

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



In These Hands. PHOTO: MOBASSER HUSSAIN.

Through The Lens

Are you feeling adventurous enough to join other photographers on a trip to see horse-racing in Norail? Or a Jatra (village play) in Srimongol? Or perhaps explore remote but beautiful places such as Tanguar Haor or Nijhum Dweep? Maybe after reading last week's *Tangents* on street photography, you want to try taking pictures in Dhaka streets?

Through The Lens (TTL) is a voluntary group that organizes photographer outings. These include photo-walks in and around Dhaka, often led by knowledgeable guides. TTL also offers "Photo Safaris" every month to places like those listed above. These tours typically last two to three days and attract 30-40 photographers.

However, that is not all the group does.

TTL started in 2008 as an online group (on flickr.com) for Bangladeshi photographers to share and discuss photographs and critique each other's work. Then, one day, the members met face-to-face and went out taking pictures. Since then, TTL has grown to over 4000 members on flickr.

"We arrange the only organized photo tours in Bangladesh," said Shudipto Das, "and photographers of all ages join our photo-walks and photo safaris."

Shudipto is a moderator of the group with eleven others. Saud al Faisal is the administrator.

I asked Shudipto about participants in the photo safaris. "They average between 25 and 30 years old. They are mostly hobbyist photographers from all professions: doctors, engineers, bankers, students... you name it." Do they need fancy cameras? "No. They can even come without cameras if they want to." Can women also join? "About a quarter of our tour groups are women and they face no trouble."

TTL also organizes an annual photography exhibition called Bangladesh in Frames. This year, 105 photographs were on display at Drik Gallery. They were selected by a committee from over 1200 photographs submitted by members.

When I visited the exhibition, the sheer variety of the subject matter struck me. Many photos were unexpected renderings of everyday subjects, reminding me how photographs can unlock the immense beauty packed inside the relatively small area of Bangladesh.

While covering a broad range of human activity, the exhibition also showed landscapes, still lives, abstracts, wildlife, portraits and architectural photos.

In Mobasser Hussain's "In These Hands," the signature photo for the exhibition, a foundry worker with sweaty muscles looked like a mythical figure, reminiscent of Prometheus who stole fire for humans in Greek mythology.

Shudipto Das's camera captured the intense concentration of a young jockey, whistle in mouth, leading the horserace in Narail.

Hameem Shakhawat's "Seascape", taken at Patenga, rewarded contemplative viewing by evoking a variety of serene moods.

In "Window of Scope" by MMZ Khan, an old woman sat in an empty room, facing a door whose outline was mysteriously lit up. It showed the magic of light in a way that only a photograph can.

Want to expand your photographic horizons and perhaps make photographs like these while making friends with other photographers? You can visit www.tlbd.com for more information on joining.

www.facebook.com/tangents.ikabir

DU hall students forced to join politics

PALASH RAHMAN

In a bid to increase the number of political activists, all student fronts at Dhaka University force students residing in the halls to join their political programmes almost every day intervening their studies.

DU sources said DU hall unit BCL leaders even ousted over 120 students from 13 male residential halls for the last three years on charge of remaining absent from political programmes.

Bangladesh Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) used to force students to attend their political programmes during the tenure of last BNP-Jamaat alliance government. The university unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), a student front of ruling Awami League (AL), follows such practice in the halls since AL assumed office in 2009.

Now BCL leaders are compelling first, second and third-year honours students to join its programmes at the hall guest rooms terming it "guest room programme" in the university's 10 halls for three to four days in a week.

The leaders are also forcing the students to attend their political programmes held on the campus and outside ignoring their classes, examinations and even sickness in exchange of seats in the halls.

The students who take advantage of getting seats in the halls have to attend the programmes held in the guest rooms for about two hours generally beginning around 10:00pm with the participation of 50 to 80 students and respective hall unit leaders.

If any student is found absent without permission of the senior leaders, he has to suffer punishments. The punishments include verbal and physical abuse, cancellation of hall seats, even ouster from halls with bag and baggage.

In the guest rooms, leaders do nothing but "teach" the new comers about a set of "manners," including dealing with BCL central leaders, delivering political speeches and chanting slogans in rallies and processions.

The leaders also give lessons on how to tackle rivalry clashes using hockey sticks, iron rods and other lethal weapons. Several BCL factional groups hold programmes in the guest rooms separately at night, sources said.

