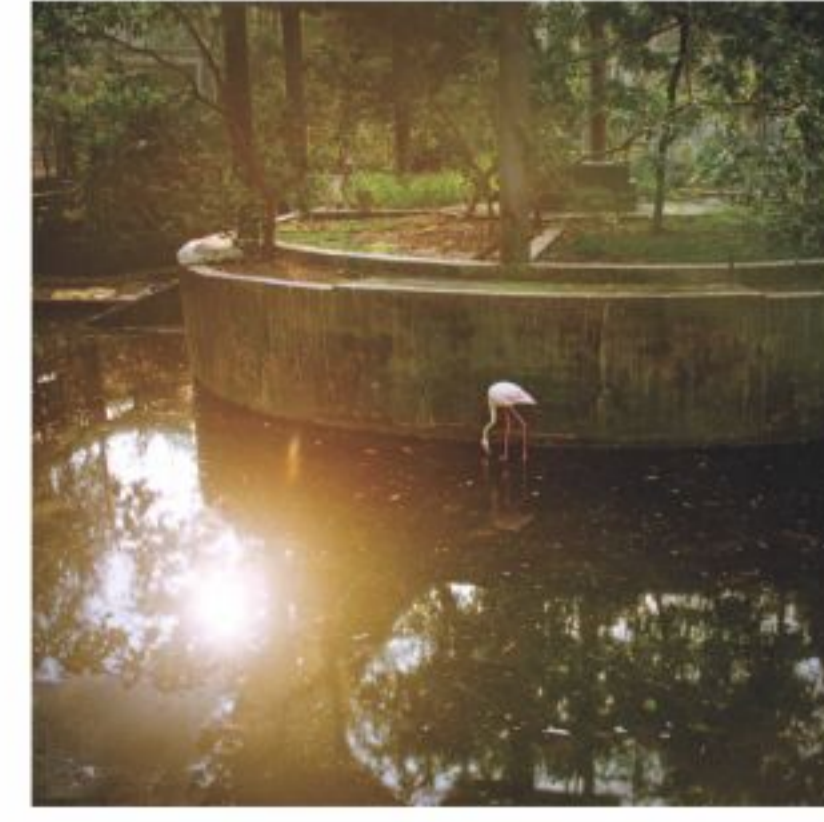
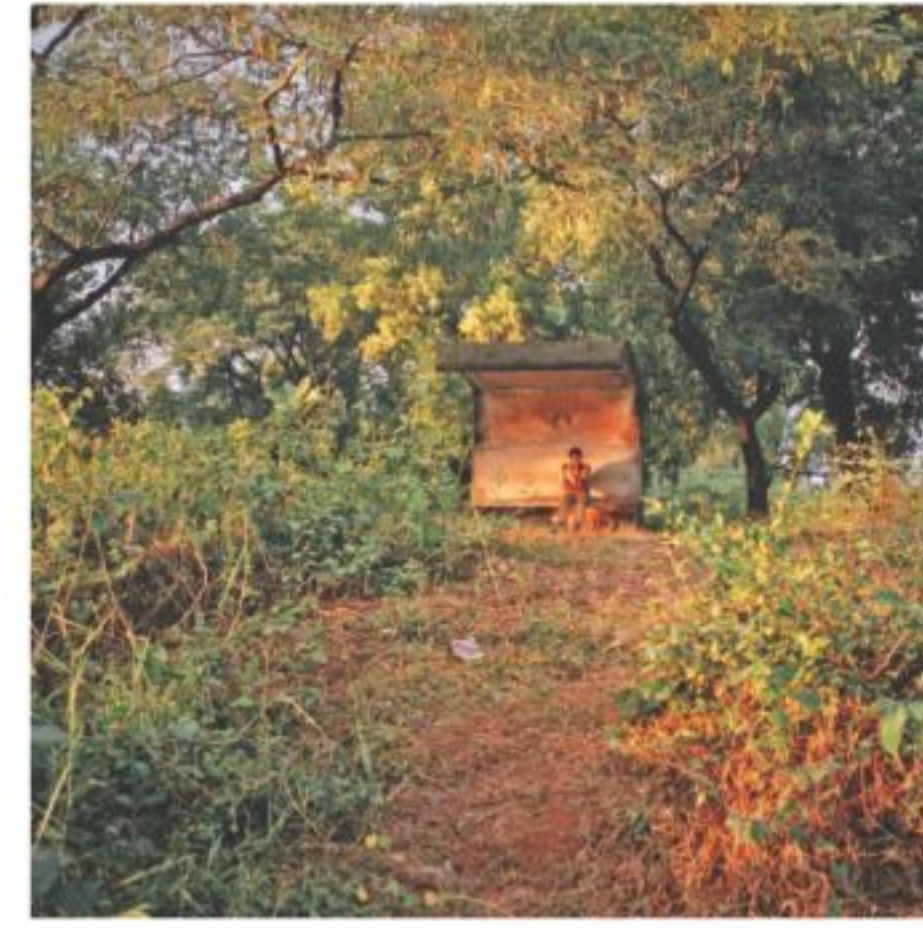


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A PAUSE TO BREATHE



Photos and words
TAPASH PAUL

I found loneliness in a place of serenity; that loneliness has flown into me. Here, the animals, humans, and nature are entwined in a love triangle rich in intimacy, commitment, and passion. I fell in love with these animals and their home. And then that love flowed into my photography.

My photo story is about a zoological garden in Dhaka, a unique place for recreation. It is located in a tranquil landscape 16 kilometres away from the cacophony of the metropolis. About three million people visit the zoo every year. The large, sprawling character of the site attracts city dwellers seeking relief from the bustle and monotony of urban life.

But the reality of the zoo is a tragic one. The cages are small, dirty, and poorly maintained, the conditions inhospitable,

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and the animals not given enough to eat. Visitors end up throwing junk food into the trash-strewn pens. And yet the zoo remains a popular leisure activity among Bangladeshis since the price of a ticket is next to nothing.

When I started working at the zoo it seemed impossible to relate to it, but in a serendipitous twist of fate, after spending ample time there, I started to develop a bond with the animals. 'A pause to breathe' seeks to inspire the millions of visitors who come to the zoological gardens to try and connect with the animals in this beautiful expression of love. ■

