

**TANGENTS**  
BY IHTISHAM KABIR

# Coming to Birding



Our common but beautiful egrets.

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR.

I became interested in birds at a relatively older age without any formal training. Many colleges and universities today offer ornithology courses and labs, but my learning has been from trial and error or from others in the field.

It all started with the trees my father had planted while creating a plantation. They were his life's work. After he passed away I started to document them using photographs. Soon I was photographing nature and landscape around the trees. Next I wanted to include creatures to complete the picture of the environment he had created. I started with insects, butterflies and squirrels and was eventually drawn to birds. Before I knew it, I was hooked.

Then came a trip to Sundarban. In the company of expert guides, I learned about special birds of Bangladesh: for example, the nine types of kingfishers present in Sundarban. I also saw a masked finfoot, a rare duck found in Sundarban and in the "wanted" list of dedicated birders.

But I missed the photographic opportunity of the finfoot because my lens was inadequate. So I rented - and later bought - a 150-

500mm lens which opened new territory. Wandering with this lens I discovered the astonishing variety of birds in Bangladesh. I found many in or around Dhaka, including the National Botanical Garden (Mirpur), Savar and Purbachal.

I applied all my photographic knowledge - both technical and aesthetic - to photographing birds. Encouragement and appreciation from friends and family inspired me.

I also learned from the birders of Bangladesh Bird Club which has played an important role in the understanding and preservation of our avifauna. I grew to appreciate their dedication and discipline. They have advanced our knowledge by diligent field work while teaching local communities about the environment.

Several books helped me. Among them are *Encyclopedia of Flora and Fauna of Bangladesh* (Vol. 26, *Birds*) edited by Enam ul Haque et al, *Photographic Guide to Birds of Bangladesh* by Ronald Halder, and *A Guide to Wildlife* by Monirul Khan.

I gradually learned where to look for birds and how to observe and (hopefully) identify them. I learned to be quiet, stay still or

move slowly, and always be prepared with my camera, for birds are not generous with second chances.

While I have picked up some skills, I have failed in utilizing bird sounds. Perhaps because I have not tried hard enough to memorize them, I am unable to identify bird calls. Compounding the problem is the ability of some birds to call in several ways and even mimic other birds. So I am often frustrated when I hear a cacophony of birdsongs in a forest but cannot identify them.

Many birders live and die by the list of birds they have observed. They are called "listers" and their great joy is seeing a bird they had not seen before (a "lifer"). A rare bird or one led astray by a storm makes their day.

My pleasure, however, is in making a good photograph. At the end of the day I am a photographer, not a scientist. So a well-composed, well-lit photograph of a common bird excites me more than a poorly composed photograph of a rare bird, and I prefer a beautiful common bird to a bland looking exotic one.

www.facebook.com/tangents.ikabir.

# More open spaces urgent in capital

## Experts tell Buet alumni exhibition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at an exhibition yesterday stressed the need for creating public places for city dwellers as the capital's residents were facing a huge crisis of parks, playgrounds and open spaces.

Addressing as chief guest after inaugurating the exhibition, Bangladesh Parliament Speaker Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury said the parliament area was a heritage site visited by many people every day for their recreation and more such sites were needed.

Suggesting developing more parks with sections specifically designed for children, she said a lack of parks and playgrounds for children was a big problem of urban life.

Association of Buet (Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology) Alumni in association with the Institute of Architects Bangladesh (IAB), Institution of Engineers Bangladesh and Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP) organised the three-day exhibition in the capital's Bangladesh National Museum.

The organisers said it was to disseminate ideas and create awareness among

polymakers, journalists, professionals and citizens.

Put on display at Nalini Kanta Bhattashali Gallery are 31 selected entries of "Creating an Urban Oasis: Students Idea Competition for the Old Airport Site, Tejgaon, Dhaka".

A book compiling 31 selected projects and articles by eminent professionals was also launched.

Dhaka North City Corporation Mayor Annisul Huq said they would create more public spaces as soon as possible.

Dhaka South City Corporation Mayor Sayeed Khokon said they would be grateful to experts and students if they come up with plans like the Tejgaon airport one for Dhaka Central Jail, which is going to be shifted to Keraniganj.

Stressing the need for an integrated authority to make Dhaka a liveable city, Khokon said there was no coordination among the 56 departments running the city.

The alumni President Jamilur Reza Choudhury, IAB President Prof Abu Sayeed M Ahmed and BIP President Prof Golam Rahman also spoke.



HOTEL BOY KILLING

# Owner shot him dead

Staff tell court; another remanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Five Ghoroa Restaurant employees gave judicial statements yesterday on witnessing the owner, Ariful Islam Sohel, brutally torturing 16-year-old Md Riad in the Motijheel restaurant and in their Swamibagh mess and then shooting him dead.

Meanwhile, another staff, Jasim Uddin, was taken on a seven-day police remand.

He and another employee Farid, who took Riad to Dhaka Medical College Hospital early Wednesday, had claimed that

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Speaker of Jatiya Sangsad Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury visits an exhibition, "Creating an Urban Oasis", at the National Museum in the capital yesterday after opening the event. She also unveiled a book by the same name. The Association of Buet Alumni organised the exhibition.

PHOTO: JATIYA SANGSAD



Participants at an English in Schools teachers' training programme jointly organised by The Daily Star and Robi Axiata Ltd at a Sylhet city hotel yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

# EIS enabling teachers' access to web

## Speakers tell training session in Sylhet

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

The English in Schools (EIS) programme for teachers is not only helping to develop English language skills but also enabling access to the web, aiding a better performance in this competitive world, speakers told a session of the programme yesterday.

Teaching is a dynamic skill which needs to be refreshed through regular training, they said, adding that teachers sometimes fail to deliver English lessons in the expected manner due to a lack of good techniques and experience.

The Daily Star and telecom operator Robi Axiata Ltd jointly organised the training programme for 200 English teachers of secondary schools in four divisions through grammatical and communicative exercises to stimulate English language learning among secondary school students.

Around 50 English teachers from 25 secondary schools of Moulvibazar, Sunamganj, and Sylhet districts participated

in the daylong session at Laa Rose Hotel in Sylhet city.

The trainers also urged the teachers to encourage students to read the weekly page "English in Schools" of The Daily Star published every Monday. The participants urged for inclusion of contents, relevant to the academic curriculum, in it.

The trainers demonstrated different techniques to inspire and engage students effectively in regular classes. The daylong event also included presentations, opinion sharing, and question-answer sessions.

Shireen Hasan, founder executive director, X-cel, Institute of Interactive Learning, with her team conducted the training.

Dr Salehuddin Ahmed, consultant of the EIS programme and former managing editor of The Daily Star; Shafiqur Rahman Bhuiyan Shafiq, manager, Communications & Corporate Responsibility People & Corporate Division, Robi Axiata Ltd; and Jahangir Alam, Sylhet district education officer, also spoke.



# 1971 defeated forces taking identities of militants

## Says home minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister

Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal

yesterday said the defeated forces in the Liberation War of 1971 were now appearing with the identities of militant groups like al-Qaeda, Islamic State, Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (Huji), and Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB).

He did not say why they were doing so but claimed that the government had been able to keep militancy under control and would not let evil forces thrive in Bangladesh.

The home boss was speaking at Moitri Festival, a cultural programme, organised by SAARC Cultural Society in the Supreme Court Bar Association Auditorium.

Reiterating that the killings of foreigners are a part of both local and international conspiracies, he said, "Investigation is going on properly. After the end of the investigation, we will tell you everything in detail. We will tell you -- Who were involved in the conspiracy? Who are the big brothers? Who gave

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