

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR

The Waiting Game

It is noon on a hot and humid April day. I am standing with my camera amidst some trees when I see two unusual flying bugs. They come and go in random trajectories. Then they tire and sit - but only for a split second, too quick for my camera to focus - before flying off again. I stay still, looking through my camera viewfinder, sure that the next time they sit, or the time after that, I will get their picture.

Indeed, waiting is a large part of photographing birds, wildlife and insects. I usually try to find a likely place, hopefully spot a creature, and wait for the right moment to photograph it.

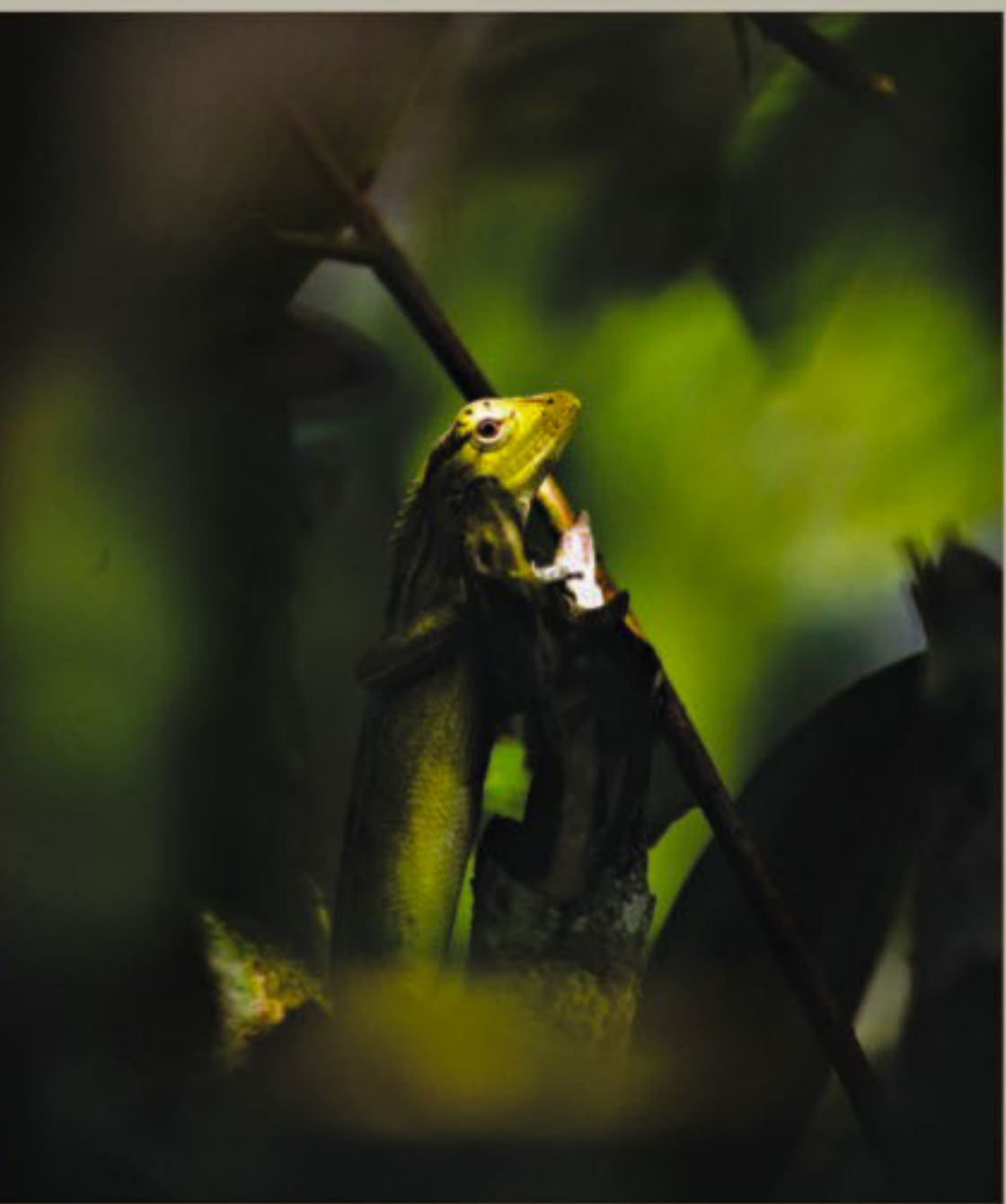
The trouble is that none of the creatures follow my wish. They move of their own free will, which is driven by priorities such as finding food, mating, feeding their young and avoiding predators. At times, out of sheer desperation, I concentrate hard, solemnly sending reiki and assorted mind control commands their way, but they are impervious. Either they do their own thing, or they run away.

