

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Untitled.

PHOTO:
HASAN CHANDAN

Chandan's Photographs

The great French photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson once said that the difference between a good photograph and a mediocre one is a question of millimetres. Precision is key to making an everyday scene become an extraordinary photograph. Photographs by Chandan being exhibited until the end of this month at Mango Cafe exemplify this principle.

The photographer Hasan Saifuddin Chandan needs no introduction because, among other things, he is the author of the book of photographs *People of Kamalapur Railway Station*, a timeless classic. A founder of the MAP photo agency, he has photographed Bangladesh since 1982 and won numerous international and national awards. He is regarded as a ground-breaking photographer for his precise and compelling images where geometrical elements and human moments come together with effortless grace.

The exhibition has twenty-one photographs: eleven are black and white and the rest are in colour. Those who follow Bangladeshi photography will find some well-known images here, including that of a brick-breaking couple enjoying a moment of happiness with their child.

There is a kind of poetry of light that Chandan squeezes out of life in Bangladesh. It is a combination of the way he selects the subject, the way he frames the photo, his technical mastery and his understanding of light. What matters is the end result which touches us in a profound manner.

But what about the photos themselves – what do they say? They can be interpreted at two levels that mix and match in varying degrees: a

narrative level and a symbolic level. The first tells us the story by capturing a decisive moment, while the second evokes feelings and thoughts based on our reading of symbols presented the photograph.

Narration carries more weight in some images. Chandan captures the right moment for telling a story in these photos and we can fill in the dots in our mind. For example, a boy who has arranged two chairs to prop himself up and do his homework, right on the sidewalk, takes us back to our own school days.

In another photograph, a truck driver is taking a nap on a bench next to his truck, a table and empty chairs next to him. The truck, door open, is on the far side. The formally precise image is an unexpected one and yet, because we instantly grasp the situation, it is emotionally touching.

Other photos have more symbolic power. One photo shows a boatman in his sailboat. Holes in the sail, black against white, mimic the old boatman's white beard and hair, leading us to ponder their relationship: friends or adversaries? In another photo, an old woman's wrinkled hand placed against the terracotta wall says much about time and human frailty.

Some photographs are about architecture in our environment. In one, a vibrant purple wildflower grows into the arch of a historic building; in another, the Parliament building looms behind the flowers on the head of a flower-girl like a giant late-afternoon shadow.

The exhibition offers a unique opportunity to see and acquire world-class photographic art from a native talent. Open 10am-10pm until April 30, House 6, Road 5, Dhanmondi.

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Illegal food factory sealed off in Bhairab 6 including factory owner jailed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

A mobile court of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday shut down an unlicensed factory at Chandiber village in Bhairab and sentenced six people in this connection to different terms in prison.

According to Rab sources, they received complaints against the food factory, Tahera Food Products, which was running without a license from Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI). The factory was using BSTI seals on their packets and marketing them in different areas including Bhairab, Brahmanbaria and Kishoreganj.

Maj Mohammad Mahfuz-ul-Amin Noor, commanding officer of Rab-9 Bhairab camp, said the factory was producing adulterated ice creams and juices and selling those.

He added that they sealed off the factory, seized a truck loaded with adulterated ice creams and juice bottles and arrested the factory owner, his assistant and four labourers.

The arrestees are factory owner Md Ibrahim Mia, his assistant Md Siddique Mia, and labourers -- Md Nazrul Islam, Md Kibria, Nazmul Hasan, and Md Yeasin Mia.

Ibrahim was sentenced to six months' imprisonment, Siddique to three months and the labourers to a month each.

Leg-severed body of Sylhet UP member found

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The body of a union parishad member, with the legs severed, was found inside a suitcase left by the roadside in Dhopagul area under Osmani International Airport Police Station in Sylhet yesterday.

Profulla Nomosudra, 50, member of Nandirgaon Union Parishad under Gowainghat upazila of Sylhet district, has been missing since last Wednesday, said his family sources.

