

# TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Iconic Che Guevara photograph by Magnum's Rene Burri

## Magnum's Photographs

Seventy years ago the world was a very different place. The Second World War had just ended. Tensions ran high between the Capitalist and Communist blocks. Wars were being fought - often by proxy between Communist and Western powers - in many parts of the globe. Television was in its infancy. Newspapers and magazines were the primary source of news around the world. Photographs printed in these publications were the only way for the public to see the news events.

In 1947, during this heyday of photojournalism, five photographers formed a cooperative in Paris. They were some of the best: Henri Cartier-Bresson, Robert Capa, George Rodger, David Seymour and William Vandivert. Between them, they divided the world into regions, went to remote places and combat zones and brought back photographs to document lives, wars and events. Their agency then created a library of these photographs and sold them to magazines and newspapers. It was the first picture agency wholly owned by its members.

They named their agency after the jumbo-sized champagne bottle: Magnum.

Over the next decades, many of the world's best photographers became part of Magnum. They took iconic photographs of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: Che Guevara with his cigar, the Partition, Gandhi's funeral, Vietnam war, Biafra... the list goes on.

Magnum photographers had to be brave and resourceful. They travelled to dangerous zones and risked their lives for the picture. Two of the founders - Capa and Seymour - were killed on assignment.

But there is something else special about Magnum's photographs. I believe this quality traces its roots to a book called *The Decisive Moment*, a collection of photographs by Cartier-Bresson. These photographs have a geometric perfection extracted into the frame often from everyday activities.

Cartier-Bresson's camera captured instants when everything inside the frame fell into a perfect composition. "Decisive" referred to a visual, not necessarily a dramatic, climax. If your framing and timing were perfect you suddenly had something larger than the sum of its parts.

To a large extent, the aesthetics of the decisive moment was often expanded by Magnum's photographers into their own realms of journalism and news. For example, Sebastiao Salgado brought his intense, burning vision into his coverage of the Ethiopian famine. Elliott Erwitt's photographs showed humour in many everyday activities. Bruce Davidson explored the underground youth culture of the USA, including drugs culture.

Becoming a member of Magnum meant you had reached the pinnacle of photojournalism. Some photographers, however, proved too intense for Magnum and their relationship did not last. Notable among them were the seminal war photographer Don McCullin and the great American photojournalist Gene Smith.

Magnum photographers worked in black and white film (except for Ernst Haas who worked in colour from the very beginning.) But in today's world the market dynamics are very different. Print media has reduced importance while digital and instantaneous technologies reign supreme.

Magnum still has great talent in its ranks. But it seems to me that the agency is increasingly reliant on past work, using them to generate "collection" books and a variety of autographed prints. The mantle of cutting edge photojournalism has perhaps passed on to younger agencies such as VII and NOOR Images. But in the annals of photography, Magnum will always occupy a very special place.

www.facebook.com/tangents.ikabir

## CLASH WITH TRADERS NEAR DHAKA COLLEGE Over 150 students sued

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A case was filed yesterday accusing 150 to 200 unidentified Dhaka College students while police have been provided some footage of Thursday's clash with traders on Mirpur Road in the capital that left at least 30 persons injured, including pedestrians and shoppers.

Swapan, an executive member of Dhanmondi Hawkers' Market Association, filed the case with New Market Police Station and the association provided the footage. Officer-in-Charge (investigation) Mahbubur Rahman told The Daily Star.

He said police were scrutinising the footage. No arrest was reported till filing of this report last night. This correspondent found normalcy in the area yesterday noon with people going through the shops as usual.

Dhaka College students clashed with traders on the stretch of Mirpur Road between New Market and Science Laboratory intersections, paralysing the city's busiest shopping hub for hours.

Over 24 shops were vandalised and

"looted", four motorbikes set on fire and some vehicles damaged before police managed to bring the situation under control around 5:30pm.

Jasim Uddin, additional deputy commissioner (Ramna Division) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said about 700 students and over 1,000 shop owners and hawkers were engaged in the violence.

