

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Mikey makes a point.

PHOTO:
IHTISHAM KABIR

Mikey's Quest

Mikey Leung likes to promote Bangladesh as a tourist destination to the rest of the world. He wrote (with Belinda Meggitt) the guidebook *Bangladesh: the Bradt Travel Guide*, one of two traveller's guides on Bangladesh available internationally. More recently, he started the project Positive Light, which, in his words, "will show the stunning beauty of Bangladesh to the world."

The goal of Positive Light is to assemble photographs of Bangladesh by Bangladeshi photographers and make a coffee-table book to show off this country.

I have known Mikey for several years. Recently, I caught up with him at Dhaka's Edward M. Kennedy Center for the opening of the photographic exhibition of Positive Light.

"Why did you start this project?" I asked him.

"Because I really believe in the potential of Bangladesh," he said. "Many people abroad think Bangladesh is not a good place to visit. I know that is not true, and I want to change that thought."

Did he have any memorable moments during the project? "When we started, I thought I knew Bangladesh fairly well, but when the photographs started coming in, they showed me a Bangladesh even more beautiful than the one I knew. That's when I realised that the project would succeed," he said.

Over 700 photographs by 130 photographers were submitted for the "crowdsourced" project. Crowdsourcing is the notion of tapping into a large number of people to execute a project (outsource to a crowd.)

I asked him about tourism in Bangladesh: "What is one thing that Bangladesh can do immediately and

easily to promote tourism?"

Mikey thought for a moment. "Focus on the expatriates living here. While in Bangladesh, most of them spend their time in Dhaka for work, but for holidays, they visit other countries. If they spent their vacation exploring Bangladesh instead, it would generate revenue and improve Bangladeshi tourism services and infrastructure. They could also tell their friends and family back home, generating publicity," he said.

The ultimate goal of Positive Light is a coffee-table book on Bangladesh. The project has three sponsors including the British Council. Mikey is also leveraging "crowdfunding" - that is, obtaining small donations from a large number of people using the Internet - for funding the book and paying the photographers. This method has generated over \$15,000 for the project.

I asked Mikey about future projects. "I would like to print the Positive Light book in Bangladesh. Currently it is available on Blurb (an on-demand printing service) but a local printing will make it more readily available here. Then I would like to spread it worldwide."

Positive Light was the first exhibition held at the newly opened Edward M. Kennedy Center for Public Service and the Arts in Dhanmandi. The EMK Center is a collaborative effort between the U.S. Embassy in Dhaka and the Liberation War Museum. "We are delighted to host this event and look forward to more publications like this highlighting the positives in our country," said M. K. Aaref, Director of EMK Center.

I agree and I wish Mikey success in his quest.

www.facebook.com/tangents.ikabir
Positive Light website is at photography.crowdsourced.travel

Dhaka, Delhi agree to curb drug trafficking

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, *New Delhi*

Bangladesh and India have expressed their concerns over the increasing trend of smuggling of synthetic and "party" drugs -- largely used by youngsters -- across the open border.

To this end, both the countries have decided to share actionable intelligence and information regarding these drugs which are produced cheaply in laboratories and available easily under popular names like "Speed" and "Ecstasy".

"We are worried over the increase in the volume and usage of new synthetic drugs across the borders that we share. We need to protect the future generations from this menace," Director General of Bangladesh's Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) Mohammad Iqbal told reporters here on Thursday on the closing day of the two-day annual talks with India's Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB).

Iqbal headed the Bangladesh delegation at the third DG-level conference.

The smuggling of synthetic drugs, also known as Amphetamine Type Stimulants (ATS), has seen a considerable increase as the security agencies seized 85,498 ampoules of the contraband this year as compared to 75,857 ampoules last year.

At the conference, both the agencies signed a joint declaration emphasising additional

measures to combat the drugs, drug smugglers and gangs involved in these operations.

During the joint media interaction, NCB chief Ajay Chadha said Phensedyl, a pharma syrup widely used as drug, was a problem and challenge for Indian security and the enforcement agencies.

He said the Indian government was trying to curb Phensedyl smuggling from the Indian side to Bangladesh. Chadha also said a number of vulnerable smuggling points along the border were identified at the meet for increased vigil by the government agencies.

The DGs also decided that the border guarding forces of both the countries -- Indian BSF and Bangladesh's BGB -- will hold regular meets to address issues related to psychotropic drugs and contrabands.

"Both the sides also expressed concern over growing menace of synthetic drugs or pharmaceutical preparations containing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals. These are susceptible to misuse and are the fastest growing drugs of abuse today," an official statement said.

