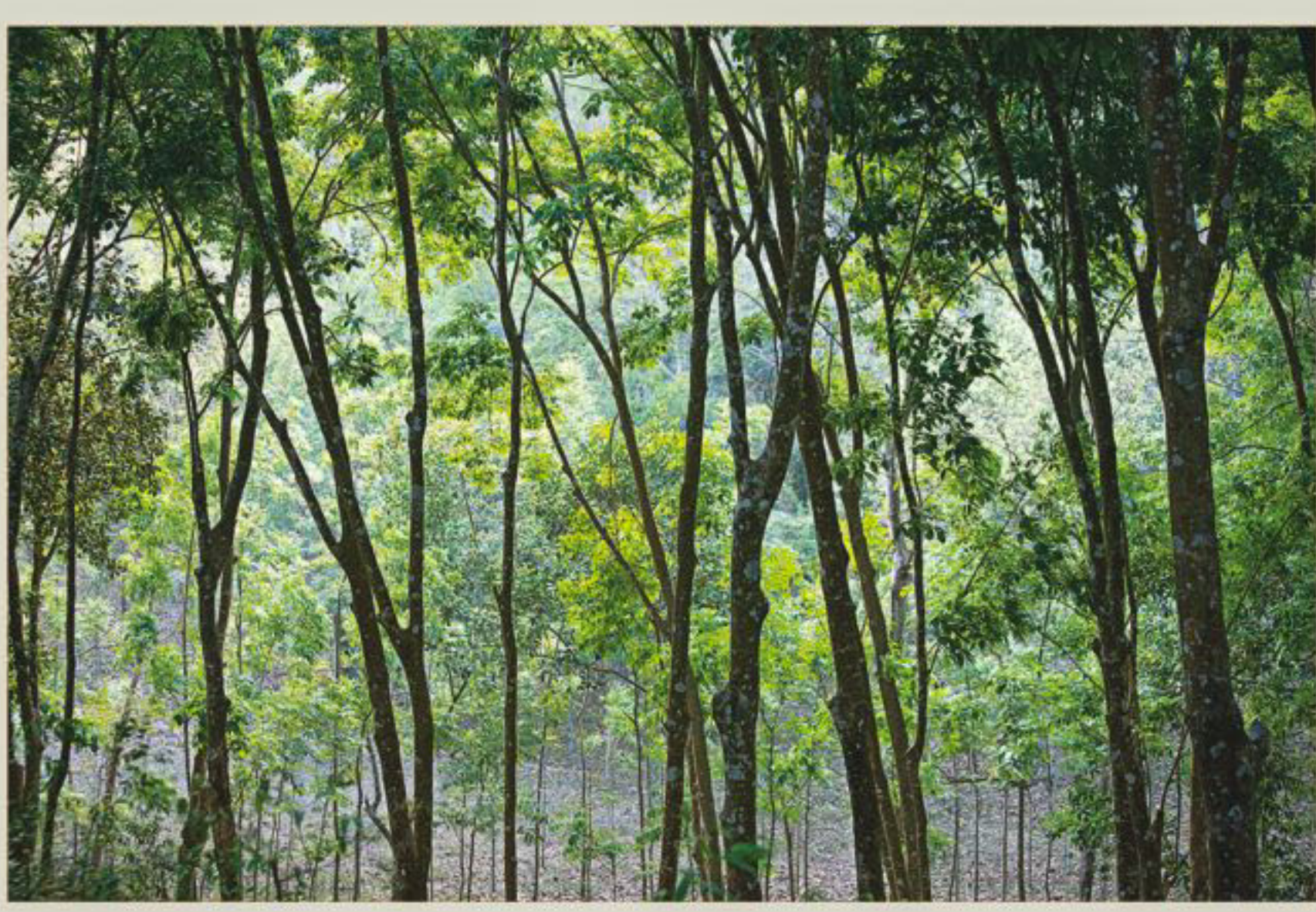


# TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Nature gives us serenity. PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

## Be Prepared

Most of us living in the city yearn for nature: peace and quiet, perhaps a forest, a lake or just a serene rural setting. With the approaching winter, there will be many opportunities to take that nature trip you always wanted - the mangroves of Sundarban; the remote lakes and waterfalls of Chittagong Hill Tracts; the forests, hills and haors of Sylhet; or a cruise in one of our beautiful rivers. The possibilities are endless. But once exposed in the great outdoors, city-dwellers often find themselves unprepared. Nature can be deceptive and cruel. Just because it is beautiful outdoors does not mean you will have an easy time there.