The association Joint Secretary Mohammad Khorshed Alam said, "We filed the case because our loss stood at around Tk 50 lakh." He accused some Dhaka College students of threatening traders at times and compelling them to sell clothes at comparatively low prices and sometimes to give those away for free.

"Yesterday, (Thursday) they tried to take clothes without paying and thus they created chaos. They looted our clothes and beat our traders," said Khorshed, adding that the evidence was present in the footage.

He said the traders were requesting police to take stern action against the perpetrators after conducting an investigation based on the footage.

## Integrated check post opposite Benapole port to open soon

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

The construction of an integrated checkpoint is at its final stage at Petrapole, India opposite Benapole Land Port in Bangladesh to facilitate export-import.

Port sources said the Indian prime minister is expected to inaugurate the check post very soon.

A delegation of India's central government visited the spot yesterday afternoon. The team has asked the authorities concerned to finish the remaining work within 15 days, the sources added.

At a cost of Rs 172 crore, the check post is being constructed on 42 hectares of land with a capacity of parking 2,000 trucks, said SK Bosh, an official of Petrapole Immigration Police.

In October, a joint group of customs officials of the two countries signed an agreement to set up an integrated check post at Petrapole and another at Benapole to exchange all information of export-import. The work of the check post at Benapole is going on.

## Trader stabbed, mugged in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muggers stabbed a fruit trader and snatched Tk 1.2 lakh from him at Dayaganj intersection in the capital early yesterday.

The injured, Yusuf Ali, 45, of Sayedabad, is undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, said Inspector Mozammel Haque of DMCH police camp.

A group of four muggers on two motorcycles intercepted a rickshaw carrying Yusuf in the area and robbed him while he was going to Badamtali for purchasing fruits, UNB quoted the victim's wife Shahinur as saying.

Yusuf was attacked as he tried to resist the muggers, the news agency added.

## Thakurgaon Sugar Mills starts crushing

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Thakurgaon Sugar Mills Ltd yesterday began producing sugar from sugarcane for this year although over 12,000 tonnes of sugar of last three seasons are still piled up there.

Almost 4,000 tonnes of sugar have already rotted, said Managing Director of the mill Enayet Hossain, urging the government to increase the duty on importing sugar and to conduct campaigns for informing people more about the nutrition value of plantation white sugar.

Lawmaker of Thakurgaon-I constituency Ramesh Chandra Sen inaugurated the sugarcane crushing programme and said a proposal for building a biomass plant in the area to use the by-products of the sugarcane had been sent to the industries ministry to save the sugar industry.

## Two arrested Shibir men, aide hurt in 'gunfight' with cops

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Two arrested Islami Chhatra Shibir leaders and one of their aides were injured in a "gunfight" with police in Panchbibi upazila of Joypurhat early yesterday.

With leg injuries, Md Abuzar Giffari, 28, president; and Omar Ali 22, secretary of the district unit of the pro-Jamaat student organisation; and Al Amin, are undergoing treatment at Joypurhat Modern Hospital.

Police arrested Md Sujaur Rahman, a Union Parishad level Jamaat leader, with a shotgun and four sharp weapons on the spot, said Md Ashraf Islam, officer-in-charge of Panchbibi Police Station.

Rab-5 handed over the Shibir men and the other to police after their arrest with two pistols, four bullets and 27 bombs in Kadamtoli area of Panchbibi early Thursday.

Based on their information, a police team took them to Jatair village in Panchbibi to recover arms.

When the law enforcers rushed to the spot, Jamaat-Shibir men suddenly shot at them and tried to snatch the arrested persons, prompting police to fire back, said the OC.



## A NEW LAP FOR NEWBORN

Amena Khatun's wish is finally fulfilled. She does have a son now, but the only exception is that the mother is not genetically connected to the boy. The newborn, presumably a day old, was found abandoned early yesterday, inside a sack in a bush in Gopalpur village of Jhenidah's Kaliganj upazila where Amena lives with her husband and two school-going daughters. Officer-in-Charge of Kaliganj Anwar Hossain said as the child needed immediate care and Amena was very willing to adopt, they handed him over to her. A doctor examined the boy and he is in good health. The 35-year-old said she was happy to have a son. She named the boy, Aranya, meaning jungle. The story is reminiscent of the famous saying, "The wild are beautiful at the wilderness and children in their mothers' arms," written by Bangalee writer Sanjib Chandra Chhatterpady in late 19th century, in his popular travelogue "Palamou". PHOTO: AZIBOR RAHMAN

## Cancer deaths to rise to 13pc in 2030: IARC

BSS, Dhaka

The death from cancer in Bangladesh will be increased to 13 percent in 2030 from 7.5 percent in 2005, according to the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC).

