans, a statement

25 top companies showcase their high-end products and services for the city's affluent segment

of the bank said. SCB's customers and card holders as well as clients of the participating organisations will enjoy a free entry to the event on presenting their cards or related documents.

Entry fee for general visitors is Tk200.

McCabe said, "At Standard Chartered we value the relationship with our valued customers. We strive to provide them with means to a better lifestyle. This exhibition hallmarks the deeper connection we have with our partners and is a testament to our commitment towards our customers."

Sandeep Bose, head of consumer banking of SCB, Tareq Reaz Khan, general manager of retail lending products of SCB, and other high officials of the co-sponsors and partners were present on the occasion.

Jubo Dal man killed in Sylhet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A Jubo Dal man was strangled at Muchhedhar village in Biswanath upazila of yesterday.

The deceased, Ful Miah, 28, was the joint-convenor of Khajanchi Union unit of Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal. His family members said getting no response from Ful Miah on his cell phone in the morning, they along with locals went to his grocery shop and found him dead.

His hands were tied behind his back while injury marks were seen on his throat, said Chand Miah, officer-in-charge of

Biswanath Police Station. Ful Miah was strangled, he added.

On information, police recovered the body and sent it to Sylhet Osmani Medical College morgue for autopsy.

The deceased's family alleged the involvement of former UP member Dudu Miah behind the killing, claiming that his shoes were found at the shop.

They also said Dudu Miah could not be contacted over phone despite repeated attempts and the police were informed about it.

Police suspect that the murder was a sequel to previous enmity and filed a case in this connection.

Teacher sued for corporal punishment

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

A schoolteacher in the town was sued on Wednesday for beating up a student with a wooden stick in November last year.

Umme Habiba Khatun, a class V student of Lalbagh Government Primary School, was given the punishment, as she did not attend classes for three days.

The girl had to take first aid from a local clinic with injuries in the hands and back.

Habiba's mother Liza Begum of Pilkhana area in the town filed the case against Nahid Shirin, headmistress of the school, with Sadar Police Station.

Liza said she complained to the school managing committee and the district primary education officer (DPEO) about the corporal punishment, a practice banned by the High Court. But they were yet to take any action, she added.

Nahid Shirin, the headmistress, said, "I have beaten up Habiba for her absence, and the matter has already been settled after I have said sorry to Habiba's family".

The officer-in-charge of the police said they were taking action in this connection.



Jim McCabe, CEO of Standard Chartered Bank, Bangladesh, inaugurates a fair, "Showcasing Lifestyle 2012", at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the city yesterday. Sandeep Bose, head of consumer banking, and Tareq Reaz Khan, general manager, retail lending products, are also present. PHOTO: STAR



Moderate to thick fog likely

UNB, Dhaka

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

Moderate to thick fog may occur over the river basins and light to moderate fog may occur elsewhere over the country during mid night till morning, Met Office said.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged and night temperature may fall slightly over the country.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:42 pm and rises tomorrow at 6:41am.

Country's highest temperature 28.4 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Teknaf and lowest 08.8 degrees at Srimongal.

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	25.5	13.7	62	55
Chittagong	24.4	12.7	70	64
Rajshahi	25.8	11.2	77	59
Rangpur	23.3	10.8	90	63
Khulna	26.8	14.2	85	61
Barisal	27.0	12.3	85	70
Sylhet	26.1	13.3	77	56
Cox's Bazar	27.8	14.2	56	57