

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Lioness with full belly relaxes atop a tree.

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

Predators of Masai Mara

We would have missed it but for the vultures. A large flock of them stood around at the far edge of the giant field that stretched to our right, catching our attention. The ground beyond the field was raised and covered with trees. Periodically a vulture flew over to the shade of the trees and lazily flapped its way back to the flock after a few seconds.

What attracted the vultures? Asking the driver to stop, I trained my binoculars on the shaded area. On the ground was a large patch of red - a half-eaten wildebeest. This was the vultures' lure. I continued my scan and found the lioness about a hundred feet to the left, sitting like the Sphinx and watching the world go by. Sated, it did not care that the vultures were feasting on its kill.

The lioness was one of many predators I saw in Kenya's Masai Mara National Reserve.

With millions of Wildebeests (a type of antelope) and countless other prey, the Reserve is a predators' heaven. They come in all sizes here. Those at the apex, such as Lions, Cheetahs and Leopards, usually hunt in darkness and spend the days lazing and sleeping. Those below them, such as the smaller cats Caracals and Servals, Spotted Hyenas, Bat-eared Foxes and Wild Dogs often seek out carcasses discarded by the larger predators and feed on them.

The birds come next. By far, the most prolific is the vulture. There are six species of vultures in Masai Mara. We saw flocks of them several times, congregated around discarded carcass. They took turns feeding, often using their long necks to push their heads deep under the skin into skin, navigating through the bones to pull out long, stringy tissue with their large

beaks. Lions are a key attraction of the park. Like others, I went with preconceived ideas about what to expect from them. But instead of the ferocious beast snarling and attacking its prey, most of the dozen Lions I saw were busy in their principal occupation during the day: sleeping. Remarkably, one Lioness was asleep on a tree branch. Lionesses seemed more alert than Lions since they are the ones who do most of the hunting. Cheetahs were also plentiful.

Among the large cats, they are the least dangerous to humans. I saw several groups resting in the grass or near tree trunks. From their languid pose, it was hard to imagine that they are the fastest land animals on the planet, reaching speeds of 120 kilometres an hour. The Leopard turned out to be the most elusive. The driver finally found one asleep in the foliage of a tree branch about twenty feet from the ground, next to a stream. It was camouflaged well. Even after we were alerted to its presence, it took us ten minutes of intense scrutiny before we spotted it.

I was lucky to see a Serval, one of the smaller cats, with a body disproportionately small compared to its long legs. It was completely fearless as it strode in front of our vehicle, sat a bit, then walked off into the distance. Earlier, I had seen a Spotted Hyena relaxing with her baby. I was surprised at the large size of the hyena which I learned can weigh up to 55 kilograms.

Watching the predators of Masai Mara was an experience I will treasure all my life.

facebook.com/tangents.ikabir or follow 'ihtishamkabir' on Instagram.

M'singh university student found dead at mess

OUR CORRESPONDENT, M'sing

A university student was found dead in her room at a mess (shared accommodation) in Mymensingh on Thursday.

The deceased -- Jarmin Akter Jui, 23 -- was a fourth year honours student of the finance and banking department at Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University in Trishal, said police.

Her messmates found the door locked from inside around 5pm and knocked on the door several times, said Trishal Police Station Officer-in-Charge Md Azizur Rahman.

As there was no response from inside, they broke open the door and found her body hanging from the ceiling, said the OC.

On information from them, police recovered the body and informed Jui's family members in Jamalpur Sadar, said the police officer.

Md Masud Chowdhury, the department head at the university, said they were informed of the incident by those living in those mess. Jui attended classes yesterday, he added. VC Prof AHM Mustafizur Rahman also visited the spot.

Police primarily suspected that Jui might have died by suicide.

OC Azizur Rahman told The Daily Star yesterday that on the spot they found a note reading "nobody is responsible for my death".

They handed over the body to the family who did not accuse anyone of the death, he said, adding that an unnatural death case was filed.

BARIND IRRIGATION PROJECT

Tk 1.28cr for foreign tours a waste of public money: Experts

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Despite more than Tk 1.28 crore has been allocated only for foreign tours of officials in an irrigation project, experts say Barind Multipurpose Development Authority (BMDA) is experienced enough in this regard.

They said the government officials concerned need not go abroad for gathering knowledge. A huge amount public money is being wasted, they added.

On August 27, Ecnc approved a Tk 128.18 crore irrigation project to be implemented in five districts -- Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj, Naogaon, Natore and Bogura -- between 2019 and 2023. A total of 715 ponds and 10 dighis will be re-excavated in the project.

