

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR

My Adventures With Instagram

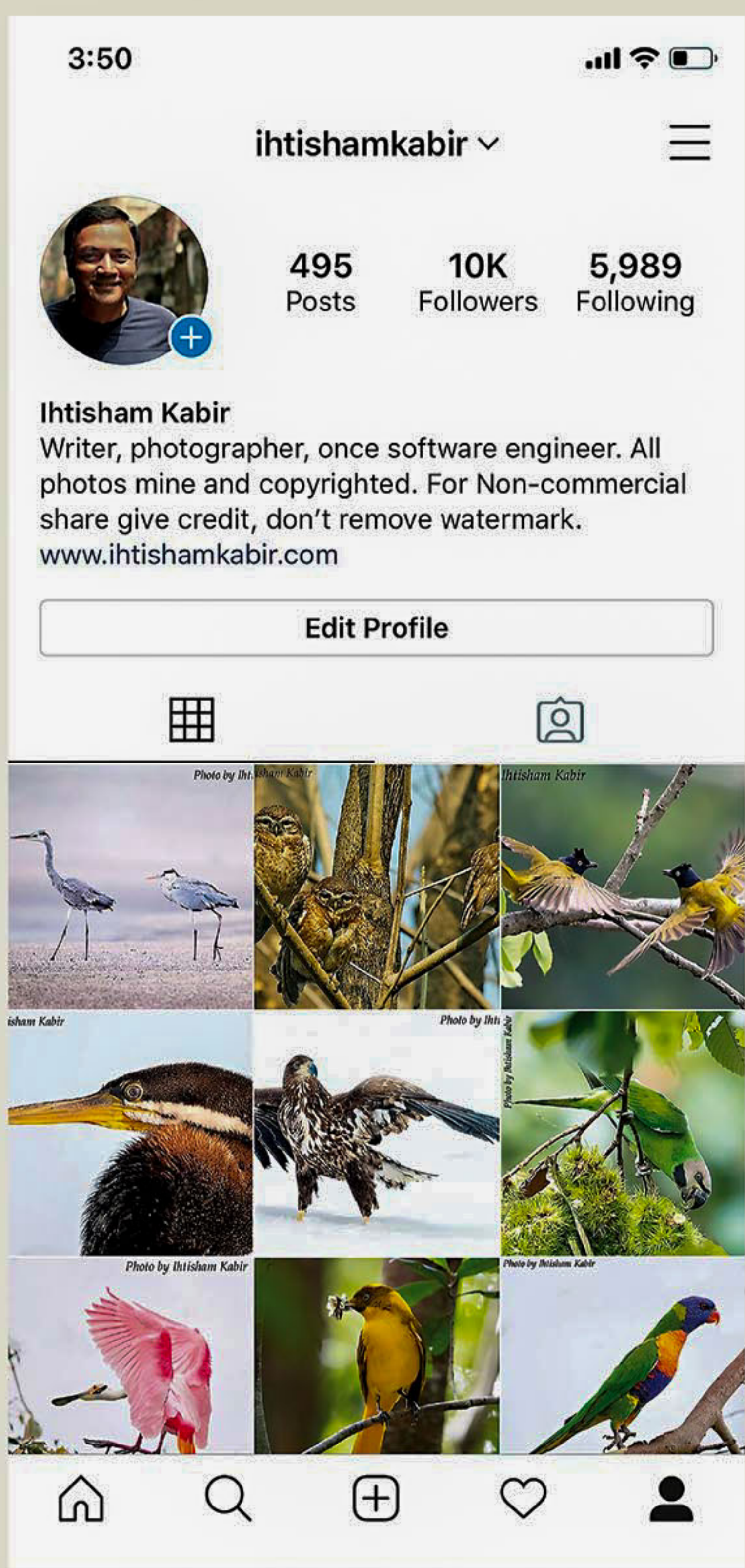
Instagram was launched in 2010 as a mobile phone app enabling users to easily share photographs and videos. It came with an attraction: a series of easy to use creative filters allowed the photographer to customize their work for an artistic look. Early Instagrammers used it predominantly for sharing photos taken with their mobile phones. Today there are one hundred million active users of Instagram who upload 95 million photographs daily, taken with mobile phones as well as digital cameras. A photographer's standing on Instagram is based on the number of followers they have and the "likes" and "comments" they receive on their photographs.

I started using Instagram about two years ago. My main reason was to reach a global, photo-centric audience for my bird and wildlife photographs. After spending some time learning, I realized that to have any impact, I needed to maximize followers. There are two ways to increase followers on Instagram. The easy way is to pay for followers - these followers are called "fake followers" because, when you post photographs, they are never around to see, like, or comment on them.

