

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR

The Quick Brown Fox

Centaur, a humanist typeface

The Quick Brown Fox

Bodoni, a modern typeface

The Quick Brown Fox

Old English, a Baroque typeface

Different Typeface Styles

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

The World of Type

While assembling a book of photographs and their accompanying text, I recently found myself looking closely at typefaces for printing text. Next thing I knew, I was immersed in the world of type.

There are numerous designs for printing the letters of the alphabet. Curvature, slant, line-thickness, height, colour and dozens of other features contribute to this design. A particular design of the letters is called a typeface. We see many different typefaces every day when we read newspapers, books or even the bus route and number. In advertisements, the choice of typeface is important for branding and logo.

Typography, the design and layout of printed text, has been around for centuries. The German printer Johann Gutenberg is credited for invention of the printing press in the 1450s and typographers have been busy ever since. The press used movable type - that is, letters carved into pieces of metal or wood. Gutenberg's invention enabled the mass production of books. It was a pivotal moment in the history of civilization.

Interestingly, the Chinese had invented printing with type several centuries before Gutenberg. Their problem was the huge number of symbols in Chinese language. Thus, to make the type for a Chinese book, entire pages had to be carved out from wood (as usual, ink was then applied to this carving to print the page.) So Chinese printing did not flourish.

The Roman letters used in most European languages, in contrast, are comprised of a much smaller set of letters. Printers equipped with these individual letters could compose entire pages of text with much greater flexibility. This led to wide adoption of Gutenberg's method.

Most of us using word processing or graphics programmes know about

software fonts, which are typefaces implemented in software. These programmes offer us dozens of fonts. Many of these fonts such as Garamond, Bembo, Palatino, and Jenson are named after printers from the 15th and 16th centuries in Europe. These fonts are re-creations of typefaces they had designed. Some fonts are called "humanist" because they have characteristics derived from hand-written letters. Other philosophies and aesthetics ("modern", "baroque", "gothic", etc.) have also influenced typeface design over the centuries.

The capital letters of English come directly from Roman inscriptions. However, before movable type came along, a thriving group of professionals, called scribes, copied and wrote out books, documents and other text by hand. They needed to write fast, and their style of writing evolved into smaller, cursive letters, now known as small letters.

Capital letters and small letters are also called "uppercase" and "lowercase." Printing presses used to carry the type letters in suitcases with several drawers; the uppers drawers held the capitals while the lower drawers held the small letters.

Computer-based printing looked awful when computers first came along. This was primarily because of the small memory of early computers. Over the years, of course, computers have taken over typography.

In 1985, the writer Md. Zafar Iqbal, then a PhD student at CalTech, showed me one of the first Bangla software fonts on his Apple Macintosh computer. Today, there are over a hundred Bangla fonts available; Bijoy is probably the most popular. The greatest challenge in Bangla typeface design lies in designing *juktakkhors* (ligatures.)

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Handcuffed man dies in 'gunfight'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A detained accused died during an alleged shootout between police and his gang in the capital's Rupnagar area last night.

The detainee, Mahadi, 38, was arrested in Barisal in the morning in connection with an alleged shooting on July 8, in which a garment factory owner of Mirpur was injured, said Deputy Commissioner of Mirpur division of Dhaka Metropolitan Police Imtiaz Ahmed.

Mirpur police said a team of police yesterday went on a raid taking the detainee with them in front of Ena Properties in Rupangar Beribadh area around 9:30pm.

When police reached the spot, six to seven of Mahadi's associates opened fire them, leading to a gunfight. Amid the clash, Mahadi, who was handcuffed, ran away, said police.

After the gun battle stopped, police found Mahadi lying on the ground with a bullet wound to the head, they said. Police took him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

DC Imtiaz said Mahadi was an accused in 18 criminal cases mainly related to extortion and possessing firearms. He also said Mahadi had been demanding extortion from many garment factory owners in Mirpur area and used to force the owners to provide garment by-products to the people of his choice.

Hefajat activist arrested with anti-state magazines

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police yesterday arrested a Hefajat-e Islam activist for distributing anti-state and provocative magazines to a crowd before Anderkilla Shahi Mosque in Chittagong city after Juma prayers.

During primary interrogation, Mohammed Alauddin, 24, admitted to Kotwali police that he is an activist of Hefajat-e Islam and yesterday was distributing copies of "Monthly Kashemiya" magazine, which publishes anti-state articles, upon the order from his leaders.

Alauddin is an accused in a case filed for vandalising and torching vehicles, including one of Somoy tv, in the city during a Hefajat-e Islam rally on April 7, said police.

CHANGING GRAMEEN BANK STRUCTURE Moudud warns govt of tough response

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP standing committee member Moudud Ahmed yesterday warned the government of a tough response from the public if it brings any changes to the structure of the Grameen Bank.

He alleged that the government has been undermining Prof Muhammad Yunus, founder of the Grameen Bank. "If BNP gets to power, we will restore the bank to its previous state," he said.

