

## TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR

## A for Antenna, B for Bolt...

I am in Mirpur visiting the Underprivileged Children's Education programme (UCEP) Technical School. Accompanied by programme managers Anis and Ayub, I trawl through classrooms, photographing the children.

I knew about the seventeen hands-on vocational skills taught here, but seeing their sheer variety opens my eyes.

In the electronics class, a girl confidently identifies the terminals of a transistor using a millimetre while another explains the differences between waveforms on a signal generator. Auto mechanics students show me the assembly of a steering system, while the CNC (computerised numerical control) students punch in digital measurements for precise machining.

All of them aim to become skilled employees in electronics and light engineering industries.

A blue light flashes behind a curtain where boys are learning welding in isolated cubicles. Welding is key for the growing shipbuilding industry of Bangladesh.

In a large area devoted to garments training, Sharmin is learning how to iron and package a shirt. I ask her if she likes coming to school.

"I love it," she says.

"But why?" I insist.

"Because," she says, "I enjoy learning new things. This training will land me a job."

Meanwhile, several boys in the computer class are trying out Powerpoint slide transitions. The teacher tells me that students learn basic computer literacy in the UCEP feeder school and advance those skills here.

Automotive mechanics, welding and machining, electronics, textile weaving and spinning, offset printing, screen printing, industrial woodworking, plumbing and pipes, refrigeration and air-conditioning, garment expertise, even aide to nurse - it is all here. The school steers children from Dickensian drudgery into meaningful careers in the nation's growing economy.

UCEP was started in Dhaka in 1972 by New Zealander Lindsay Cheyne. He wanted to enable poor working urban children to escape poverty by teaching skills valuable to employers.

Brigadier General (Retd.) Aftab, who has run UCEP since 1992, meets me at the school. He explains their two levels of schooling. Urban working children first enter UCEP integrated schools which provide national curriculum education with hands-on vocational skills; after Class 8, many of them proceed to UCEP technical schools for in-depth vocational training.

"We also emphasise English," he says, "as a tool for



Learning About Car Engines

PHOTO:  
IHTISHAM KABIR

learning and a value-add skill for our students." Thus, instead of "A for Apple, B for Banana, C for cat" youngsters learn "A for antenna, B for bolt, C for chisel."

"UCEP covers 42,000 children in 53 primary and 10 technical schools today," he says.

Employment rate for graduates is 95%. Their average income rises 350% immediately after graduation.

Children are bussed here from all over town, even far-away Kamrangir Char and Jatrabari, for the four hour daily programme. They also receive a small monthly stipend to compensate for lost work hours.

In my short visit there, I can only imagine the obstacles UCEP must overcome, but I quickly realise what it has accomplished. Urban working children are usually street-smart, creative and energetic. UCEP has channelled this energy into lifelong productive activities. Bravo!

www.facebook.com/tangents.ikabir

## Further probe to identify Kibria killers: Shafique

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Shafique Ahmed yesterday expressed his hope that the killers of former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria and their patrons would be identified through further investigation and be brought to justice.

"After the murder of Shah AMS Kibria in 2005, the then administration did not want the investigation to be conducted properly. Therefore, the real killers and their patrons were not detected", he claimed, addressing a memorial meeting on Kibria at Jatiya Press Club in the city.

"But the present government is very much committed to doing further investigation with due sincerity", he said, requesting all concerned for providing necessary information regarding the killing to the investigators.

Shah AMS Kibria Foundation organised the programme to mark the 7th death anniversary of the former finance minister. Kibria, also an ex-Awami League leader from Habiganj, was assassinated in a grenade attack on a party rally at Baidyer Bazar in his hometown of Habiganj, Sylhet on January 27, 2005.

About opposition parties' long-standing demand for holding the next general election under a non-partisan government, the law minister said, "Those who raise such demand will have to place the proposal before parliament first. Then, their proposal will be discussed if it contradicts with the constitution".

Bangla Academy Director General Shamsuzzaman Khan, who presided over the meeting, said Shah AMS Kibria was murdered for political vengeance.

The previous investigation claimed that the attack was made in line with the August 21 grenade attack, but when Kibria was fighting for life after the attack, the local administration did not take due steps to send him to hospital quickly, said lawmaker Tarana Halim, also a relative of Kibria.