The hard way to increase followers is organically, by consistently sharing high quality photographs and building up a support base. I took this approach and - with some crucial help from my children - it took me almost two years to reach 10,000 followers. Along the way I accumulated over half a million "likes" on the photographs I posted on Instagram.

But other interesting things also happened. I got to make friends. With one of them I went birding in Australia twice. A Japanese photographer, after hearing about my frustrations during a previous trip to Hokkaido, sent me a meticulously detailed itinerary to follow on my next trip there. A Sri Lankan friend supplied me with pointers to local guides when I go there looking for Leopards. From Argentina, a kind photographer sent me details of where to look for Geoffroy's Cat, a rare and beautiful feline, in the Ibera Wetlands.

I found photographers with distinctive pursuits. One, for example, is committed to finding and photographing members of the cat family all over the world. Another only photographs sunsets in all their glory. There are plane, train and automobile photographers. The work of macro photographers gives me



The author's Instagram page.

a fascinating, up-close look at insects. But I still scratch my head in bewilderment at some aspects of Instagram. After I had posted a particular photograph last year, over a hundred Indonesian users "liked" it. Another photograph drew a similar response from Turks. I could not figure out how they found my photo. I concluded it had been referred in a large and secret Instagram group where they were members. All Instagrammers get to write

a very short "Bio" in their profile. Some of these are creative and humorous, such as the woman who said her three hobbies were breakfast, lunch and dinner! While I am far from understanding (or utilizing) all of Instagram, I have found it to be a powerful way to reach people around the world with my photographs and show them the beauty of nature in Bangladesh and other countries. facebook.com/tangents.ikabir or follow "ihtishamkabir" on Instagram.

Rangpur-3 goes to polls today

4 out of 6 candidates including Saad Ershad not eligible to vote

KONGKON KARMAKER

With around 4.42 lakh people expecting to exercise their franchise, election to Rangpur-3 constituency (Sadar upazila) will be held today. The parliamentary seat fell vacant after HM Ershad, Jatiya Party chairman and also opposition leader of the House, died on July 14.

A total of six aspirants from different political parties are contesting the by-polls. Of the candidates, two are Ershad's family members -- his son and JP candidate Saad Ershad and nephew Shahriar Asif. Asif, who is contesting as an independent candidate, had been expelled from the party for violating rules.

The other contestants are: Rita Rahman of BNP; Shafiqul Alam of National People's Party; Kazi Mohammad Shahidullah of Gono Front and Touhidur Rahman Mondol of Bangladesh Khelafat Majlish. Meanwhile, Saad, Rita, Shahidullah and Shafiqul are not eligible to cast their votes as they are not voters of the constituency, GM Sahabat Uddin, regional election officer in Rangpur, told this correspondent yesterday.

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CASE FOR PROVOKING SUICIDE

Liza's husband arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Police yesterday arrested the husband of Liza Rahman, who succumbed to burn injuries she sustained when she set herself on fire near Shah Makhdum Police Station in Rajshahi last week.

The arrestee, Shakhawat Hossain, 19, was arrested from his sister's house in Gomostapur of Chapainawabganj, said Masud Parvez, officer-in-charge (OC) of Shah Makhdum Police Station. Acting on a tip-off, a team of police raided the house and arrested him at 2:30am in connection with the case that the police claimed Liza's father Mohammad Alam had filed for provoking suicide.

Mohammad Alam, however, denied filing it. He alleged that some police officials of Gobindaganj Police Station in Gaibandha picked him up from his home, took him to Shah Makhdum Police Station

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Barishal's biggest hospital grapples with doctor crisis

Nearly half the posts remain vacant

M JAHIRUL ISLAM JEWEL, from Barishal

More than 43 percent of doctor posts are vacant at Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital (SBMCH) in Barishal for a long time, depriving patients of required healthcare due to shortage of physicians.

According to the SBMCH authorities, 97 doctor posts out of total 224 are presently lying vacant. Eventually, patients are suffering at the major hospital in the division comprising 45 wards -- including a newly introduced one for dengue.

Currently, 127 doctors are working at the hospital where around 2,000 patients usually remain admitted, said Dr Md Bakir Hossain, director of

SBMCH. Besides, thousands of outpatients take healthcare services on a daily basis.

Recently, around 1,986 patients remained admitted while 3,100 ones took treatment from the outpatient department, said the director.

Md Solaiman Kabir, registrar of the medicine ward, said a doctor has to perform their duties five times more than usual.

