

## TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Osprey with favourite food, Hail Haor.

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

## OSPREY

If there ever was a Shakespearean bird, the osprey is it. Its dramatic appearance, its single minded pursuit of prey, the fierce manner in which it catches and eats it – all these remind us of fate, of the forceful characters in Shakespeare.

The osprey's love of catching fish has been known for centuries. Some people think that fish are paralyzed with fear when they see an osprey circling overhead.

I first saw an osprey (*mach murali*, *pandion haliaetus*) from a boat on the way to Sundarbans several years ago. The boat's approach had disturbed its meal. As it took off carrying a half-eaten fish in its claws, its striking appearance – the black band around the eyes, the black and white wing pattern – caught my attention. Looking at my photograph later, I saw the bird was carrying the fish aligned with the direction of flight. This was no accident – ospreys carry their fish in a way to minimize wind resistance.

But the bird is rare in Bangladesh, and the next few years I only saw it twice more from a distance, over the Haors. Then, earlier this year, I visited the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge in New York which has a man-made osprey breeding center. That summer morning, an osprey alternately perched on the top of a tall tree and circled the water. When it fished, it dived from a great height, plunging into the water and clutching its prey in its talons as it emerged. Sometimes it skimmed the water – like a water ski – for fish.

Indeed, the osprey's entire physique

is adapted to catching fish. The soles of its feet are covered with thorny spines and its long claws cover a wide range of motion. Its nostrils have valves which close when the bird is underwater to prevent water from entering. Its feathers dry quickly and its wings are long and narrow to enable it to fly great lengths as it looks for fish.

Recently I had a stroke of good luck when one afternoon early November I saw an osprey in Hail Haor, Moulvi Bazar. It was sitting on a pole in the middle of a large fisheries pond, about 200-300 feet from me. It had caught a fish which it was holding with one claw. As it slowly ate – savoured perhaps? – the fish, it kept a sharp eye out for possible predators coming to snatch it away.

Returning to Shakespeare, the osprey appears in his play *Coriolanus*. The context is revealing: the great Roman general Coriolanus has been driven out of Rome. His lieutenants are discussing how he can return to take over Rome. One of them expresses his confidence about the general's chances in such a venture: I think he'll be to Rome As is the osprey to the fish, who takes it By sovereignty of nature.

Unfortunately the general was not quite as successful as the osprey, which catches fish four out of five attempts. But that is another story.

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## 50 teachers join training programme in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The second session of teachers' training programme under "English in Schools" concluded in Khulna yesterday.

The daylong training programme was organised by The Daily Star and telecom operator Robi Axiata Ltd at a hotel in the city as a part of their joint initiative which aims to develop English language skills of secondary school students.

The event included presentations by participating teachers, brainstorming and workshop evaluations.



Participants at the teachers' training programme of English in Schools, a joint initiative of The Daily Star and Robi Axiata Ltd, at a hotel in Khulna city yesterday. Inset, from left, Shireen Hasan, founder executive director of X-cel; Syed Ashraful Alam, regional manager, Robi southern cluster; TM Zakir Hossain, deputy director at Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Khulna region; and SM Walid Rahman, a trainer.

## List of war criminals stolen in Patuakhali

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A list of 25 war criminals in Patuakhali sadar upazila was stolen from the upazila Muktijoddha unit office on Thursday night.

Md Sirajul Islam Mollah, deputy commander of the unit, said a gang broke into the office and stole the list from the almirah.

War criminals might be involved in the stealing, the freedom fighter said.

SM Tariqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Patuakhali Police Station, said they were looking into the matter.

A general diary (GD) was filed.

## Thailand keen on trade route with Ctg port

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Thailand is keen on introducing a coastal shipping trading route between its Ranong Port and the Chittagong Port to enhance bilateral trade with Bangladesh.

Governor of the Ranong Province of Thailand Suriyan Kanjanasip expressed the interest in a meeting with Bangladesh Ambassador in Thailand Saida Muna Tasneem at the governor's office on Wednesday, said a press release yesterday.

"We want to see Ranong Port, located on the Andaman sea, as the gateway for connecting Thailand to BIMSTEC countries and as a shipping hub at Andaman sea, transporting goods from Thailand to the ports of Yangon, Chittagong, Kolkata, Chennai and Colombo," said the governor.

In response, Tasneem said a key foreign policy focus for Bangladesh is to enhance connectivity with Thailand.

"We are, therefore, exploring the feasibility of introducing coastal shipping connectivity between Chittagong Port and Ranong port to boost bilateral trade cooperation," she said following her official talks with Suriyan Kanjanasip.

The Bangladesh envoy added that direct shipping links between Chittagong Port and Ranong Port could cut down bilateral shipping cost by at least a third and save shipment time in comparison to the present route via Singapore.

