

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Grey-crowned Crane, Lake Nakuru.

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

Birds of Kenya

When birding in a new country, what is banal to locals there can be thrilling to the visitor. In Bangladesh I have seen visitors marvel at our Purple Swamphens and Common Kingfishers. And so when I visited Kenya, the Superb Starling, which is very common there, delighted me. Its iridescent blue back, orange breast and white eyes that stared from its black head kept me spellbound.

That is not to say that it was the only bird of interest. Kenya has a large variety of birds because of the diverse terrain of the country – about 1100 species compared to our 700. I had the opportunity to see some of them during my recent trip.

In Masai Mara, vultures were the most prevalent birds of prey. Due to the hunting of prey – particularly Wildebeest – by the large cats, vultures seemed to have plenty to eat. I was able to observe them up close as they gorged themselves on discarded carcasses of Wildebeest, the most popular animal of the park.

There was the brown Long-crested Eagle which looks similar to our Crested Serpent Eagle. But their appearances diverge when they open their crests. The former's crest shoots upward from the back of its head, while the latter's swells in a ring around the neck.

The most unusual bird I saw in Masai Mara was a Secretary Bird. A terrestrial bird of prey, it hunts insects and small mammals on the ground with its sharp claws.

The Lilac-breasted Roller was also present aplenty in the park. Similar in build and shape to our Indian Roller, its purple and turquoise underparts and blue upperparts make it strikingly colourful.

Far from Masai Mara, the lakes of the Rift Valley are well-known for their bird population that includes Flamingos, Pelicans and other water birds. In Lake Nakuru I saw the Flamingos, though not in the large numbers that had been there in the past.

I also spotted my favourite African bird: the Grey-crowned Crane. I had seen this bird first in Uganda, where it is the national bird. Its golden crown and splashes of red give it an unforgettable look.

From Lake Nakuru I went to Lake Naivasha, another Rift Valley lake. Our group rented a boat to look for birds in the lake. The boatman was a knowledgeable guide who knew the names and habits of the birds.

We started out with the African Spoonbill with a distinctive bill, white with a flat, spoonlike bill. There were Cormorants aplenty, and Giant Kingfishers, about the size of our Brown-winged Kingfishers of Sundarban, but black with white dots. In the vegetation of the shores were Black Crakes, various Ibises and African Jacanas, but I did not see the standard shorebirds such as Sandpipers that we see in our Haors.

The highlight of the lake was its African Fish Eagles. They perched on top of tall, dead Acacia trees that were scattered throughout the lake. Sometimes they swooped into the water and caught a fish with their claws before returning to their perch.

Most people go to Kenya to see the animals, and rightfully so. But its rich birdlife also makes the country an attractive destination for birding.

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Man dies of dengue in Ctg

Number of patients admitted in hospitals daily coming down

STAR REPORT

A patient infected with dengue disease died at Chattogram Medical College Hospital yesterday afternoon.

The deceased was identified as Abu Sayeed, 30, of Tangail. Prof Sujat Paul, head of medicine of CMCH, confirmed the death.

Sayeed was admitted to CMCH on Thursday. He had dengue hemorrhagic syndrome, said Dr Taherul Islam, assistant registrar of medicine department of the hospital.

Sayeed, a foreman of a factory in the port city, went there from Tangail about a week ago.

Meanwhile, a total of 4,409 dengue patients were admitted to different hospitals across the country in the first six days of this month. September is considered a high risk period for dengue fever.

The number of dengue cases was 52,636 last month -- the highest in a single month ever.

Though 700-900 patients are being admitted every day to different hospitals since last week, the number of patients are going down gradually.

According to the data of Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), 75,146 dengue patients were admitted to hospitals across the country till yesterday. Of whom, 3,337 are undergoing treatment.

A total of 793 dengue patients were admitted to hospitals in the last 24 hours till 8am yesterday, of whom

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2 held in raid at Ajmeri Osman's office in N'ganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Law enforcers raided the office of Ajmeri Osman in Narayanganj early yesterday and arrested two of his associates in connection with a case filed for extortion and beating up a businessman.

Ajmeri, son of former MP from Narayanganj-5 constituency AKM Nasim Osman and nephew of current MPs Selim Osman (Narayanganj-5) and Shamim Osman (Narayanganj-4), was not present at the time.

The arrestees are Narayanganj District Students Society President Shahadat Hosen Rupu, 32, and Mokhesur Rahman, 35, said Asaduzzaman, officer-in-charge (OC) of Narayanganj Sadar Model Police Station.

A joint team of Narayanganj Sadar Model Police Station, Fatullah Model Police Station and Detective Branch of police in the district conducted the raid at the office on Allama Iqbal Road around 12:15am, according to police and witnesses.

After detaining the duo and talking to Ajmeri's family members, law enforcers left the scene around 12:45am, said police.

The raid was conducted due to a complaint filed against Ajmeri and his associates on the charges of demanding extortion and beating a businessman -- Md Bacchu Mia of Amlapara area in the

city -- on Thursday night, the OC said. The complaint was recorded as a case yesterday morning, he added.