WOODEN GANGWAY COLLAPSE  
200 fall into Naf

A CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

At least 200 tourists fell into the river Naf and 50 of them received injuries when a wooden gangway collapsed at Damdamia ghat (terminal) in Teknaf upazila of Cox's Bazar yesterday.

Police and local people said at least 1,000 tourists, mostly women and children, gathered at the ghat to board the ship MV Abdur Rab Serniabat to St Martin's Island.

Suddenly a portion of the gangway caved in dumping the tourists into the water.

On information, upazila nirbahi officer rushed to the spot and rescued the tourists with help of coastguards and members of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB).

The injured tourists were admitted to Teknaf Upazila Health Complex while the rest were given first aid.

"Thanks to the Almighty we avoided fatalities as the water was only four to five feet deep where the gangway collapsed," Lt Col Md Zahid Hasan, captain of Teknaf 42 BGB, told The Daily Star.

NEWS IN  
brief75th birth anniversary of  
Prof Anisuzzaman today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 75th birth anniversary of Professor Emeritus of Dhaka University Dr Anisuzzaman, says a press release.

On the occasion, Prof Anisuzzaman's 75th Birth Anniversary Celebration Committee will organise a programme at Bakultala of the university's Faculty of Fine Arts premises at 8:00am.

Meanwhile, Bangla Academy yesterday accorded a reception to Anisuzzaman, also chairman of the academy, at its seminar room on the eve of his birth anniversary.

Former chief adviser to a caretaker government Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman presided over the programme while poet Syed Shamsul Haque, National Professor Mustafa Nurul Islam, and Bangla Academy Director General Dr Shamsuzzaman Khan, among others, spoke.



## One held in domestic help murder

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday arrested a person in connection with the killing of a teenage domestic help in the city's Sabujbagh area on Wednesday.

Abdul Quayum, officer-in-charge of Sabujbagh Police Station, said they arrested Sumon Ali, 24, from his house at Jirabo of Ashulia around 4:35am.

The police also recovered valuables including some gold ornaments and money from his possession, which was allegedly robbed from the apartment where the teenage domestic help Halima Khatun was killed on that day.

In preliminary interrogation Sumon confessed his involvement with the killing, said Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) of Motijheel Division

## Boy killed in city road crash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A 14-year-old boy was killed in a road accident last night while he was crossing a road near Shantinagar intersection in the city.

Chan Mia, an employee of Ador Shoruchi Hotel and Restaurant, was knocked down by a private car in front of the hotel around 11:30pm.

He was rushed to a local hospital where doctors pronounced him dead around 12:30am, said Abdul Halim, sub-inspector of Ramna

## Wife sues ASP for concealing religious identity in marriage

COURT CORRESPONDENT

An assistant superintendent of police was sued on Thursday for concealing his religious identity while marrying a Muslim woman.

The accused is Sudarsan Kumar Roy, currently posted at Dinajpur district.

Shilpi Akhter, a resident of South Goran in the city's Khilgaon area, filed the case with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka.

In her complaint, Shilpi said Sudarsan married her on December 10, 2010, first using an affidavit and then a Nikahnama (marriage registration document) from a Muslim Registry Office in Dhaka on January 20 last year, to register the marriage.

During the marriage, Sudarsan told Shilpi that he had become a Muslim. But on December 17 last year, he went missing with all of Shilpi's valuables.

On December 28, when Shilpi went to Sudarsan's Rangpur residence, she found out that his family had no knowledge of the marriage.

On February 6, this year, the accused came to Shilpi's Khilgaon residence, revealed his fraudulence and threatened to harm her if she disclosed it to anyone, the complainant added.

After the hearing, Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Erfan Ullah took the case into cognisance.



(Sitting from left) Prof AMM Shafiullah, Prof Jamilur Reza Choudhury, Prof Dr SM Nazrul Islam, Prof Dr Sadekul Islam Bhuiyan and Dr Nooruddin Ahmed at the inaugural ceremony of Grand Reunion 2012 of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology Alumni Association in the city's Bangabandhu International Conference Centre. PHOTO: STAR

## Hookah, boat, sheaf of paddy do not mean success of Language Movement

Says Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Language Movement cannot be termed a success as long as the country's ballot paper has hookah, boat and paddy sheaf, said former chief adviser to a caretaker government Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman yesterday.