My outdoors training started in earnest when my son joined the Boy Scouts of America, whose motto is "Be Prepared." Later I became Scoutmaster, leading groups of scouts outdoors. I taught basic outdoor safety rules which have served me well. Following them can help you enjoy your outdoor experience.

**Buddy:** Never go into forests or unknown places by yourself. There must be at least one other person with you. Otherwise a simple accident - a sprained ankle, or tripping and falling - can have serious consequences.

**Water:** Don't jump into the water - no matter how shallow - if you don't know how to swim. That river, stream, lake or ocean is potentially much more dangerous than the swimming pool you left behind in Dhaka.

**Shoes:** Perhaps more than any other attire, your shoes are the most important item when you are outdoors. Make sure they are comfortable. Running shoes are fine for walking on flat land, but in any

kind of hilly terrain you need hiking shoes supporting your ankles. Consider sandals or sandal-shoes for water activities.

**Clothing:** Wear comfortable clothes. Avoid cotton as it does not dry easily; synthetic outdoor clothes are lighter in weight and dry quickly. It is best to dress in several lightweight layers (instead of one heavy sweater or jacket) when it is cold. As the cold increases or decreases, you can add or remove layers as needed. If you are out in the sun for long periods, cover yourself as much as possible. A *gamcha* is very useful; a hat can also serve well.

**Drinking water:** Dehydration can creep up on you, especially on a hot day. It is best to carry drinking water and drink it often. If you are prone to cramps - especially when bicycling - drink Orsoline instead of water.

**Protection:** Sunblock is necessary for a day out in the sun. Insect repellants can help against mosquitoes, bugs and leeches, especially in jungles. An umbrella helps shelter against sun or rain; in our weather raincoats don't work too well. I don't wear sunglasses but some find them helpful.

**Planning:** The more you find out about your destination and plan your trip, the better your experience will be. Talk to people who know the area. Check the weather forecast. If you can find guides who can show you around, use them. The website nishorgo.org has information on guides knowledgeable about our protected forests and wildlife sanctuaries.

Bangladesh has many beautiful spots that are easily accessible. What are you waiting for?

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A Rana Plaza victim displays a banner reading "Ensure punishment for those who are responsible, including Sohel Rana" at a human chain under the banner, among others, of Bangladesh Garment Workers' Solidarity formed yesterday at the collapse site by the survivors and the family members of those killed as the nine-storey building caved in at Savar outside the capital on April 24 last year. The participants also demanded compensation for all of those affected by the incident. PHOTO: STAR

## ONGOING BARISAL-DHAKA HIGHWAY RENOVATION

# Uneven surfaces pose accident risks

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Renovation of a two-lane 30-kilometre stretch of the Barisal-Dhaka highway is ongoing without keeping adequate space for overtaking, putting vehicles at risk of accidents and damage and leading to tailbacks.

Till date, around two kilometres of a single lane of the 18-feet wide stretch, from Barisal town's Goriar Par to Barisal's end point at Vurghata, has got a new layer of bitumen.

This has raised the lane some four to 12 inches from the strip of ground on one side and some four or five inches from the untouched lane on the other.

During the day, the construction workers allow traffic on only the untouched lane, intermittently halting vehicles at both ends.

But with no one to man the section at night, vehicles start using the raised lane.

Drivers plying the route say that if a vehicle behind on the raised lane wants to pass or an oncoming one can be seen to be in need of space while passing another, one has to move to the left, inevitably forcing the left wheels to run over the strip of ground.

If one does so, the vehicle risks damage to its lower section for the left and right wheels are not running on an even surface. If the vehicle continues on its path, it risks a head-on collision with the oncoming one, they said.

