

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Sunset at Baikka Beel last December.

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

Taking Stock

Dear reader, a very happy new year!
The beginning of the year is good for taking stock. We examine the year past: how was it for us? Did we do the important things? Or was the year consumed by the unimportant yet necessary tasks? It is a time to ask what we want to be and where we want to go, to set our goals for the year and to look back at the road we travelled.

At the same time, experts and critics give us the "best" of everything from the past year – the best movies, books, music, and so on. Sometimes this becomes ridiculous, like the list of the most "cringeable" moments of 2015 that I saw on television.

But this year I was touched by a list that my friend Lori Simpson shared on Facebook. It was the twenty things she loved most about 2015.

This got me thinking about how I had spent the year. In the same spirit as Lori, I asked myself about my memorable experiences in 2015 and what I had learned from them. Here is a list of some of the lessons I found most interesting.

1. The column or spout you see blowing from a whale's nose is actually moisture condensing on the warm air it has exhaled with great force. The whale does not blow out steam.
2. The reason that the tokkhok (tokay lizard) stares unblinking at you forever is because it is one of those lizards with no eyelids. It lubricates its eyes by licking them frequently.
3. For every person on this planet, there are 200 million insects; for every

pound of humanity, 300 pounds of insects.

4. Puffins make their nest in burrows that they dig with their beak. The holes can be up to four feet deep. They shovel out the soil with their feet. When they feel threatened inside the nest they fly out with great speed like a cannonball.

5. The reason our farmers sometimes burn grass in open land is to keep away cows that would attack their vegetable patch.

6. Bamboos grow faster than almost any other plant. In fact, a bamboo tree can grow many inches in a day in the rainy season.

7. Woodpeckers have one toe growing from the back of their feet to help them maintain balance while walking vertically up and down tree trunks.

8. Almost all "pelagic" birds – those that live on the open ocean – have very little colour. I am not sure why that is so, and I find most of these black-and-white birds unattractive.

9. Just like America, we have the tick – a small insect – in our forests, and they bite. Unlike American ticks, however, our ticks do not transmit deadly Lyme disease. That's because Lyme disease comes to ticks from deer which we have so few of. Nonetheless our tick bites leave red welts that itch for days.

10. The Bengal bushlark (*bangla jharbhorot*), a bird of the fields, can camouflage itself so well in dry grass that it can be three feet in front of me and I will miss it. Unless it moves, of course.

www.facebook.com/tangents.ikabir

Bangladesh lacks skills to utilise sea resources: Muhith

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh does not have a skilled workforce to extract resources from the sea, Finance Minister AMA Muhith said yesterday.

"Bangladesh has conducted some surveys on the resources of the Bay of Bengal. But we are yet to have any technology and knowledge to extract the sea resources," he told the opening session of a national conference on "Coastal and Marine Environment of Bangladesh".

For example, the minister said, there was a huge quantity of tuna fish in the Bay but Bangladesh had not adopted the technique of catching tuna properly.

Tuna could bring Bangladesh a lot of foreign currency, Muhith said.

In the last three years, through two international verdicts, Bangladesh won ownership of 118,813 sq km of territorial sea in the Bay, which opened up opportunities to explore the huge marine resources in the area.

Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (Bapa) and Bangladesh Environment Network (BEN) jointly organised the two-day conference taking place at the Krishibid Institution.

Now Bangladesh has to take policy decisions of its own

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN THAKURGAON

MP slammed for land 'grabbing' attempt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rights campaigners yesterday slammed the lawmaker of Thakurgaon-2 constituency for allegedly carrying out an attack on religious minorities to "grab their land."

"A trend of grabbing the land of the minorities and attacking the weak groups has begun. It has happened not only in Baliadangi. There are such allegations against MPs and ministers in other places as well," said Sultana Kamal, executive director of Ain o Salish Kendra.

Lawmaker of Thakurgaon-2 constituency, which falls in Baliadangi upazila, Dabirul Islam, however, denied the allegation.