"As long as our ballot paper has hookah, *nouka* (boat) and *dhaner shish* (paddy sheaf), we have to understand that we have not yet achieved literacy and our movement for Bangla language has not yet been a success," he said.

Justice Habibur was addressing the inaugural ceremony of Grand Reunion 2012 of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) Alumni Association (BUETAA) in the city's Bangabandhu International

Conference Centre.

The former chief justice did not elaborate further on the matter. He, however, said Bangalees have a relation with many languages and this tradition should not be abolished.

International Mother Language Day has a great importance for the minority language groups, he added.

Engineer Dr Nooruddin Ahmed said although Buet was a unique institution and provided quality education to its students, it could not properly pursue the quest of gaining knowledge through research.

"This is why Buet is not in the list of the top 500 universities of the world, not even in the top 100 universities in Asia," he said, urging BUETAA to provide financial assistance in Buet's research sector as allocation there is

limited.

BUETAA President Prof Jamilur Reza Choudhury said the authorities did not let BUETAA hold the reunion on Buet campus although reunion programmes of an institution are usually held on the institution premises.

He also said BUETAA will work to bring Buet into the list of top ranking universities of the world.

BUETAA Executive Director Prof Dr Sadekul Islam Bhuiyan, Prof AMM Shafiullah and Buet former vice chancellor Dr Mosharaf Hossain Khan also spoke at the ceremony.

Former students along with their family members joined the fourth daylong get-together where crests were presented to Buet students and their meritorious children.

## 3 held for killing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detective police on Thursday arrested three youths from Tangail in connection with the killing of an NGO director on December 15 last year.

The arrested persons are Aminul Islam, 23, Kamrul Hasan, 27, and Mohammad Hossain Miah, 25.

Police claimed they strangled Abul Kashem, 52, of Resource Development Foundation.

Kashem's body was recovered from his bedroom on the first floor of Suvastu Tower in the city.

Victim's wife Fatema Kausar alias Laizu had an extra marital affair with Aminul, who was a driver of the victim. Aminul, with the help of Lazu, hired the two others to kill Kashem, said police.

Laizu was also arrested and based on her statement police made the arrest from Delduar police station in Tangail.

DHAKA  
TODAY

## Human Chain

Amra Muktijoddhar Sontan will form a human chain. Time: 11:00am. Venue: Jatiya Press Club.

## Discussion

Bangabandhu Academy will hold a discussion. Time: 11:00am. Venue: Institute of Diploma Engineers.

## Seminar

BGMEA and SEDA will jointly organise a seminar. Time: 4:00pm. Venue: BGMEA office.

## Seminar

The University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (Ulba) will organise a seminar. Time: 9:00am. Venue: Ruposhi Bangla Hotel.

## Convention

Gonatantri Party will hold its national convention. Time: 11:00am. Venue: Natyamancha.

## Seminar

The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) will hold a seminar. Time:

10:30am. Venue: FBCCI.

## Orientation

Journalism Training and Research Initiative (Jatri) will hold an orientation programme. Time: 10:00am. Venue: Jatri office.

## Human Chain

Bangladeshi Bihari Rehabilitation Assembly will form a human chain. Time: 11:30am. Venue: Jatiya Press Club.

## Human Chain

Bostibasider Odhikar Suraksha Committee will form a human chain. Time: 3:00pm. Venue: Jatiya Press Club.

## Exhibition

Bangladesh National Museum will organise an exhibition. Time: 11:00am. Venue: The museum.

## Meeting

The Asiatic Society of Bangladesh will hold its monthly general meeting. Time: 4:00pm. Venue: The society auditorium.

## Joint Meeting

WEATHER  
TODAY

## Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

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

Light to moderate fog may occur over the river basins of the country during late night till morning. Met Office said.

Day temperature may rise slightly and night temperature may fall by 1-2 degree Celsius over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:55pm today and rises at 6:29am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 33.6 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Teknaf and lowest 15.6 degrees Celsius at Srirongal.

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	29.5	18.8	69	51
Chittagong	32.2	18.0	55	51
Rajshahi	29.4	18.4	87	59
Rangpur	28.8	17.5	86	66
Khulna	28.2	18.0	90	65
Barisal	30.5	16.5	91	58