Locals first saw the suitcase and informed police. The body was sent to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College for an autopsy and a general diary was filed.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

A devastating fire burns a plastic goods manufacturing factory in Islambagh's Itadhal Ghat area of the capital's Lalbagh last night.

Port city dwellers worried over hartal

TAREK MAHMUD, Ctg

Subversive and violent activities during and on the eve of recent hartals are terrorising Chittagong residents, especially those in the city, leaving them fearful of their lives and property every day.

In the 17 hartal days observed in February and March, pickets exploded some 200 cocktails, torched 40 and vandalised over 200 vehicles and destroyed many more business establishments and government installations, said police and transport organisation sources.

Targeted attacks left at least 20 people injured including students, pedestrians, vehicle drivers and police, said Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) and Chittagong Medical College Hospital sources.

The attacks centred around Alangkar, AK Khan, Bahaddarhat, Muradpur, Chawkbazar, Momin Road, Kadamtali, Tin Puler Matha, Sadarghat, Ashraf Ali Road, Rahattarpul and Oxygen areas.

These crowded areas are attack hotspots for panic can be spread easily and regular life can be instantly hindered, CMP Additional Commissioner (crime) Banaz Kumar Majumdar told The Daily Star recently.

The wave of hartals, imposed by the opposition parties, ensued a February 5 life sentence on Jamaat leader Abdul Quader Mollah.

On the last hartal on April 2, 20 cocktails were exploded at different points injuring two pedestrians -- Rabeya Sultana, 20, a Chittagong Government College student and Lal Mohan Dhar, 72, a retired Karnaphuli Paper Mill official.

A class IX student, Antu Barua, sustained eye injuries from cocktail splinters on the March 28 hartal. Md Sujon, a private medical college student, lost his sight in another explosion on the eve of the March 12 hartal.

A battery-run three-wheeler driver, Md

Musa, severely burnt when pickets torched his vehicle on the March 25 hartal, is now fighting for life at Dhaka Medical College Hospital's burn unit.

On how hartals are affecting him, hawker Abul Hossain said, with no work, his income had gone down. "Running my family has become even harder," he said.

Kanu Chowdhury, a shop owner, said he keeps his shop closed for it was easy for pickets to vandalise roadside shops such as his. A housewife, Fatema Tuz Zohora, said she was afraid of letting her two daughters go to school or coaching.

Claims that a halt in everyday activities indicated hartal success is propaganda as people kept indoors in fear, said Chittagong University Vice-Chancellor Prof Anwarul Azim Arif.

Assistant Prof Syed Sajjad Kabir of CU psychology department said such violence was having a negative impact on people, especially young minds, hampering development of their beliefs, tolerance, and social bonding.

In the long term, these minds would become self-centred, devoid of civic responsibilities and intending to move abroad, he said.

Panchlaish Police Station Officer-in-Charge Pradip Kumar Das said arrest numbers indicated that Jamaat-Shibir men were mostly involved in the violence.

Islami Chhatra Shibir, Chittagong city (North) unit Secretary Nurul Alam refuted the allegation.

BNP Chittagong city unit President Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury recently claimed that the ruling Awami League and its "terrorist" groups, aided by law enforcers, were attacking the opposition and masses and blaming it on BNP.

On the preventive steps being taken, Banaz of CMP said physical and mental retraining on riot and mob control had begun since March.

NEWS IN brief

Man murdered in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A man, who had been missing since Thursday afternoon, was found dead in a pond at Dashuria village in Ishwardi upazila of Pabna yesterday morning.

The deceased was Md Mojibar Rahman, 55, of village Degreepara of the upazila.

Criminals strangled him and dumped the body in the pond, said Md Akbar Hossain, officer-in-charge of Ishwardi Police Station.

On information from locals, police recovered the body from the pond.

Police primarily suspected that Mojibar's killing was a sequel to past enmity.

Six girls return after serving two years in Indian jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) handed over six Bangladeshi girls and a child to Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) after they had served two years in Mumbai central jail.

Kamruzzaman, officer-in-charge of Benapole checkpoint immigration police, said the seven were trafficked to India through Sadipur border in Benapole two years back with promises of lucrative jobs.