The victim students told The Daily Star that they take it as "a mental harassment"

when the BCL leaders take attendance to find out whether they were present or not.

Returning from the part-time jobs and tuitions in the busy Dhaka city late in the evenings, the students are supposed to sit for study but the political programmes at the guest rooms hamper their normal study, they added.

Sometimes the students cannot attend their classes and do bad in the examinations due to joining such political programmes.

Despite such mental torture, the students do not want to leave the halls as majority of them cannot afford to rent a room in Dhaka city, according to the sources.

"I had lost my interest to study while some BCL leaders compelled me to attend the guest room programmes while I was in first year. I had planned to study regularly to make a bright result like I did in SSC and HSC, but due to such student politics I have almost ruined myself," said a final year student under the social science faculty of the university seeking anonymity.

DU unit BCL President Mehadi Hasan told The Daily Star that BCL does not force students to attend political programmes. "If any hall unit leaders found doing this, we would take strict action against them," he added.

"As the hall committee top leader, I have to look after the overall situation of the halls. I do it with the help of my junior leaders and resident students. I just call them to the guest room programmes to inform them about the latest news and ask them to follow those to run the organisational activities," said a DU hall unit president of BCL, seeking anonymity.

Former JCD president (2003-2005) of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Hall Akramul Hasan said, "[During my tenure] we never force students to attend the guest room programme regularly."

DU Proctor Prof Dr MA Ali told The Daily Star that it's hard to stop political programmes at the hall guest rooms overnight. "But we must take necessary steps to stop such [political] programmes," he said.

DU Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr AAMS Arefin Siddique said it's "quite unfair" to do harm to the study through holding such political programmes in the halls. "I would ask the hall authorities to tackle such matter," he added.

However, ICS leaders could not be contacted due to their disappearance from the campus area.

NEWS IN *brief*

8-yr-old boy 'commits suicide'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The body of an eight-year-old schoolboy was recovered from his house at the city's Pallabi yesterday, while a 12-year-old girl allegedly committed suicide at Mirpur Thursday night.

Sohel Rana, a class II student, "hanged himself to death" inside a room around 8:30pm, said Md Russel, elder brother of the boy.

After his mother rebuked him Thursday evening, Rana, 8, entered the room avoiding everybody's eyes and hanged himself using his mother's scarf from the ceiling, Russel added.

Sources at Dhaka Medical College morgue said the boy committed suicide.

Meanwhile, Sangita Rani, 12, daughter of Suvash Halder, allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself at her residence at Borobagh in Mirpur.

Mirpur police recovered the body from the house around 10:30am yesterday. Rani used her mother's scarf for committing suicide, they added.

Quoting her family members, police said the girl went to sleep with her mother around 3:00pm Thursday. She was found missing as her mother woke up after two hours.

Later Rani was found hanging herself inside a toilet around 10:30pm. No one could ascertain why she committed suicide.

Setting fire on girl: Family demands justice

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Family members of a minor girl of Patuakhali, who is undergoing treatment at the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), yesterday demanded punishment to the culprits who set her on fire.

Four-year-old Liza, along with other children, went to fetch water from a public tube-well located on the land of one neighbour Fulbanu on February 10, said Liza's father Abbas, a rickshaw van puller.

When Fulbanu noticed the children, she chased them, managing to get hold of Liza and set fire to her dress, he said.

Another neighbour, who noticed the incident, saved Liza by pouring water on her, said Abbas, adding that she was seriously burnt by then.

Abbas narrated the incident at a press conference organised by Green Patuakhali, a Facebook-based youths' organisation, at Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) auditorium in the capital.

Abbas filed a case against four of his neighbours with Kolapara Police Station in this regard.

However, the main accused, Fulbanu, got bail from the High Court and her family members kept threatening Liza's family to withdraw the case.

40 students get Concord scholarships

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Scholarships were conferred on 40 meritorious students from 10 city schools by Concord Group and Fantasy Kingdom through a reception at Fantasy Kingdom in Ashulia on the outskirts of Dhaka yesterday.

Twenty of them received Tk 20,000 while the rest received Tk 25,000. Ten teachers from the schools were also awarded for their excellence in schooling.

The teachers are Dr Shan Ara Begum, Monju Baraya, Shanara Begum, Asma Begum, Ismot Ara Momotaz, Muhtarama Mohosena, AKM Jahangir Hossain, Asia Alam, AKM Jahangir Hossain Mojumder and Akhtari Bashar.