Ajmeri could not be contacted for comments. This is not the first time Ajmeri Osman has made the headlines.

In March 2014, Rapid Action Battalion told the media that they found involvement of Ajmeri and his 11 associates in Tanwir Muhammad Taqi murder.

Taqi, son of cultural activist Rafiur Rabbi, went missing after leaving home for a local library on March 6, 2013. His body was found floating on the Shitalakhya on March 8.

Rabbi filed a murder case with Narayanganj Kotwali Police Station the same day. He also submitted a complaint to the superintendent of police on March 18, accusing seven persons by name, including Shamim Osman, and 8-10 unnamed others.

The murder of the 17-year-old high school graduate has been much discussed for the alleged involvement of family members of Shamim Osman.

In June 2013, Rab-11 arrested some "aides" of the Osman family. Rab raided Ajmeri's office in Narayanganj city in August 2013, and found evidence of torture there. They seized a pair of blood-stained jeans, a pistol butt and equipment for yaba consumption from there. Officials also found bullet marks on the walls, almirah and sofa.



A farmer places raw jute on the railing of a bridge in Hemayetpur area. He said after cultivating in a nearby lowland, he brought the golden fibre here to dry them under the sun. The photo was taken on Dhaka-Aricha Highway yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

40,000 tonnes of fertiliser damaged under open sky

UNB, Khulna

Some 40,000 tonnes of fertilisers kept under the open sky in Khulna -- covered only with tarpaulin for a year due to a lack of storage space -- have got damaged, said sources at Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC).

The three types of fertilisers were damaged during rain and when some of the areas got flooded.

The BADC sources said the fertilisers -- triple superphosphate (TSP), murate of potash (MOP) and dye ammonium phosphate (DAP) -- were imported from Morocco, Canada and Saudi Arabia during 2018-19 fiscal.

Usually, contractors supervise the process until it enters the BADC warehouse.

Visiting the spot, the news



agency found that the fertilisers were kept in the open at Roosevelt Jetty on the bank of the Bhairab River, along the main road of Fulbari gate area.

According to the sources, the matter was raised at a BADC meeting on July 27 when the corporation informed that the contractors normally preserve

fertilisers before shipping those to warehouses.

Proshanto Kumar Saha, joint director (fertiliser) of Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation in Khulna, said the fertilisers were imported during June-July in 2018. "More will be imported in the

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Two-day Robot Olympiad begins at DU

BSS, Dhaka

A two-day Bangladesh Robot Olympiad began at Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) of Dhaka University yesterday.

Vice Chancellor Prof Md Akhtaruzzaman inaugurated the event, where State Minister for ICT Division Zunaid Ahmed Palak was present as chief guest.

The Department of Robotics and Mechatronics Engineering of DU and Bangladesh Open Source Network jointly organised the event, said a DU press release.

While addressing the event, the state minister urged students to play an effective role in developing the education, health and agriculture sectors in the country by utilising the knowledge of robotics.

"The government will provide financial support to establish a modern robotics laboratory at the robotics department," he said.

VC Akhtaruzzaman stressed the importance of scientific inventions and urged youths to be more involved in the field of robotics.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Dr Shamim Ahmed Deowan, chairperson of the robotics department, presided over the inaugural session while Prof Dr Lafifa Jamal, president of Bangladesh Robot Olympiad; Monir Hassan, general secretary of Bangladesh

Open Source Network; and Redwan Ferdous, chief coordinator of the Olympiad, addressed the programme, among others.

Around 400 students from different schools are participating in the event.



KHALIL'S "SUPER SHOP" ... true to its name, Khalil sells anything and everything, ranging from used home appliances to laptops, mobile phones and watches, occupying a part of the road in front of Janata Tower at Dhaka's Karwan Bazar. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Fight with classmate leaves 8th-grader dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

An eighth-grader died on Thursday after getting involved in a fight with his classmate at a school in Fenchuganj upazila of Sylhet.

The deceased is Majedul Islam, 13, son of Altoma Ali of the upazila.

Quoting students, police said after the afternoon tiffin break was over, students were returning to class. At that time, Majedul and a classmate locked into an argument over who will sit on the first bench.

At one stage, they started fighting and the

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Discussion on Abul Mansur Ahmad today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A discussion and award giving ceremony of an essay competition marking the 121st birth anniversary of prominent litterateur, journalist and politician Abul Mansur Ahmad will be held in Dhaka today.

The programme will begin at 4pm in Professor Muzaffar Ahmed Chowdhury Auditorium of Faculty of Social Sciences at Dhaka University.

National Professor Anisuzzaman is expected to chair the discussion. Prof Serajul Islam Choudhury, essayist Syed Abul Maksud, Prof Bishwajit Ghosh, Prof Mahbub Murshid, Prof Md Chengish Khan and journalist Kajal Rashid Shahin will address the discussion.

Abul Mansur Ahmad Smriti Parishad took the initiative to arrange the essay competition for the second time to encourage the youths' engagement in history, literature and culture.

This year's topics were: a) Society's bigotry and

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