Playing "take my picture please" with the photographer is not an important part of their daily routine.

The insects I am tracking return presently. It is difficult to follow them with my eye, even harder through the camera's viewfinder. I have a sudden epiphany. How painfully slow we humans are compared to other creatures! The blink of an eye is time enough: a frog jumps three feet, a *finzey* (dronzo) snatches a dragonfly mid-flight, a lizard sensing my presence vanishes, a kingfisher takes off with a fish, a squirrel leaps from one tree to the next. Their muscles have zero inertia, reaching top speed in a fraction of a second.

Compared to them, I must be a clumsy picture: large, slow-moving, sweating profusely in the heat, blinking rapidly as sweat stings my eye; unable to sit in odd positions, jump from one tree to another, race like a bullet or simply vanish.

To make matters worse, my largeness presents obvious dietary - nay, feasting - possibilities to other creatures. The mosquitoes and leeches I can understand. After all, it takes one tiny incision to



A Rare Pose

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

access several litres of nourishing blood coursing through my veins. But why do those red ants love stinging my legs? Why does that large beetle dive for my nose? Does my nose look like his potential mate? Huh?

This is the dilemma of the waiting game. While waiting for my photo target, I become lunch target.

I have become so accustomed to non-cooperation that when I finally find a bird close by and unafraid, I am more startled than the bird, and, fumbling with the camera, miss the photo opportunity.

Yet I persevere, telling myself the waiting game has not become an obsession. I need just one more chance, one more shutter-click, one more time the bug sits down or the bird shows its face...I will get it, and then I will rest.

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Lightning strikes on rise for warmer climate: Experts

UNB, Dhaka

The climate vagaries caused by global warming are increasing the recurrence of lightning strike in Bangladesh, the sub-continent's most vulnerable country to this natural hazard, experts say.

Several hundred people fall victims to lightning strikes here every year, with about 100 people being killed this April alone, according to newspaper reports.

Bangladesh experiences lightning strikes mainly during pre-monsoon period (March-May), said M Abdul Mannan, a scientist at Saarc Metrological Research Centre (SMRC).

He suggested awareness campaign and stronger warning system for reducing lightning casualties.

Thomas W Schmidlin, a geography professor at Kent State University, US, writes in his article "Risk Factors and Social Vulnerability" that the maximum occurrence of lightning in the Indian subcontinent occurs in Bangladesh in the pre-monsoon period with 40 lightning strikes per square kilometre.

"Over 150 people are killed annually by lightning in Bangladesh, as reported in newspapers, but the actual death toll may be 500-1,000", he said.

Dr Ainun Nishat, a climate expert, said global warming had a strong co-relation with lightning, and it had already intensified lightning strikes mainly in this region.

Bangladesh is witnessing an increase in lightning strikes, as global climate experts think warmer climate increases lightning frequency, he said.

Global lightning activity will increase if average global temperature rises, said Dr Ainun, also vice chancellor of Brac University, quoting a report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

Amanat Ullah Khan, a geography professor at Dhaka University, however, said the frequency of lightning apparently increased in recent times in Bangladesh, but there was no study to find its reasons. It is still not clear if lightning is increasing due to climate change, he added.

A growing number of international experts believe that increase in lightning frequency was strongly co-related with climate change.

Colin Price and David Rind, two researchers of Nasa Goddard Institute for Space Studies (GISS) and Columbia University, claim in their article "Possible Implications of Global Climate Change on Global Lightning" that future climate change could have significant repercussions on two related natural hazards: lightning and forest fires.

They mentioned a GISS model, which shows that for an atmosphere containing twice today's carbon concentration, the global lightning activity increases by approximately 32 percent.

Lightning discharge in thunderstorms is an indication of intensity of atmospheric convection, says Colin Price, a professor of geophysics and planetary science at Tel Aviv University, in his article "Thunderstorms, Lightning and Climate Change".

NEWS IN brief

4,000 new doctors soon

BSS, Dhaka

The government is set to recruit a total of 4,000 doctors soon under a special BCS examination to reduce people and doctors ratio in the healthcare sector and reach its service to rural people across the country.