Indian police arrested them in Mumbai city on charge of living there illegally and, later, they were sent to the jail.

After receiving the Bangladeshis, the BGB handed them over to Benapole Port Police Station.

2 trucks Indian food items seized in Benapole

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Members of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) seized contraband Indian food products worth Tk 10 crore in Shyamlagachhi area of Sharsha upazila in Jessore on Thursday night.

Acting on a tip off, a team of the BGB conducted a drive in a house of the area and recovered the products loaded in two trucks around 11:30pm, said Rafiqul Islam, commander of 26 BGB Benapole camp.

The products are *sonpapri*, chocolates, *hazmola*, malted milk, Bourn Vita, Horlicks, and powered milk.

Mawlana Bhasani university's first convocation today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University in Tangail will hold its first convocation today.

On the occasion, a procession, to be brought out in front of the university's administrative building, will parade different streets on the campus and end at the convocation pavilion set up on the university field.

At the convocation, degrees will be conferred on 2,249 students of the university while 51 students will receive awards for excellent academic achievements.

Dr M Nurul Islam, the university's vice chancellor, will deliver the welcome speech at the convocation, which will be presided by Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid.

12 shops, 6 houses gutted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bhola

At least 12 shops and six houses were gutted in a fire in Munsir Char area of Daulatkhana upazila of Bhola yesterday morning.

Locals said the fire broke out at a shop at 9:00am and soon spread to the other adjoining structures.

Two fire fighting units from Bhola Sadar and Borhanuddin rushed to the spot and doused the blaze in two hours of frantic efforts with the help of local people at about 11:00am.



WEATHER
TODAY

Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Sylhet and Chittagong divisions in 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Weather may remain mainly dry elsewhere over the country, Met Office said.

Mild heat wave is sweeping over Rajshahi and Khulna divisions and the regions of Faridpur Patuakhali, Kheupura, Chadpur, Hatia and Rangamati and it may spread over adjoining area and continue.

Day temperature may rise by 1-2 degree Celsius and night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6:16pm and rises tomorrow at 5:45am.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max:	Min:	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	35.4	25.5	75	19
Chittagong	33.0	25.6	74	72
Rajshahi	37.8	19.8	33	20
Rangpur	33.4	21.0	35	40
Khulna	35.0	23.0	50	29
Barisal	35.0	24.8	65	39
Sylhet	35.6	25.7	66	28
Cox's Bazar	34.0	26.4	74	80

Release of arrested bloggers demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Civil society members have demanded the unconditional release of the arrested bloggers and an immediate halt to all activities that deny the fundamental right of freedom of expression.

A statement signed by 85 citizens alleged that the government came under pressure from the organisations that want to save the war criminals.

The government is oppressing the bloggers, who organised the Gonojagoron Mancha, asking for the maximum punishment of the war criminals and a ban on Jamaat-e-Islami.

They expressed concern at the government's decision to make a list of alleged bloggers for defamation of religion and formation of special tribunal to try them.

Dhaka Wasa plans to supply 70pc from surface water

UNB, Dhaka

Dhaka Wasa plans to derive 70 percent of supply water from surface sources by 2020 via a sustainable and environment-friendly water management system to meet the city dwellers' safe water demand and reduce dependence on groundwater.

"We are trying to bring water from the Padma and Meghna rivers," Dhaka Wasa Managing Director Taqsem A Khan told the news agency, adding that around US\$ 1.6 billion was required for the shift.

Currently only 22 percent of supply water comes from surface sources, as per Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) officials.

Taqsem said, except Shitalakkhya, waters of Buriganga, Balu and Turag rivers could not be treated due to the high chemical contamination levels.

Water from Jamuldia point of the Padma river will be treated in a plant, to be constructed in Munshiganj district by 2016.

This treatment plant will be able to provide about 45 crore litres of water to the capital through a 33 kilometre pipeline every day, said Dhaka Wasa sources.

Water from the Meghna river will be treated in another plant, to be constructed in the city's Khilkhet area with financial assistance from Asian Development Bank.

This plant will be able to provide 50 crore litres of water a day.