"Minimum five to seven minutes are needed to check up on a patient but we can't give such time. The ward can accommodate 35 patients but now 200 to 300 patients are staying here," he said, adding, "Here are only two mid-level doctors including me.

We have to continue our duties for 24 hours."

The situation at emergency ward is even worse. Half of its doctor posts are vacant, said Director Bakir Hossain.

From the ward, around 500 to 800 patients are referred to other required wards every day while some 80-150 people receive on-the-spot treatment, ward sources said.

Ten doctor posts has been allotted to the emergency ward since the inception of the hospital in 1968, said Dr Mahabubur Rahman of the ward. But only five doctors are working round the clock, he added.

The situation creates negative

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Crammed into a corridor, guardians along with their little ones wait for their turn to see a doctor at the children's ward of Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital in Barishal.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Int'l conference on Shakespeare ends in Ctg

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A two-day international conference titled, "Discursive Shakespeare" concluded at East Delta University (EDU) in Chattogram on Thursday.

A total of 34 researchers and professors from home and abroad presented their research papers on William Shakespeare's literary works in the conference, organised by the department of English at EDU.

Ekushey Padak winning poet Abul Momen was chief guest at the conference. He said literature helps people feel the beauty of the universe amid all sorts of conflicts and wars raging across the globe in current times.

Professor Shormishtha Panja from University of Delhi was the keynote speaker on the first day of the conference.

Prof Mohit Ul Alam of Premier University, keynote speaker of the second day, said it is equally important to pursue performance of Shakespeare's plays besides academic reading of his works.

The conference ended with the staging of Shakespeare's famous play Othello. The department's lecturer Sabrin Sarwar directed the play while members of EDU Literary Club performed.

CELEBRATING AN AGE-OLD ART



The 11th edition of National Potters' Conference kicked off in Barishal city's Ashwini Kumar Town Hall yesterday. Over 200 artisans gathered to exhibit their creations, and fourteen are being honoured for their contribution to the art of pottery. There was an art competition for children, while Barishal Mayor Serniabat Sadiq Abdullah got a hands-on experience of working with clay.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Don't blame BNP for casino scandal: Dr Kamal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Top leader of Jatiya Oikyafront and Gonoforum President Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday said BNP should not be blamed for casino business in Dhaka.

"BNP has not been in power for more than 10 years. So, allegations against them [BNP] is not acceptable," he said at a discussion at Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU). Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (Rob) organised the event on "Necessity of forming national government in the context of current political situation".

The eminent jurist said he was never a supporter of BNP, rather he opposed the party. "But BNP should not be blamed for the recent casino scandal."

He then said, "Maybe BNP can be blamed. The things they [Awami League] did in last 10 years, probably they want to give BNP credit for that. BNP may have done many things in the past, but remaining out of power for last 10 years, they are still doing everything -- is it logical?"

Ruling party leaders, however, alleged that the casino business was introduced in the country when the BNP government was in power.

Dr Kamal said everyone is concerned about the current situation in the country. "Even people within the government are worried," he added. "Negative remarks like rejecting the government will not bring any result. What we need today is unity among all."

JSD president ASM Abdur Rob and other party leaders also spoke at the discussion.

Man held with 2,280 yaba pills in stomach

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Airport Armed Police Battalion (AAPBn) yesterday detained one person with 2,280 yaba pills inside his stomach from domestic terminal of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport.

Detainee Md Shakil Mia, 25, during primary interrogation said that he collected the pills from one Abir in Teknaf upazila of Cox's Bazar. He received money from one Parvez for this, said Alamgir Hossain, additional superintendent of AAPBn. The yaba tablets are worth about Tk 11 lakh.

AAPBn officials detained Shakil after he landed in Dhaka from Cox's Bazar around 6pm. A case was filed.

MA Rashid's 31st death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 31st death anniversary of former secretary MA Rashid, according to a press release.

On this occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at his son's residence in Gulshan after Maghrib prayers.

Rashid's family members have requested all relatives, friends and well-wishers to attend the programme and pray for his departed soul.

Fire guts shops, houses in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A fire gutted valuable five houses and nine shops in Miakhlan Nagar area under Bakalia Police Station in Chattogram yesterday.

The fire originated from an electric short circuit at a house, and spread to adjacent houses and shops around 7:45am, said Jasim Uddin, assistant director of Fire Service and Civil Defence in Chattogram. Six fire fighting vehicles rushed to the spot and managed to douse the blaze around 9:35am, he said.

The damage is estimated to be worth around Tk 5 lakh, Jasim added.