The schools are Viqarunnisa Noon School & College, Motijheel Ideal School & College, Dhaka Residential Model School, Dhanmondi Government Boys' High School, Sahid Bir Uttam Lt Anwar Girls' School, SOS Hermann Gmeiner College, YWCA Girls' High School, Government Laboratory High School, Faizur Rahman Ideal School and Motijheel Government Boys' School.

Addressing the function, Concord Group Chairman SM Kamal Uddin said teachers shape the future of students and are invaluable in helping them reach their destination.

Concord Group Deputy Managing Director Shariar Kamal said corporate institutions should come forward to contribute towards social welfare, especially in extending assistance in establishing educational facilities.

Cartoonist Shishir Bhattacharya urged the students to be attentive in their studies and make sure that they learn the true history of the Liberation War.

Concord Group Vice Chairperson Farida Kamal was present at the programme.



Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions and the regions of Jessore, Kushtia, Tangail and Mymensingh in 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Weather may remain mainly dry with temporary partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country, Met Office said.

Mild to moderate heat wave is sweeping over Rajshahi, Pabna, Jessore, Kushtia and Srimangal and it may continue.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6:14pm and rises tomorrow at 5:51am.

Country's highest temperature 38.3 degree Celsius was recorded today at Rajshahi and lowest 19.5 degrees at Hatiya and Syedpur.

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	34.2	24.6	72	50
Chittagong	30.5	24.2	79	75
Rajshahi	38.3	20.5	54	30
Rangpur	34.5	20.0	41	33
Khulna	34.2	24.0	79	59
Barisal	34.6	23.5	83	66
Sylhet	35.1	25.2	75	42
Cox's Bazar	32.0	23.1	72	75



Prof Fyzennessa's anniversary of death today

METRO DESK

Today is the 8th death anniversary of Prof Noorunnahar Fyzennessa of IER, Dhaka University, former provost of Rokeya Hall, first woman member of DU syndicate, first woman member of Pay Commission, president of Dhaka City Mahila Parishad. She was also a Fulbright Scholar and a faculty member of London University, says a press release.

On the occasion, food will be distributed among the students of Dr Noorun Nahar Fyzennessa pre primary School in Dhamrai.

Shaheed Saber

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 41st death anniversary of journalist and politician Shaheed Saber.

On the day in 1971, Pakistani occupation army set fire to the office of the Daily Sangbad in Bangshal which caused death to Saber, said a press release.

DU's 46th convocation today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University's 46th convocation, the biggest programme to confer degrees, will be held today at the university's central playground at 11:30 am.

University authorities have taken an early preparation to celebrate the day. Graduates have been asked to enter the arena between 9:30am and 10:00am.

For the event, they decorated a large stage and made arrangements to confer degrees to over 16,826 graduates of whom 8,640 are male and 8,186 are female, said DU Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr AAMS Arefin Siddique.

This year the university will reward 100 graduates with PhD and 43 graduates with MPhil degrees of whom 41 graduates will be awarded gold medals for their outstanding result.

While President and Chancellor of the university Zillur Rahman will grace the occasion in his protocol and



Dhaka University graduates toss their mortar board hats in the air at the base of Raju Bhaskorjo yesterday after attending the rehearsal of the university's 46th convocation, scheduled to be held today.

PHOTO: STAR

Pascal Lamy, director general of World Trade Organisation, will speak as the convocation speaker.

Pascal Lamy, also a member of French Communist Party since the nineties, would receive a Doctor-of-Laws degree for his contribution in ensuring tariff free access of Bangladeshi goods to EU countries through Everything But Arms agree-

ment, the VC said.

Lamy played a vital role to facilitate the least developed and developing countries including Bangladesh in international trade, he added.

DU proctorial team along with the law enforcement agencies will maintain law and order during the ceremony, said university Proctor Prof Dr MA Ali.

FF Saiful in 'coma'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Language movement veteran and freedom fighter (FF) Saiful Islam is in coma at United Hospital in the city.

His family members urged the nation to pray for the amelioration of Saiful's condition, said a press release.

Saiful, who led progressive movement at different times, worked as organiser of National Awami Party, Ekota Party and Ganotantri Party. He is still a presidium member of Ganotantri Party.

He got a cardiac arrest while he was on dialysis at a hospital. He was then put on life support. The life support was taken off after 48 hours. Now he is in coma, it said.