"A move is underway for recruitment of doctors in the health department through a special BCS examination soon," Public Administration Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikder told the news agency.

Sikder said a decision in this regard would be taken as the summary is awaited for final approval from the higher authorities.

President offers fateha at Banani graveyard

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman yesterday visited the graves of his wife Ivy Rahman, martyred family members of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and four national leaders at the Banani Graveyard in the capital.

The president visited the graves after Juma prayer and offered fateha there. He also prayed for the departed souls.

President's family members, including his son Nazmul Hasan MP, Awami League leader Amir Hossain Amu, and AL lawmaker Noor-e-Alam Chowdhury Liton accompanied the parties.

Earlier, President Zillur Rahman performed his Juma prayer at the Gulshan Azad Mosque.

Organisation to record features of unidentified bodies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Staff of Anjuman Mufidul Islam, a social-welfare organisation, received training on keeping detailed records of the physical features of unidentified bodies prior to their burial for easy identification.

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) provided the daylong training to 30 staff of the Islamic organisation, which provides burial assistance service, at its Kakrail office in the capital on Thursday.

The staffs were trained to collect and record special identification marks, age group and other main features of the bodies so that families and relatives of the victims could identify the graves later.

DU VC for honest, patriotic citizens

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Dhaka University Vice Chancellor Prof Dr AAMS Arefin Siddique yesterday said honest, patriotic and courageous citizens are needed to develop the country into a "golden Bangladesh".

He said progressive and enlightened people who cherish the spirit of the 1971 Liberation War must project Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's philosophy and lifelong struggle before the future generations.

The VC was addressing a discussion marking the 3rd death anniversary of Dr MA Wazed Miah, eminent nuclear scientist and husband of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, at Pirganj upazila auditorium in Rangpur district.

Bangabandhu Shikkha O Gobeshona Parishad, founded by Dr Wazed, organised the discussion.

Prof Arefin also urged everyone to unite against all conspiracies which are being hatched to prevent the war crimes trial.

Begum Rokeya University Treasurer Prof Mozammel Huq presided over the discussion, Zila Parishad Administrator Rezina Razzak, Dinajpur Medical College Principal Prof Dr Hamidul Hoque Khandker and the parishad Secretary Mojibar Rahman also spoke.

Earlier, the discussants offered prayers at Dr Wazed's grave at Fatepur village of the upazila.

Missing boy found dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Two days after going missing, a two-year-old boy was found dead in a canal just 400 yards off his Baliakhora village residence at Ghior upazila of Manikganj yesterday.

Police recovered the body of Zihad, son of Jakir Hossain, and sent it to Manikganj Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.



Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk) hangs up a notice yesterday declaring the plot, once housing Wonderland amusement park, as a public park of the capital. Rajuk demolished the main entrance and boundary wall of the park on Monday to free around four acres of land of Gulshan central playground following what they said was a Supreme Court verdict.

PHOTO: STAR

Tahrir men attack TIB drama workshop

TIB demands legal action

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of banned Islamist outfit Hizb-ut-Tahrir vandalised musical instrument of a drama workshop of Youth Engagement and Support (YES) in Sylhet city on Wednesday night, alleged officials of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB).

YES is spearheading TIB's anti-corruption social movement by sensitising the young people, nurturing their conscience and providing them with a forum of raising voices against corruption.

Swapon Kumar Datt, assistant manager (finance and administration) of Sylhet TIB, said they arranged a four-day workshop on drama against corruption by renting Shreehatto Sangskriti College auditorium at Mirer Maidan.

The volunteers found their musical instruments broken on Thursday morning and a handwritten letter of Hizb-ut-Tahrir threatening to stop their activities.

UNB adds: Expressing deep concern over the vandalism, TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman, in a statement yesterday, urged the government, especially the Sylhet administration and law-enforcing agencies, to find out the guilty persons and take legal action against the attackers.

Case panics Naogaon Adivasi clash victims

BULBUL AHMED, NAOGAON AND ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Having lost their bread-earners in the May 4 clash, families of four Adivasi labourers in Naogaon are passing their life in panic, as police recorded a case filed by the alleged killers against a number of unnamed Adivasi men.

The families expressed their fears on Friday when a group of social activists, including lawyers, journalists, and development activists led by columnist Syed Abul Maksud from Dhaka, visited them at Pungi Niboda village in Niamatpur.

