

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Kadam flower at Baridhara Park, Dhaka.

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

Kadam

Kadam (*Neolamarckia cadamba*, burflower tree) is a common tree in Bangladesh. It arrives during the rainy months and continues to bloom throughout the season. This year it arrived prematurely, perhaps accelerated by the early rains.

I am especially fond of the kadam trees in Baridhara Park adjacent to the lake. They are mature evergreen trees, tall and erect, with neat, well-trimmed branches growing horizontally from the trunk. The leaves, perhaps six inches long, are thick and dark green. Whenever I walk or run near them, I feel the comfort and darkness of rain pouring from the sky, even in the driest of seasons. Together with the other tall trees of the park, they create a bucolic environment in this small corner of our busy city.

The kadam flowers profusely. The round, golf-ball sized flowers are coloured somewhere between yellow and orange, and all around the surface of this dense pollen-covered ball protrude numerous short white filaments. This year, for the first time in my life, I held the flower in my hands. The soft texture of the white filaments caressed my palm, like a child's fuzzy ball. Its sweet fragrance surprised my nostrils.

The beauty of the flowers degrades rapidly after blooming. In the kadam trees in Baridhara Park, for example, I was able to photograph unblemished flowers only the first two days of the bloom. After that, the white filaments started dropping and dark marks appeared on the yellow-orange balls like ugly blemishes on a beautiful face. This was the beginning of the ripening process. The outer layer of the flowers eventually decomposed and peeled off, leaving a bright-green, firm, round seed, smaller than the original flower.

When a kadam flower starts to ripen, it emanates a mild but disagreeable odour. This is the smell that most people associate with it. However, the fragrance of the freshly-bloomed flower is sweeter as I discovered.

The fragrance attracts many insects including bees which converge on the flower and help with pollination. Later, as the kadam ripens, the birds come to feast on it. Among these are bulbuls and the black-hooded oriole which peck at the flower making a delightful mess, like an infant eating porridge for the first time.

There appears to be controversy over its scientific name, *Neolamarckia cadamba* because the kadam tree is also called *Anthocephalus cephalus*. Further, the great Scottish botanist William Roxburgh named it *Nauclaea cadamba*. Today most references use the first two names synonymously. The origin of the tree also appears controversial as some claim it came from Madagascar while others say it is Asian.

Kadam trees are relatively easy to grow in our climate and soil. They can reach heights of 150 feet with a strong, erect trunk, a broad, dense crown. Left untrimmed, its radial branches grow long and thick. The wood is not particularly strong and used for pulp, paper mills, plywood, boxes and crates.

The kadam has a large place in our culture and mythology. It is friendly to the environment. Various parts of the tree have medicinal uses. With the coming planting season it would be a good tree to consider planting in your land. It will give you years of pleasure while feeding many a bird and insect. Who knows, you might grow to like the odour of its ripe flowers!

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33 Bangladeshis secure clemency in Myanmar

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The Myanmar president through an executive order has pardoned 33 Bangladeshis, who were jailed in Myanmar for illegal entry.

The Bangladesh Embassy in Yangon, which made persistent requests to the Myanmar government, finally secured the clemency of the 33 Bangladeshi fishermen on May 25 and started sending them back home in phases in coordination with Myanmar authorities.

A batch of five persons, released from jails in Tanintharyi, which is close to Thailand, returned to Dhaka from Yangon by Biman Bangladesh Airlines on June 7, according to a press release of the Bangladesh Embassy in Myanmar yesterday.

The next batch of nine fishermen, whose boat had drifted into Myanmar waters in January this year due to engine failure and who were subsequently jailed, is being transferred from Thandwe to Yangon for repatriation by air on June 12.

The remaining 19 persons are scheduled to be repatriated through the Taungbro border point on June 15 after the Bangladesh Consulate in Sittwe makes necessary coordination with Myanmar Border Guard Police and Border Guard Bangladesh.

Similar clemency was granted by Bangladesh to 92

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The curious case of JU

MD ASADUZ ZAMAN, JU

Ariful Islam Anik, a fourth year student of Bangla department of Jahangirnagar University, left the campus on May 25 for his village home in Kishoreganj. The following day [May 26], he joined as a field executive in a survey conducted by an NGO.

To his agony, on May 26, he heard the bad news of the demise of two fellow students in a road accident the same day. But in his wildest dreams he could not imagine that he would be made an accused in the case filed by the JU authorities following a widespread student protest centring the death.

On May 27, JU authorities filed the case against 31 students and 40-50 anonymous persons for carrying out "vandalism at JU VC's residence", blocking roads, and "giving threats to teachers". Of the 31, at least three students like Anik have been made accused even though they claimed they were not present at the time of "vandalism VC's residence".