It was also agreed that "the best practices in curbing drug trafficking and demand reduction will be shared bilaterally".

The meeting decided that an NCB delegation would travel to Dhaka in June next year for the annual meeting for the bilateral exchange.



An accident waits to happen for this open manhole, situated on Dayaganj Road, in front of Tikatuli Sweeper Colony, of the capital with its lid missing for several months. The photo was taken on Thursday.

PHOTO: STAR

Krishak Dal leader hacked to death

Two also injured in the attack

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Some unidentified criminals hacked a BNP-backed Krishak Dal leader to death and blasted a bomb injuring two others last night.

The deceased was identified as Golsar Hossain, 45, son of Sabet Mondol of Taherhuda village and joint convenor of Krishak Dal, Harinakunda upazila unit. He was also former president of Taherhuda union in the upazila.

Abul Khayer, officer-in-charge (OC) of Harinakunda Police Station, said the criminals hacked Golsar while he and one Shukur Joardar and his son Bakul Joardar were gossiping at the tea stall of one Hashem Ali at the village.

The miscreants also blasted a bomb that left Shukur and his son wounded at around 8:00pm. The injured were admitted to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital where Golsar died.

Death anniversary

METRO DESK

Today is the second death anniversary of Barrister Syed Mohammad Ali.

He died on this day in London in 2010.

On the occasion, prayers for his departed soul will be offered by his friends and family in Dhaka and London.

Stop rental power plants

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday stressed the need for shutting down rental and quick rental power plants and repairing national power plants to meet the country's power demands.

They also suggested taking initiatives and setting up big power plants to increase energy production locally rather than depending on multinational companies.

Shaptahik, a weekly news magazine, organised the seminar on "Excessive hike of electricity price: Liability of rental-quick rental power plants" at Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs auditorium in the capital.

"Not a single country in the world succeeded in solving their electricity crisis through rental power plants," said Dr Akbar Ali Khan, former adviser to a caretaker government.

He said the government could solve the power problem by repairing the existing power plants and solving the gas crisis instead of opting rental power plants.

Why will people pay excessive electricity bill resulting from system loss, mismanage-

ment, corruption and quick rental power plants, he asked.

Columnist Syed Abul Maksud said corruption in the power sector can be much more devastating than that in any other sectors of the country.

A keynote paper of Kallol Mostafa presented at the seminar showed that the main causes of increasing power production cost included using liquid energy instead of gas in electricity production, failing to increase gas production at cheap rate through state owned companies, and purchasing gas at higher rate from multinational companies.

Engr BD Rahmatullah, in another keynote paper, said the government will have to give Tk 20,700 crore yearly if it takes 2,000 MW power from quick rental and rental power plants and this cost will go up with increasing power needs.

Shaptahik Editor Golam Murtaza moderated the seminar while economist Prof Abu Ahmed, CPB General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim and economist Prof Pias Karim addressed it among others.



Gonotantik Baam Morcha, an alliance of left-leaning political parties, brings out a procession in front of Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday demanding withdrawal of the decision to hike prices of rail tickets.

PHOTO: STAR

DEFEAT IN BAR COUNCIL POLL Pro-liberation lawyers blame 'internal rift'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Stating that the defeat in the July 18 Bangladesh Bar Council election was "for internal rift", pro-liberation lawyers yesterday emphasised staying united to protect the country from "national and international conspiracy".

Several leaders of Sammilito Ainjibi Samannoy Parishad (SASP) made the appeal in SASP's extended meeting in the capital's Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) auditorium.

The meeting also criticised the absence of three SASP leaders -- Law Minister Shafique Ahmed, Attorney General Mahbubey Alam and the council's immediate past vice-chairman Abdul Bashet Majumdar -- in the meeting.

Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Oikya Panel, a body of BNP-led 18 party alliance lawyers, won nine out of 14 posts in the poll.

SASP leader Rakanuddin Mahmud stated an allegation, raised by several lawyers outside the capital, that some central leaders sent them letters asking not to vote for SASP candidates and join yesterday's meeting.

"Why did he (the attorney general) not join the meeting? I suspect that he might be behind the distribution of the letters. He could have attended the meeting and proven that he was not involved," he said, raising similar questions on the law minister's absence.

SASP Member Secretary Subrata Chowdhury said, "We are lost for words to condemn the negative activities and conspiracies of some of our friends in the election."