Kristina Hembrom, wife of Ilias Mardi, one of the four murdered, alleged that police recorded a case of the killers, accusing 10-12 unnamed Adivasi people to counter their murder case.

"We are worried and fearing arrest any time for the case", she said, in tears. Kristina said she was also anxious about her future with her two sons.

Ilias Mardi, Madan Hembrom, Moharam Marang and Koki Tudu were killed in a clash between the supporters of two rivaling land owners at Chalk Gopal village in Manda upazila, where they went to work after being hired by Abdul Alim, one of the owners.

Abdul Alim has been in feud with one Anwar Hossain over eight bighas of land. Kristina said Alim hired five Adivasi labourers for harvesting paddy for a rate of Tk 2,500 per bigha a day before the clash.

"Alim's offer was lucrative as labourers usually work at Tk 200 per day. Alim said he was having a shortage of labourers".

The widows said they were not aware that their husbands had been hired.

"I felt like a bolt out of the blue when I heard of the murder", said Maina Hembrom, wife of Madan Hembrom. "And now police are also acting against us".

The only surviving Adivasi man in the incident, Chandi Kisku, was now fleeing home following the case, they said.

Syed Abul Maksud told the families that they would pressure the government for ensuring justice.

Noted jurist Barrister Rafiq-ul-Huq, who was also in the team of visitors, said recording a case against fellow men of the victims was like murdering the victims once more.

Asked why police took the case against the Adivasi men, Superintendent of Police (SP) of Naogaon YM Belalur Rahman said it was because Anwar Hossain claimed that Abdul Alim forcibly wanted to harvest crops of the land, of which he was the actual owner.

He said he would ask police not to harass or arrest the Adivasi men.

The visitors' team also included journalist Saleem Samad, Bangladesh Adivasi Forum organising secretary Saktipada Tripura, Dhaka University teacher Robaet Ferdous, and Kapaeeng Foundation's Dipayan Khisa.



Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Dhaka, May 11 (UNB) - Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at one or two places over ajshahi, Rangpur, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and the regions of Kushtia, Comilla and Noakhali 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 heat wave is sweeping over Khulna division and the regions of Rajshahi and Pabna and it may continue.

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

The sun sets in the capital today at 6:32pm and rises tomorrow at 5:17am.

Country's highest temperature 37.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and Ishwardi and lowest 22.0 degrees at Sayedpur.

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	34.8	27.0	72	62
Chittagong	32.8	26.0	75	73
Rajshahi	36.2	26.5	69	76
Rangpur	30.5	24.2	77	83
Khulna	36.8	26.3	76	71
Barisal	35.0	26.2	77	72
Sylhet	33.5	25.5	75	65
Cox's Bazar	34.0	25.7	73	67

BNP 'tail' of Jamaat Says Dilip Barua, sniping at Dr Yunus, Fazle Hasan Abed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Terming BNP as "the tail of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami", Industries Minister Dilip Barua yesterday said the opposition will not be able to compel the government into restoring the caretaker government system by any means.

He also criticised Nobel Laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus and Brac Chairperson Sir Fazle Hasan Abed for pointing out the importance of the caretaker government system to US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

"You can not make us retract our decision (over the caretaker government issue) by complaining to foreigners," said Dilip. He challenged the duo that if they really want to restore the caretaker government system, they should join politics and place their demand before the government.

Dilip was addressing a memorial meeting on Dr MA Wazed Miah, eminent nuclear scientist and husband of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, organised by Bangabandhu Academy at Jatiya Press Club in the capital.

He claimed that the opposition was trying to create anarchy knowing that they will not be able to go to power again.

Pointing at the opposition leaders, Dilip said, "Politics is not for those who flee their homes and take shelter at the High Court building (when cases against them were being filed)."

World University Vice Chancellor Dr Prof Abdul Mannan Chowdhury called upon the countrymen to lead a life like Dr Wazed who neither had any greed for power nor tried to misuse it even while being surrounded by a political atmosphere.

Awami League leader Advocate Yousuf Hossain Humayun called upon the university authorities to include Dr Wazed's books into its curriculum to keep his contributions to science alive.

Awami League leader Babu Satish Chandra Roy also addressed the programme, presided over by Bangabandhu Academy Adviser Mozaffar Hossain Paltu.