Contacted, over the phone, Kabya Krittika, an official of Keymakers Consulting Ltd and supervisor of Anik's team, said, "It's bizarre to find his [Anik] name in the list of accused. How can he be involved in JU incidents staying far away from the campus?"

Abu Sayem, a campus reporter of the Daily Destiny, had a similar story to tell. He

was allegedly beaten up by the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) men at about 4:00pm on May 27 while covering the students' road blockade.

Injured, Sayem and his colleagues said he took treatment at JU Medical Centre first from where he moved to his dorm.

But he was also made an accused in the case, Junaid Ahmed, general secretary of a faction of JU Press Club ventilated the frustration.

Police dispersed the blockade on Dhaka-Arichha Highway, outside the campus, around 5:30pm. Another student named Ayon, who joined the student protest, got injured as police dispersed them. He was first rushed to JU Medical Centre and later shifted to Enam Medical College Hospital from where he was discharged on May 28, according to his medical documents.

Dispersed, students laid siege to VC residence around 5:45pm. As he was hospitalised, Ayon said he was not present there.

A member of Udichi Shilpigosshthi at JU, Ayon also made a point that the blockade took place outside the purview of the JU campus. The university authorities cannot make him accused for the road blockade.

In this regard, JU Associate Professor Raihan Rhyne, also spokesperson of the Shikkhak Shikkharthi Oikya Mancha (Teachers-Students Unity Platform), said,

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On the second Friday of Ramadan a large number of shoppers poured in at the capital's Gausia Market and other adjacent shopping centres. The photo of an overcrowded Elephant Road was taken yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

HC wants reports on radioactivity in toxic scrap ship

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court has asked for assessment reports from three agencies on the presence of naturally occurring radioactive material in MT Producer (North Sea Producer), an imported toxic scrap vessel now at a ship-breaking yard in Chittagong.

Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission, Bangladesh Atomic Energy Regulatory Authority, and the Marine Port Initiative of Bangladesh Customs have been asked to submit the assessment reports within 10 weeks.

The court on Thursday also issued a rule asking the respondents to explain in three weeks why giving a clearance certificate in favour of MT Producer should not be declared illegal.

The 52,000-tonne Floating Production Storage and Offloading (FPSO) unit was purchased by Janata Steel Mill (Ship Breaking Yard) at a record price of Tk 51.82 crore from Danish shipping company Maerks Line.

The court also asked for explanation about why action should not be taken against the seller of the vessel for giving a false announcement about it, and why foreign experts should not be appointed to ensure safe scrapping of the vessel with the importer paying the cost.

The respondents to this rule are secretaries to the ministries of industries, environment and forests, commerce, and labour and employment; chairmen of Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission and

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Punish Hefajat leaders for threatening Sultana Kamal

Demand students, rights activists, civil society members at rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students, rights activists and civil society representatives yesterday demanded that the government arrest the Hefajate-Islam leaders who threatened eminent rights activist Sultana Kamal.

They also demanded abolishing section 57 of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Act and immediately release those who were arrested under the provision.

According to section 57, if any person deliberately publishes any material in electronic form that causes deterioration of law and order, prejudices the image of the State or a person or causes to hurt religious belief, the offender faces jail term for a maximum of 14 years.

The demands were made at a rally organised by a student and civil society

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Protesters in the capital yesterday protest the recent spate of attacks across the country on minorities, including the indigenous community at Longadu. They also protested the issuing of threat against Sultana Kamal.

PHOTO: STAR



Two of the three workers of Power Development Board (PDB) use a transformer as their platform to repair a power line on Chatteshwari Road in Chittagong city.

Without any elevated working platform, safety harness and gear, PDB workers are often seen risking their lives.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



আমাদের পণ্য

প্রসি কিংছেন?
জোনে কিনাছেন তো?

সঠিকভাবে এসি সয়েজান ও উৎপাদনের জন্য Psychrometric Test Chamber এ পরীক্ষা অবশ্যক। যার মাধ্যমে এসির সঠিক BTU নির্ধারণ, ইনভার্টার-আউটপুটের উপযুক্ত ভারসাম্যকরণ এবং International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) 60335 Standard অনুযায়ী নিরাপত্তা নিশ্চিত করা হয়। বাংলাদেশে শুধুমাত্র গভার্নমেন্ট ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং বাংলাদেশ Accreditation Board (BAB) কর্তৃক অনুমোদিত Psychrometric Test Chamber (NUSDAT-UTS) এ পরীক্ষা করা হয়। যারা Standard Maintain না করে Production ও Assemble করছে তাদের এসি হয় অত্যন্ত নিম্নমানের ও সুরক্ষিত।

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