Moreover the vehicle behind seeking to overtake it has to either move at the speed of the vehicle in front till it passes the raised lane or has to overtake it by running the wheels on the right down the untouched lane, hence damaging the vehicle in the

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Drivers plying the Barisal-Dhaka highway say vehicles moving on the renovated nine-foot wide lane on the right run the risk of accidents and damage to the lower portion during attempts to overtake others at night. Following the application of a fresh layer of bitumen as part of the ongoing renovation of a 30-kilometre stretch, the renovated surface is some four to 12 inches higher than the strip of ground adjacent to it and four to five inches higher from the untouched lane on the left. The photo was taken at Barisal's Satmile area recently. PHOTO: ARIFUR RAHMAN

## RANA PLAZA COLLAPSE

# Victims want compensation, punishment for culprits

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Survivors and family members of those who died in the Rana Plaza collapse formed a human chain at the site of the collapse in Savar yesterday, demanding compensation for all victims of the tragedy.

They also organised a short march demanding punishment for those responsible for the collapse of the nine-storey building on April 24 last year. The tragedy left 1,136 people dead and hundreds injured.

Several hundred demonstrators under the banners of "Bangladesh Garment Workers' Solidarity", "Textile Garment Workers' Federation" and "Garment Workers Front" marched on the Dhaka-Aricha highway from the site to Sobhanbagh, said witnesses.

Addressing the human chain, Nurul Islam, a garment worker, who sustained injuries in the collapse, said 18 months have passed since the tragedy, but he is yet to be compensated.

"Due to my injuries, I cannot work long hours in one sitting, and so it is difficult for me to get jobs," said Nurul whose four-member family is dependent on him.

Speakers alleged that the government and BGMEA authorities had received foreign aid for victims of Rana Plaza collapse, but they have not distributed the aid among the victims.

"We demand compensation for all victims. The government is plotting to exclude the names of injured workers from the list of people to be compensated," alleged Taslima Akter, coordinator of Bangladesh Garment Workers' Solidarity.

## SHIRIN, SABER ELECTED TO LEAD CPA, IPU

# Win doesn't mean int'l community accepted polls

### BNP tells press conference

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday claimed that the election of Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury and lawmaker Saber Hossain Chowdhury as chairperson and president of CPA and IPU respectively did not mean that the international community had accepted the January 5 polls.

"They (voters of the international parliamentary bodies) have expressed their stance independently in all parliamentary associations at international level including Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) and Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)," claimed BNP Vice Chairman Shamsher Mobin Chowdhury.

"They did not take any suggestion from the executive bodies of the governments of their countries," he added while replying to journalists' queries at BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's political office in the capital's Gulshan.

The press conference was organised against the backdrop of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's media briefing on Thursday when she said the election of the lawmakers proved that there was no question about the January 5 polls, which the BNP and most other political parties boycotted.

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## Khaleda's remark irresponsible

### Says foreign minister

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister AH Mahmood yesterday blasted BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia for her remarks on the government's legitimacy and the January 5 national elections, describing those to be "completely a childish act and irresponsible" and expressing doubt over her knowledge on international affairs.

Addressing a rally at the Nilphamari Government Boys' High School ground on Thursday, Khaleda, also chief of the BNP-led 20-party alliance, said not a single country has recognised the "illegal" Sheikh Hasina government which came to power through a voter less elections.

The international community showed its confidence in the government by electing Speaker Shirin Sharmin

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BECAUSE my family DESERVES THE BEST

### Residential

Baridhara | North Gulshan | Gulshan | Banani  
Dhanmondi | Lalmatia | Siddheshwari | Hatkhola  
Mirpur | Uttara | Ashulia (Bungalows) | Khilkhet (Lake City Concord)

### Commercial

Gulshan Avenue | Gulshan South Avenue (Police Plaza Concord)  
Kemal Ataturk Avenue | Banani Road 11 | Mirpur  
Hatkhola | Khilkhet (Lake City Concord)

01913531594, 01913531566, 01937402976, 01922120674, 01922120642

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