Expressing frustration over inertness of both the administration and police in dealing with the issues, the rights activists also asked the government to be strict against the land grabbers. They said this at a press conference organised to reveal the findings of an investigation into allegations of grabbing the land of minorities by the lawmaker and his son.

The investigation conducted by the National Citizen Coordination Cell to Implement the Vested Property Return Act has found a group of people led by the law-

maker's son Mazharul Islam attacked the minorities to grab their land.

"Dabirul was directly involved in the incident," said Sultana in a reply.

The rights campaigners demanded a judicial probe into the allegation of grabbing the land of the Hindus. They urged the authorities to take a stern action against the people involved in land grabbing and attacking the minorities.

Quoting the victims, General Secretary of the Cell Subrata Chowdhury said the lawmaker's son had been putting pressure on the minority families to sell their land.

The investigation report says the lawmaker and his family have set up a tea garden -- Ranbag Islami Tea Estate Company -- in the bordering areas of the upazila.

Some 10 Hindu families have 35 acres of arable land and a tea garden inside the tea estate spreading over 106 acres of land surrounded by Indian border on three sides, it adds.

The Hindus used one acre of land belonging to one Akul Chandra Singh as a corridor to go to their land. If the land was grabbed, they could not go to their land.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Foreign minister seeks world help for Myanmar Muslims

He meets OIC chief

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

A collective role of international community is needed in addressing the plight of the Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar, said Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali.

He made the call during a meeting with Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Secretary General Iyad Ameen Madani in Jeddah on Thursday.

He highlighted measures taken by Bangladesh to resolve the matter with Myanmar, which is expected to get due importance after assumption of the office by new government led by Aung San Suu Kyi.

Mahmood Ali and Madani also discussed issues of common interest of OIC member states, said a press release. The foreign minister offered readiness of the Bangladesh government to extend full support to the cause of Muslim Ummah.

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Event Outline

Thursday, 14th January

08:00: Wall magazine submission
10:00: Opening Ceremony
14:00: Spell Master [P, S, C]
15:00: Olympiad [S, C, U]
16:00: Intensive Reading [S, C]
Spell Master Final [P]

Friday, 15th January

09:00: Recitation [P, S, C]
10:00: Story Writing [S], Extempore Speech [C], Spell Master Final [S]
11:00: Story Writing [C], Extempore Speech [S], Turncoat [C]
12:30: Wall Magazine Presentation
12:30: Lunch break
15:00: Extempore Speech Final [S]
16:00: Multimedia Presentation [S]
17:00: Extempore Speech Final [C]

Saturday, 16th January

09:00: Turncoat [S]
10:00: Multimedia Presentation [C]
11:00: Spell Master Final [C]
15:00: Closing Ceremony

Eligible groups of participants

Group 'P': Students of **primary level**
Group 'S': Students of **secondary level & SSC candidates**
Group 'C': Students of **higher secondary level & HSC candidates**
Group 'U': **Undergraduates**

Contact

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Stay updated:
<https://goo.gl/xhngbC>

Online Registration:
<https://goo.gl/DJuh1g>



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurates Sheikh Russel Municipal Children's Park at Tungipara in Gopalganj yesterday.

PHOTO: PID



আমার সন্তানতো আমারই

বিশ্বজয়ের মিশনে আমিও আছি ওর পাশে

একশ শতকের চ্যালেঞ্জ মোকাবেলায় সন্তানকে তৈরি করতে অভিভাবককেও জানতে হয় অনেক কিছু। একটি জ্ঞান সমৃদ্ধ পরিবারই সন্তানের এগিয়ে চলাকে সহজ করে তুলতে পারে। **Champs21** আপনার স্কুল পড়ুয়া সন্তান ও আপনার জন্য পাঠ্যপুস্তক এবং পাঠ্যবিষয়ের বাইরের কন্টেন্ট চমৎকারভাবে উপস্থাপন করে।

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