

# TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Is Sundarban underrepresented in the world press?

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

## The Photojournalist's Dilemma

Recently I attended the Foundry workshop in Thailand where working photojournalists from all over the world gathered. I returned with food for thought and admiration, as well as questions to ponder.

The photojournalist tells his story with photographs. Those who achieve global prominence are immensely brave, hard-working and creative. Often they go to dangerous or inhospitable areas, face war or disasters, and reveal untold stories about people's lives at great personal risk.

A good photojournalist's work shows me something new and unexpected. For example, James Delano's work on the Japanese facing their tsunami/earthquake/nuclear disaster is a memorable tribute to their heroic resilience, while Suthep Kritsanavarin's searing depiction of Rohingya refugees and Paula Bronstein's unblinking portraits of Pakistani acid victims are haunting. Ashley Gilbertson's photographs of the empty bedrooms of young, dead American soldiers will break the heart of any parent.

As one veteran photojournalist put it, "We are warriors." For whom? For the oppressed, the underdog, the tortured, the voiceless.

Meanwhile, the career of a photojournalist faces challenges and fierce competition. We live in a world where anyone at the right place and time can digitally capture a momentous photograph.

In order to establish himself, a photojournalist must do in-depth work on a subject - for months or even years. Picking the subject is tricky: it must be a unique story that fires the photographer's passion, it must grab the global reader's attention, and it must translate to a compelling visual narrative. With luck, his story will sell to a magazine.

I also encountered the photojournalist's dilemma.

On the way to lunch one day, an earnest young middle-eastern photographer told me he wanted to photograph Bangladesh. "Great! And what would you like to photograph there?" I asked.

"I have heard about the gangs operating around the universities and I want to work on them," he said. I was taken aback.

True, photographs have had tremendous influence in the birth and growth of Bangladesh, particularly photographs of suffering.

But the hard work of millions of Bangladeshis is paying off and the nation is better off than before.

Yet, photographic coverage of Bangladesh in world press remains vastly negative.

What about the mothers who fight traffic every morning to take children to school, day workers who suffer through stifling heat in crowded buses so they can get to work, entrepreneurs whose hard work and ingenuity have made Bangladesh a successful garment exporter, farmers who are growing more food than ever and NGOs who have made great contributions to education and health?

Who is their warrior? I don't see many photos of our beautiful Sundarban in the world press. But the first sign of a man-made or natural disaster, or a garments unrest usually gets front-page.

I can see the photojournalist's dilemma. Bad news, sad news, and news about conflicts sell. A living has to be made, bills must be paid.

But don't you think the people of Bangladesh have worked hard enough to earn an even-handed representation by the world's photojournalists?

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CTG CITY, COASTAL ISLAND AREAS

## Home-goers travelling on unfit trawlers

### Shortage of BIWTC vessels blamed

PRANABESH CHAKRABORTY, Ctg

Acute shortage of state-run vessels plying between Chittagong city and its nearby coastal islands has escalated the miseries of thousands of home-bound people ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr.

Only one out of four vessels of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC) now runs towards Hatia and Sandwip islands from the port city.

The scarcity of BIWTC vessels is forcing people to cross the channel by privately owned trawlers and motorised boats, most of which do not have any fitness certificates and clearance from the authorities concerned, travellers said.

People are being compelled to board the only BIWTC-run vessel to twice its capacity, putting their lives at risk, they added.

The state-run authority, however, has cared less for repair of its vessels that remained grounded for long, and arranging additional trips on the route.

The mismanagement and negligence by the higher authority have caused this situation, an official of BIWTC, preferring not to be named, told The Daily Star.

Earlier, BIWTC used to operate four vessels-- MV Alauddin, MV Matin, MV Manirul

Haque and MV Baro Awlia--for transportation of people in coastal islands.

At present, the authority is operating only one vessel, MV Matin, with three trips a week as the rest others are kept in dockyards for repair and maintenance.

Finding few alternative means of communications, people board the vessel to twice its capacity, said Md Ibrahim, a commuter.