According to BMDA officials, among other things, Tk 86 crore will be spent for re-excavation of ponds and canals, Tk 15.30 crore for buying low-lift pumps and Tk 2 crore for tree

plantation while Tk 1.28 crore has been allocated for foreign tours of 16 government officials.

The foreign tour would be in two phases, eight officials in each phase, four officials of BMDA and four from different ministries including the planning and agriculture.

They would visit either Australia, New Zealand or the Netherlands.

When contacted, Prof Chowdhury Sarwar Jahan of Geology and Mining department of Rajshahi University said, involving unnecessary foreign tours in a project is wasting public money.

"We should use our own expertise and research first. I don't think BMDA need further experience in works like re-excavation of ponds and using surface water," said Prof Sarwar, also a member of National Committee for Strategies of Managed Acquirer Recharge.

According to officials, BMDA has successfully re-excavated at least 3,032

ponds and 1,643 kilometres of canals for irrigation since 1985. Recently, they re-excavated 17 acres of ponds in Barind region of Naogaon's Porsha upazila.

In the last decade, they collected 48 cusec of water from the river Padma and took it through pipelines to the 24km Sormongla canal 3.5km away from the river during monsoons, supporting irrigation round the year.

BMDA Executive Director Abdur Rashid yesterday told The Daily Star, "There is no limit to gather knowledge." They want to see what others are doing in using surface water, he said. "We're not committing any crime."

The foreign tours would enrich the experience of our officials in implementation of the project successfully as the selected countries have had success with experience in preserving rainwater and dealing with other surface water for irrigation.



Despite there being a separate lane for rickshaws, many are seen parked on the other side of the divider, waiting for passengers -- clogging traffic movement. The photo was taken recently in the capital's Nilkhet.

Woman sets herself on fire following quarrel with husband

Couple sustain serious burn injuries

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A couple sustained serious burn injuries as the wife set herself on fire at their house in Boalkhali upazila of Chattogram early yesterday.

Sharmin Akter, 26, and husband Saiful Islam, 28, were undergoing treatment at the Burn and Plastic Surgery unit of Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH), said Assistant Sub-inspector Alauddin Talukder of CMCH Police Camp.

The couple had an argument on Thursday night, and at one point, Sharmin set herself on fire, said Sheikh Neyamat Ullah, officer-in-charge of Boalkhali Police Station, quoting family members.

After pouring kerosene on her body, Sharmin lit a matchstick and set herself on fire around 12:30am yesterday. The husband sustained burn injuries trying to save her.

Family members rushed them to CMCH where the couple are undergoing treatment, the OC said.

Contacted, Dr Rafiq Uddin Ahmed, head of Burn and Plastic Surgery unit of CMCH, said Sharmin sustained 90 percent burn injuries while Saiful sustained 18 percent.

The health condition of both the husband and wife were critical, he said. OC Neyamat said police were investigating into the incident.

Dhaka, Delhi agree to control fake currency

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

India and Bangladesh have agreed on developing a mechanism to share authentic information on operatives of fake currency notes on both sides of the border.

At the fifth Joint Task Force meeting held in New Delhi from August 26 to 28, two nodal officers from both sides were nominated to serve as focal contact points for sharing information regarding fake Indian currency note (FICN) operatives, exchange of interrogation reports and dossiers of the accused through quickest means using information technology, India's National Investigation Agency said in a statement.

The Indian side highlighted the major cases of detection of FICN smuggling and seizures of fake currency in Bangladesh and gave details about the criminals in syndicates and gang leaders of rackets, it said.

The Indian side suggested that Bangladesh conduct an operation on suspicious bank accounts in bordering areas of Bangladesh through the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) of Bangladesh

Bank to monitor unusual movement of funds such as dummy accounts or "mule" accounts and raise a red flag for further analysis to dismantle the network of FICN racketeers, according to the statement.

The Bangladesh side highlighted the legal measures available to penalise counterfeiting of currency notes and also discussed at length about the recent achievements made by them in the detection and seizure of FICN in Bangladesh.

"It was also highlighted that during detection, FICN operatives based in third countries beyond India and Bangladesh add a challenge in curbing the menace," the statement said.

In order to combat smuggling of fake Indian currency notes, India and Bangladesh set up a joint task force in 2014 and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and Standing Operating Procedure (SOP) were signed between two countries.

The Bangladesh delegation at the fifth joint task force meeting was led by YM Belalur Rahman, deputy inspector general.