Tasneem, accompanied by embassy officers and a business delegation of major exporters from Thailand to Bangladesh, was

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## 'SECRET' BURIAL OF JAPANESE WOMAN Her internal organs sent for lab test

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The forensic department of Dhaka Medical College (DMC) yesterday sent samples of the internal organs of Japanese woman Hiroe Miyata to Mohakali Government Lab to find the cause of her death, as it could not see any physical injury on the body because it was decomposed.

The secretly buried body was exhumed from the city corporation graveyard in Uttara Sector 12 in presence of police and an executive magistrate following a court order passed the day before.

Miyata, 60, was allegedly murdered and buried by some of her "business partners" nearly a month ago. Dr Sohel Mahmud, assistant professor of the department, said the lab test results might come in two weeks.

The burial came to surface in police investigation after a Japanese Embassy official in Dhaka lodged a general diary (GD) on November 19 with Uttara East Police Station, saying she could not be contacted by her mother from Japan for a few days.

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Hospital linen is washed in the overly polluted Buriganga and dried on its bank regularly, creating chances that the "cleaned" cloth will do more harm than good. The practice has been going on for a long time but no preventive measure was seen yet. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: BANGLA CHOKH

## RECENT ATTACKS Arrest attackers immediately

Demands Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council yesterday demanded that the government immediately arrest and punish persons responsible for recent "communal attacks" including that on its Faridpur unit leader, a Shia mosque in Bogra, and a priest in Pabna.

Forming human chains in front of the capital's Jatiya Press Club and on Town Club Road in Pirojpur, the council leaders also urged all democratic forces to unite to resist such attacks.

Hacked in front of his house in the town's Ramkrishna Palli on November 24, Alok Sen, the council's Faridpur unit general secretary, was shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital the next day.

The shooting at the Shia mosque on Thursday evening left the muezzin, Moazzem Hossain, dead and three others injured. Pastor Luke Sarkar escaped an attempt on his life when three suspected radicals tried to slit his throat in Pabna on October 5.

"...a dozen Christian priests recently got death threats. Such communal attacks are not isolated incidents as a vested quarter has been carrying out the attacks to destabilise the country," said the council General Secretary Rana Dasgupta in the capital, demanding all investigations to be fair and impartial.

The council's President Prof Nim Chandra Bhowmik said the administration has to be more sincere as the terrorists were trying to "turn Bangladesh into Afghanistan and Pakistan".

Another presidium member, Subrata Chowdhury, said

## Two killed in Noakhali attack over land

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

Two people were killed and 10 others injured in an attack by rivals over land dispute in Shibpur village of Sadar upazila in Noakhali yesterday afternoon.

Md Alauddin, 18, son of Siraj Mia, and Md Ibrahim, 50, son of Idris Mia, who were hacked in different parts of their bodies, were declared dead at Noakhali General Hospital.

The injured, including Rajib, 25, Salauddin, 35, Harunur Rashid, 40, and Gazi, 30, are undergoing treatment at the hospital. Of the victims, four are in a critical condition.

There has been a dispute over 2.5 acres of land between the two groups for 10 years, said locals.

After Juma prayers, Alauddin, Ibrahim and some of their relatives visited the land to see crops.

At one stage, Sumon and Kala with their associates numbering 40 attacked them with sharp weapons and sticks, Anowar Hossain, officer-in-charge of Sudharam Model Police Station, quoted locals as saying.

Later, police arrested Sumon, 28, and Kala, 26. Police sent the bodies to the hospital morgue for autopsy. No case was filed till filing of this report at 7:00pm.

The Daily Star



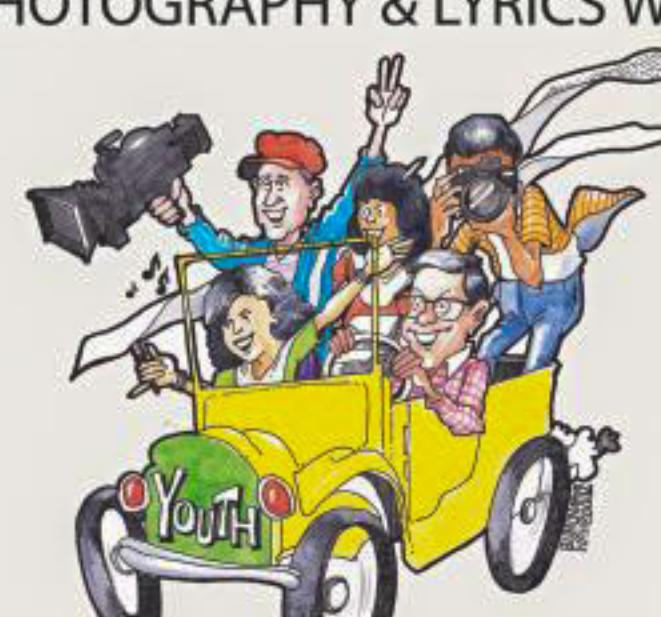
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10 AM to 5 PM at TSC auditorium corridor

## Dance Performance by Shadhona

5 PM to 7 PM at Jahangirnagar University Openair Stage



Organized by TSC, Jahangirnagar University

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PHOTO: STAR