"The situation will turn even more volatile before Eid if the problem is not addressed urgently," he added.

Sources at BIWTC, however, said MV Manirul Haque, which went out of service one month back, is set to resume its operation by Tuesday.

Md Nurul Alam Akand, deputy general manager of BIWTC, Chittagong, told The Daily Star that MV Manirul Haque is now being repaired. "We are trying to make it operational as early as possible," he added.

According to BIWTC office, MV Alauddin has been kept in the Sitalakkhya River at Narayanganj dockyard since 2009 for repair works.

MV Baro Awlia, which was bought from China in 2000, was operational till June 22, 2011. It is now kept at Chittagong dockyard to have it repaired.



PHOTO: BSS

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurates a website containing the digital version of the Holy Quran in Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the capital yesterday.

## NATIONAL POLLS AL, BNP must hold discussion Say eminent citizens

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Several eminent citizens yesterday urged the two major political parties of the country -- Awami League and BNP -- to find a way to hold a fair parliamentary election through discussions.

The call came at a discussion before an Iftar organised by Nagorik Oikya, a recently formed citizens' organisation, at a hotel in the capital.

"Whether the (next parliamentary) election would be non-partisan is a decision for political leaders," said the immediate past election commissioner, Muhammad Sakawat Hussain.

"A fair election is not possible with parliament still not dissolved. We have gained such experience after holding several elections. There will be an influence on the election either by the lawmaker or his supporters," he said.

Barrister Rafique-ul Huq said although the prime minister proposed the formation of an interim government, the problem arises on the question of who the chief of that government would be.

"There will be no solution through arguments and television talk shows. The two major parties must find a solution to it through discussions. If one truly desires for a free and fair and peaceful election, then finding the solution will not be that hard," he said.

"The prime minister has proposed a way to hold the next election. BNP could propose a way too," he added.

Veteran journalist ABM Musa said it is the Awami League's responsibility to remove doubts over whether the next election will be held at all.

Nagorik Oikya Convener Mahmudur Rahman Manna said, "We do not know what the situation will be between the two political parties after Eid but Nagorik Oikya will weigh movement to press home several demands."

Language Movement veteran Ahmed Rafique, former state minister for information Prof Abu Sayeed, SM Akram Hossain and Mobasher Hossain also spoke at the discussion.

## Burglary at Ctg house

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Burglars stole 17 tolas of gold ornaments and other valuables worth Tk 1 lakh from a house in Chittagong city early yesterday.

Sources said four thieves stole the ornaments from the house of Abdur Rahim in Pashchim Shahid Nagar area around 12:30am.

Police arrested Saleh Ahmed Rocky, 25, of Laksham upazila in Comilla in this connection yesterday.

## Bapex starts drilling gas well in Sunetra field

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration and Production Company Limited (Bapex) started drilling an exploratory gas well in Sunetra Gas Field in Dharmapasha upazila in Sunamganj yesterday.

Bapex Chairman Dr Hossain Mohammad Mansur inaugurated the drilling of the exploratory well.

Local lawmaker Muazzam Hossen Ratan, Bapex Managing Director Morteza Faruque and Sunetra Gas Field Project Manager Nurul Islam, among others, were present on

the occasion.

At least three months will be required to assess the actual amount of gas in this gas field, Dr Mansur said.

"We hope that the gas field will be a milestone for energy sector in the country," he said.

According to Sunetra Gas Field Project Manager Nurul Islam, the size of this structure can accommodate about three trillion cubic feet gas.

The structure has been named 'Sunetra' as part of it fell under Sunamganj district and the rest in Netrakona.



Vendors show-crisp new notes for sale in the capital's Gulistan yesterday. During Eid-ul-Fitr, which is approximately 10 days away, family elders present youngsters with these new notes when the latter come to seek their blessings.

PHOTO: STAR

## NEWS IN brief

### Student killed by lightning

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A college student struck by lightning died at Barakpur village in Jhikargachha upazila of Jessore yesterday. The deceased was Russel Khan, 20, son of Solaiman Khan of the upazila and a student of Jhikargachha College.