SASP Convener M Amir-UI Islam said a quarter was hatching national and international conspiracies and SASP member Shah Jikrul Ahmed said a vested quarter was trying to create a division in SASP's unity.

Talking to The Daily Star, Shafique said his SCBA membership was suspended, as per the organisation's rules, after he became a minister. "As a minister, I can not attend such meetings."

Mahbubey Alam said he was not invited to the meeting as he, on several occasions, had asked to reshuffle SASP's committee. "Those (Rakanuddin's comments) are absolutely false and a propaganda to publicly humiliate me."

Abdul Bashet, president of Bangabandhu Ainjibi Parishad, one of SASP's five component organisations, said four of the component organisations were not informed of the meeting in "due time."

"We did not take part in the meeting as it was organised unilaterally," he said. SASP leaders Dr Kamal Hossain, Shahara Khatun, Abdul Matin Khasru, Yusuf Hossain Humayun and Additional Attorney General MK Rahman were present at the meeting.

NEWS IN brief

Two die from electrocution

METRO DESK

Two people died from electrocution in Chittagong and Thakurgaon yesterday.

Our staff correspondent from Chittagong reports, Md Yousuf, 13, son of Sekandar Mia, of the city's West Madarbari, died as he came in contact with a live electric wire while searching for waste papers on the sun shade of a two-storey building on Ice-Factory Road in the port city yesterday afternoon.

Police said Yousuf used to make his living by collecting papers.

In Thakurgaon, Daburuddin, 35, son of Shawkat Ali of Bangaon village, was electrocuted at the village in Haripur upazila as he came in contact with a live electric wire at about 11:30am yesterday, said Gadura UP Chairman Abdul Hamid.

He died on the way to Ranishankoil health complex.

Minor's body recovered in park

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The decomposed body of an unidentified baby boy was found in the capital's Osmani Udyan yesterday.

Some street urchins noticed the body while picking up garbage in the area around 7:30am and informed locals, said Sirajul Islam, officer-in-charge of Shahbagh Police Station.

On information, police recovered the body of the boy, aged about 2 years, around 9:00am and sent it to Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsy, he said.

Morgue sources said the boy was strangled at sometime on Thursday.

Police suspect that somebody killed the boy and

Boiler blast kills rice mill worker

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

A rice mill worker was killed and his three co-workers were injured when a boiler at the mill exploded at Panbazar Mithipur village in Pirganj upazila in Rangpur yesterday morning.

The deceased was Krisna Chandra Barman, 38, son of late Kharag Chandra Barman of Jotydaanga village in the upazila.

Pirganj Police Station Officer-in-Charge Hasan Shamim Iqbal said the boiler at the rice mill of one Khalilur Rahman Mandol exploded when the workers started it for boiling paddy at around 8:00am, killing Krisna instantly.

The injured Belal Hossain, 25, Tota Mian, 60, and Firoza Begum, 32, were rushed to Rangpur Medical College Hospital.



Human chain

Bangladesh Labour Party will form a human chain demanding withdrawal of power tariff hike; Venue: in front of Jatiya Press Club; Time: 10:30am.

Memorial meeting

Freedom Fighters Peoples Council will organise a memorial meeting on late journalist Ataus Samad; Venue: Dhaka Reporters Unity; Time: 4:00pm.

Roundtable

Nagorik Oikya will hold a roundtable on the attacks on Buddhists; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 3:30pm.

Human chain

Bangladesh Muktiyuddha Projanmo will form a human chain protesting the attacks on Buddhists; Venue: in front of Jatiya Press Club; Time: 10:30am.

Blood donation

Dhaka Foundation will organise a blood donation programme; Venue: Nazir Bazar High School; Time: 11:00am.

Software launch

Bangladesh Visually Impaired Peoples Society will launch a software; Venue: Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies; Time: 10:00am.

Seminar

National Human Rights Commission, Bangladesh will organise a seminar on child rights; Venue: Cirdap Auditorium; Time: 10:00am.

Seminar

Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs will hold a seminar on a bill on the appointment of Supreme Court judges; Venue: its auditorium; Time: 10:00am.

Memorial lecture

Asiatic Society of Bangladesh will



Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

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

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

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

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:41pm and rises tomorrow at 5:53am.

Country's highest temperature 32.3 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 22.8 degrees at Sylhet.

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	30.8	24.8	81	80
Chittagong	26.4	24.0	98	97
Rajshahi	32.3	24.4	94	86
Rangpur	31.5	24.5	83	84
Khulna	30.4	25.2	94	92
Barisal	28.3	25.4	95	92