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The Daily Star and East Delta University signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on Thursday. The newspaper's Head of Marketing Md Tajdin Hassan, the university's founder Vice Chairman Sayeed Al Noman, Vice Chancellor Prof M Sikandar Khan, and Planning and Development Director General Syed Shafiquddin Ahmed were, among others, present. Under the MoU, copies of The Daily Star will be distributed among the university students for a year.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Road accidents kill four, injure six

STAR REPORT

At least four people were killed and six injured in road accidents across the country in the last two days, according to reports from our correspondents and news agencies.

In Sathkira, two people were killed and two injured in two separate accidents in Shyamnagar upazila yesterday.

In Isakur area, Sadek Hossain, 18, was killed when his motorbike hit a van, police said.

Locals took Sadek to nearby health complex where doctors declared him dead.

In Chandpur area, Abu Sayeed, 27, was killed when his motorbike collided with a van around 8:30am, police said.

After the accident, Sayeed and the two pillion passengers

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12 Ctg Jamaat leaders arrested

Police recover crude bombs and machetes

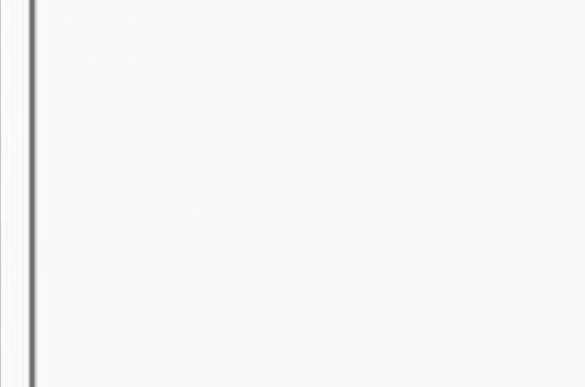
STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police arrested 12 top leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami's Chattogram city unit during a drive at a house in Sugandha Residential Area in the port city on late Thursday night.

Among the arrestees, Mohammad Shahjahan is the Ameer of Jamaat's port city unit while Nazrul Islam and Mohammad Ullah are the general secretary

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রোগতত্ত্ব, রোগ নিয়ন্ত্রণ ও গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউট (আইইডিসিআর) স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়

মোবাইল ফোনের মাধ্যমে স্বাস্থ্য সম্পর্কিত তথ্য সংগ্রহ

আপনারা অবগত আছেন যে, বাংলাদেশ সরকারের স্বাস্থ্য মন্ত্রণালয়ের রোগতত্ত্ব, রোগ নিয়ন্ত্রণ ও গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউট (আইইডিসিআর) ২০১২ সাল থেকে মোবাইল ফোনের মাধ্যমে আপনার এবং পরিবারের সদস্যগণের স্বাস্থ্য এবং রোগ সংক্রান্ত আচরণগত তথ্যাবলি সংগ্রহ করে আসছে। এ সকল তথ্য স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তরের বিভিন্ন জনস্বাস্থ্য উন্নয়নমূলক কার্যক্রমকে সমৃদ্ধ করছে। আইইডিসিআর-এর তথ্য সংগ্রহকারীরা মোবাইল ফোন নাম্বার সমূহে হেবচয়নের মাধ্যমে আপনাদের সম্মতি সাপেক্ষে তথ্য সংগ্রহ করে থাকেন। এ কার্যক্রমে সহযোগিতার জন্য বিটিআরসি, মোবাইল অপারেটর এবং ইতোমধ্যে অংশগ্রহণকারী সকলকে আইইডিসিআর ধন্যবাদ জানাচ্ছে।

আইইডিসিআর-এর এই কার্যক্রম চলাকালে আপনি আইইডিসিআর থেকে আপনার মোবাইলে একটি কল পেতে পারেন। এ বিষয়ে আপনার সার্বিক সহযোগিতা ও আন্তরিকতা একান্ত কাম্য। উত্তরদাতা হিসাবে আপনার পরিচয় কোথাও প্রকাশ করা হবে না। স্বাস্থ্য সংক্রান্ত আপনার মূল্যবান তথ্য এই রোগ নিরীক্ষা কার্যক্রমের জন্য বিশেষ গুরুত্বপূর্ণ। কার্যক্রমের তথ্যাদি নির্দিষ্ট সময় পর পর আইইডিসিআর-এর ওয়েব সাইটে (www.iedcr.gov.bd) প্রকাশ করা হবে।

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