Solaiman said his son was returning home when thunderbolt struck him near Butcher Beel around 7:00pm, leaving him spot dead.

### Two ticket scalpers arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police arrested two ticket scalpers with 40 tickets in Chittagong early yesterday.

The arrestees are Shafiq, 28, of Mymensingh and Azizul Haque, 29, of Kishorganj.

A team of Detective Branch (DB) of police arrested the two with 28 tickets of Turna Nishita and 12 tickets of Subarna Express for August 18.

The duo admitted that they were about to sell the tickets on the black market, said Tarek Ahmed, assistant deputy commissioner of DB Chittagong Metropolitan Police.

### Formalin-laced fishes of Tk 2.2 lakh destroyed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Department of Fisheries (DoF) destroyed two metric tonnes of formalin-laced fishes worth around Tk 2.2 lakh in Chittagong city yesterday.

A team of DoF, led by Provati Dev, the district fisheries officer, conducted a drive in fishery ghat area around 6:00am and destroyed the formalin-mixed fishes of a truck coming from Teknaf upazila in Cox's Bazar district.

No fish hoarder in the area confessed to bringing the formalin-laced fishes from Teknaf, said Md Kamal Uddin Chowdhury, an official of DoF.

Kotwai police assisted the team during the drive.

### Youth's body found on seashore

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The decomposed body of an unidentified youth was found at Sitakunda upazila in Chittagong Thursday night.

Md Masud Alam, sub-inspector of Sitakunda Police Station, said locals found the body lying on the seashore in Noralia embankment area.

Being informed by locals, police recovered the body around 10:30pm and sent it to Chittagong Medical College morgue for autopsy.

An unnatural death case was filed with Sitakunda

### Farmer murdered in Rangpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

A man was beaten to death allegedly by fellow villagers following a dispute over irrigation of paddy fields at Sahdhu village in Kaunia upazila yesterday.

The deceased was Nawab Ali, 50. Police and local sources said Nawab Ali got locked into an altercation with Iman Ali, 45, as he used Iman's land to channel water to his paddy fields.

At one of stage of the quarrel, Iman beat up Nawab in the field. On information, Nawab's son Ashrafur Islam came to the scene and assaulted Iman.

Soon, Iman Ali's son Mostafizur Rahman joined the clash and beat up Nawab with a stick and iron rod, leaving him dead on the spot.

**DHAKA TODAY**

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| <p><b>Procession</b><br/>Nivritto Foundation will bring out a procession; Venue: Dhanmondi 3/A (Dahkin Hawa)-Jatiya Press Club; Time: 8:30am.</p> <p><b>AGM</b><br/>Asiatic Society of Bangladesh will organise its annual general meeting (AGM); Venue: the organisation's</p> | <p>auditorium; Time: 4:00pm.</p> <p><b>Discussion</b><br/>Peshajibi Samannaya Parishad will hold a discussion; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 3:00pm.</p> <p><b>Human chain</b><br/>Muktijoddhar Santan O Pranjnmo Oikya Mancha will form a human chain; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time:</p> |
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**WEATHER TODAY**

**Rain likely**

**UNB, Dhaka**

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at most places over Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at many places over Rajshahi, Rangpur and Dhaka divisions in 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy to heavy falls are also likely at places over the country, Met Office said.

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

**The sun sets in the capital today at 6:35pm and rises tomorrow at 5:33am.**

Country's highest temperature 35.4 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 24.4 degrees at Cox's Bazar.

The highest maximum temperature is likely to be 34-35 degree Celsius and the lowest minimum temperature may be 24-25 degree Celsius.

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      | 33.0                   | 27.3 | 74                     | 65      |
| Chittagong | 30.8                   | 26.0 | 75                     | 76      |
| Rajshahi   | 35.4                   | 26.0 | 83                     | 69      |
| Rangpur    | 33.5                   | 27.8 | 77                     | 73      |
| Khulna     | 33.2                   | 26.0 | 86                     | 98      |
| Barisal    | 32.0                   | 26.5 | 83                     | 83      |