He made the remarks at a discussion on "Conspiracy of Government against the Grameen Bank and Dr Muhammad Yunus and Future of Our Economy" organised by Youth Forum, a pro-BNP platform, at Jatiya Press Club.

"The nation is proud of Yunus and Grameen Bank but the incumbent government is trying to insult him. But it is impossible to insult a figure like him. The government has reduced the nation's honour," he said.

He alleged that the government has launched a fight against the country's women by interfering in the Grameen Bank where 84 lakh women are engaged.

On restoration of the caretaker government, Moudud said the present government is weighed down by corruption and is afraid of the outcome if it holds election under a caretaker government.

He claimed that the government has lost the five city corporation polls because of the Gonojagoron Mancha, which was regenerated under the government's supervision.



Bright string lights illuminate two shopping malls in Nasirabad area of Chittagong city. Most of the large markets in the port city have been decorated with lights since the beginning of Ramadan, defying a government bar on such decoration. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

File appeal seeking death penalty for Ghulam Azam

Gonojagoron Mancha urges govt

DU CORRESPONDENT

The Gonojagoron Mancha, a platform of youths demanding the capital punishment for all war criminals, yesterday urged the government to file an appeal with the Supreme Court, seeking death sentence for former Jamaat-e-Islami chief Ghulam Azam.

The protesters, who raised their demands including a ban on Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Chhatra Shibir, at a rally at the capital's Shahbagh, will meet the attorney general at his office today to press home their demands.

A war crimes tribunal sentenced Ghulam Azam to 90 years in prison on July 15 for masterminding crimes against humanity and genocide in 1971.

In a separate rally in front of Jatiya Press Club, Udichi Shilpa Goshti, a cultural group, demanded the capital punishment for Ghulam Azam.

Gonojagoron Mancha spokesperson Imam H Sarker demanded a ban on Jamaat, saying the tribunal in its verdict against Azam termed Jamaat a criminal organisation.

Addressing the Shahbagh rally, rights activist Khushi Kabir said Azam's age was considered in sentencing him but he did not consider the age of the victims while killing them.

Meanwhile, the Gonojagoron Mancha will hold a photography exhibition on July 26-27 at Shahbagh from 3:00pm to 6:00pm each day, focusing on the country's Liberation War.

Ctg city malls defy bar on illumination

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

With the commencement of Ramadan, most shopping malls in Chittagong city have been adorned with colourful lightings, thus violating the government order that prohibits such illumination to curb power outage.

Moreover, these markets are kept open till 10:00pm to 11:00pm when the government has directed authorities of all markets throughout the country to shut by 8:00pm.

On a recent visit, this correspondent saw that the city's posh shopping malls including Mimi Super Market, Afmi Plaza, Ameen Centre, VIP Tower Shopping Mall, Sanmar Ocean City, Yunus City Centre and Central Plaza were decorated with string lights and open well after 8:00pm.

Zakir Hossain Rubel, general secretary of Central Plaza Traders' Association, said it was impractical to order the markets to close by 8:00pm during Ramadan as traders racked up 80 percent of their total annual turnover on the occasion of Ramadan.

Moreover, people prefer shopping after evening, said Didar Md Sadek, general secretary of Afmi Plaza Eid Sale Festival. But it exceeds 7:00pm just to finish iftar and prayers, he added. "If we shut the market by 8:00pm, we won't get any customers." About lighting decoration, he said LED bulbs were used for the illumination, which consumed very little power.

Asad Iftekher, president of Sanmar Ocean City Shop Owners' Association, said, "We have gone for illumination since it has been a trend to give the markets a festive look on occasions like Ramadan and Eid."

He, however, said if the other city malls refrained from lighting up theirs, they would follow suit.

Swapan Kumar Saha, chief engineer (distribution) of the Power Development Board, Chittagong south zone, said the mall traders' association leaders earlier pledged to the PDB that they would not use extra lights during Ramadan. Action will be taken if they do not comply, he added.

Chittagong Deputy Commissioner Abdul Mannan also spoke for taking action against the violators.



Violating rules, a motorised three-wheeler runs on a road in Tiger Pass Area of Chittagong city. The picture was taken on Thursday.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

Timber of Tk 10 lakh seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A team of the local forest office captured four persons with a cargo vessel laden with illegally logged timber in the Lohalia river near Patuakhali town early yesterday.

Arifur Rahman, 24, Md Mehedi, 24, Solaiman, 26, and Abdur Rahman, 25, all residents of Galachipa upazila, heading for Dhaka, were handed over to Patuakhali police.

Md Faruq Hossain, range officer of the Forest Department at Patuakhali sadar upazila, who led the drive, said the trees were worth about Tk 10 lakh.

The trees were planted in 1995-96 along a 3km embankment at Baherchar village in Galachipa under the Social Forestation Project.