Experts predict that cancer will be an increasingly significant cause of morbidity and mortality in Bangladesh in the next few decades. There are 1.3 to 1.5 million cancer patients in Bangladesh, with 2 lakh people being diagnosed with cancer every year.

This was informed at a childhood cancer awareness campaign and drawing competition for children afflicted with cancer at Dhaka Medical College on Thursday.

According to the World Child Cancer, more than 2 lakh children contact cancer worldwide every year and of them, around 80 percent live in low- or middle-income countries.

The survival rates are as low as 5 percent,

compared to 80 percent in high-income countries.

Against this backdrop, paediatric oncologists and experts have put emphasis on creating mass awareness and taking preventive measures and early diagnosis to save lives of thousands of children from cancer.

Thousands of children die of cancer every year in the world. But public awareness, preventive measures and timely diagnosis can reduce mortality, they observed.

According to the World Child Cancer, approximately 70 percent of childhood cancer can be cured if the disease is diagnosed early and treated appropriately.

However, today around 80 percent of the world's children are deprived of advanced medical care, it says.

The World Child Cancer, and Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) jointly organised the campaign under a UK aid-funded project.

## Woman dies in train drinking juice from co-passenger

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

A woman died after drinking poisonous juice, offered by a doping gang member, in a running train, Meghna Express, in Laksham on Thursday night, said her husband.

Reba Begum, 27, of Rajbari Sadar, was thirsty when a man sitting beside them gave her a bottle of juice in Langolport area, said the husband, Rashedul Islam, adding that Reba started complaining about stomach and chest pain soon after that.

Reba died 40 minutes after the man got off at Laksham Railway Station. A case was filed in Chandpur.

The Daily Star



Standard Chartered

## CELEBRATING LIFE

### District Festivals

CONCERT. PHOTO EXHIBITION



This event is free for all. Registration is a prerequisite. visit: [www.imdhaka.com/celebratinglifebd](http://www.imdhaka.com/celebratinglifebd)

Today we are at  
Shahid Sukhranjan Samaddar Student Teacher Cultural Center  
**Rajshahi University**



**Photography Exhibition**  
Time: 10 AM to 4 PM

**CONCERT**  
Performance by **Chandana Majumder**  
Time: 4 PM to 6 PM

For information regarding Celebrating Life, please visit [www.celebratinglifebd.com](http://www.celebratinglifebd.com)



Renowned Obstetrician & Gynaecologist

## Dr. Hasina Afroz

MBBS, MS (Obs & Gynae), MCPS, FCPS, Special Training in Infertility

Now in **UNITED HOSPITAL**

More than 20 years of experience including  
**Laparoscopic Gynaecological Surgery & Uro-Gynaecological Surgery**

- Teaching experience of more than 18 years including working as Head of Department (Obs & Gynae) in Rajshahi Medical College
- Trained in Fistula Surgery & Management (Hamlin Hospital Ethiopia) and Laparoscopic Gynaecological Surgery (USA)
- Trained in Infertility Management from Hamid Latif Hospital, Lahore, Pakistan
- Master Trainer of fistula surgery & management in National Fistula Centre in Dhaka Medical College Hospital
- Before joining in United Hospital as **Consultant**, she was serving as Associate Professor, Department of Obs & Gynae in Rajshahi Medical College Hospital, Rajshahi



UNITED HOSPITAL

Plot 15, Road 71 Gulshan Dhaka 1212  
Tel: 880 2 8836000 8836444  
[www.uhbd.com](http://www.uhbd.com)

Hotline **10666**

Appointment **01914001313**