Mihir Kumer Do, divisional forest officer (DFO) in Patuakhali, said he found 40 felled trees at the spot and formed a three-member probe body to investigate the incident.

Locals said a group of people, led by chairman of the project beneficiary committee Shah Alam Mridha, cut down around 300 trees worth about Tk 40-45 lakh in the last week.

8 firearms, ammo recovered, 2 held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Rapid Action Battalion recovered eight firearms and ammunition, and arrested two alleged arms smugglers at bordering Kaziupur in Gangni upazila of Meherpur on Thursday afternoon.

Tareq Jubair, commander of Rab-6, said, on information, they raided a house at Kaziupur village and arrested the two persons.

On their confessional statements, Rab searched the house and recovered three pistols, four one-shooter guns, one rifle and 66 bullets from a consignment of fruits.

The arrested Sahab Uddin, 40, and Milon Hossain were handed over to Gangni police yesterday morning.

The firearms were supposed to be sent to buyers in Dhaka, said Rab.

Earlier on June 3, border guards recovered three firearms from Sultanpur border in Chuadanga while those were being smuggled into Bangladesh.

Ensure safe iftar items Demand green activists

UNB, Dhaka

Green activists yesterday demanded that the government take effective steps to ensure marketing of safe iftar items and fruits during Ramadan.

They raised the demand at a human chain jointly formed by Poribesh Bachao Andolon (Poba) and Pallima Green before Malibagh kitchen market in the capital.

Poba Chairman Abu Naser Khan, Pallima Green President Hafizur Rahman, Poba Joint General Secretary Syed Monwar Hossain, Poba Coordinator Atiq Morshed, General Secretary of Peace Ifma Hossain, and Senior Vice President of Dhaka Mohanagar Shop Owners Association Rezaul Islam Montu, among others, spoke.

The green activists said contami-

nated and adulterated food items flooded the city markets in the Ramadan.

A section of unscrupulous traders driven by their greed for windfall profits uses various chemicals, including formalin, in fruits and fish to keep those fresh for long, which adversely affects human health.

They said access to safe food was a right of consumers, but people were being deprived of the rights.

Food adulteration and mixing chemicals in food goes rampant in almost all food items - from baby food to vegetables and meat to fish, they added.

They also demanded setting up a control room, and conducting surprise raids on food warehouses and factories by anti-adulteration teams.



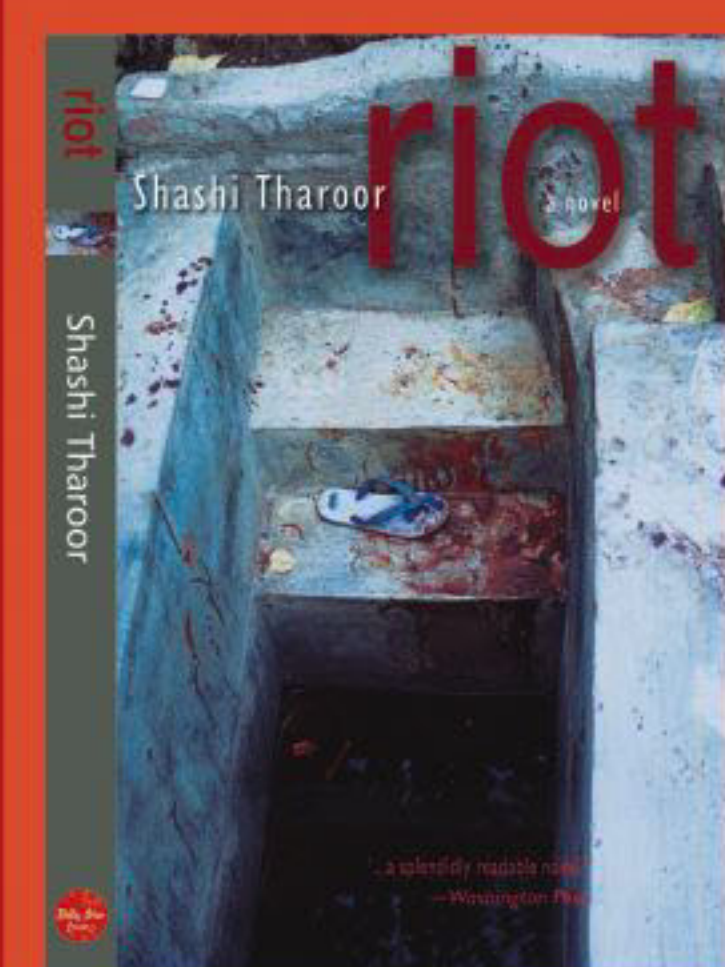
Daily Star Books

New title arrives Shashi Tharoor's scintillating novel

riot

Who killed 24-year old PRISCILLA HART? Was it the result of a love affair that spun out of control? Or was she an innocent victim of a riot that had exploded in India in that fateful year of 1987 between HINDUS AND MUSLIMS?

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