

TANGENTS
BY IHTISHAM KABIR

CATS

The Felidae family, commonly known as cats, consists of 38 species of carnivorous mammals. Cats are native to all parts of the world except for Australia and Antarctica. In the family are our familiar domestic cat, as well as Tigers, Lions, Leopards, Cheetahs, Jaguars, Pumas, Lynxes and Mountain Lions. Their acute senses, fast reflexes, explosive muscular strength and a supple skeleton make them excellent hunters. They stalk, chase and pounce on their prey, using their sharp canine teeth to kill.

The cat family evolved from a weasel-like animal about 20 million years ago. The domestic cat goes back to early Egyptian civilization when, as far back as 4000 years ago, people took a liking to it because of its ability to hunt small rodents and snakes, thus keeping food supplies safe.

Dr. Monirul Khan's *Photographic Guide to the Wildlife of Bangladesh* lists seven wild cat species in Bangladesh. They are Jungle Cat, Clouded Leopard, Leopard, Bengal Tiger, Marbled Cat, Leopard Cat and Fishing Cat. Unfortunately none of these cats is easy to see in the wild. They are few in number and are extremely wary of humans. All I have managed to see are a Jungle Cat at Rema-Kalenga Wildlife Sanctuary (at night with a flashlight), and an unfortunate Fishing Cat that had been killed and left by the side of the road (yes, people in our villages still kill wild animals ruthlessly.)

I had better luck overseas. My first cat in the wild was a Leopard I saw in Uganda's Queen Elizabeth Park. It crossed the road in front of our car and paused just behind some bushes, looking at us through the leaves for a few seconds before disappearing into the forest. In Kenya's Masai Mara I saw Lions, Cheetahs and a Leopard. A bonus of the Kenya



Serval, Masai Mara, Kenya.

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

trip was a Serval, a smaller cat with distinctively tall legs.

But my best cat sighting was watching the Jaguar in the Pantanal, Brazil's massive wetland. This beautiful creature had been almost hunted to extinction by ranchers until they realized the potential it held for attracting tourists. Today, numerous tourists visit Brazil to see Jaguars. While charting the massive Paraguay river by boat, I was able to see several Jaguars at a leisurely pace, including one that crossed the river with two infants in tow.

The Bengal Tiger and the African Lion are perhaps the two most fabled cats of the world. The man-eating habits of Bengal Tigers of yesterday have given rise to many thrilling stories

close to our home. While it was widespread in our country at one time, today its habitation has shrunk to the mangrove forest of Sundarban where the inhospitable terrain allows it to escape the hand of man. Our other cats are scattered among the patches of forests that remain in our country.

I once met a photographer on Instagram whose goal is to photograph all members of the cat family. It is an ambitious project, considering the difficulty of reaching cats such as the Snow Leopard in the Himalayas and Geoffroy's Cat in remote Argentina. But still, what an epic adventure it must be!

www.facebook.com/ikabirphotographs or follow ihtishamkabir on Instagram

Hours after mother's death, man dies in road accident

STAR REPORT

A man was killed mere hours after his mother's demise in a motorcycle accident in Pirganj upazila of Rangpur on Thursday.

The deceased Bhutto Mia (28) was a resident of Kishorgari village under the upazila, Pirganj upazile police told our Dinajpur correspondent.

The accident occurred following Bhutto's mother Zamila Begum's death from a cardiac arrest on Thursday noon, police said.

Upon hearing the news, Bhutto rushed home from work and went out to Pirganj Bazar to buy shroud cloth for his mother with two other relatives on his motorcycle.

As they approached Pirganj-Laldighi road, a running tractor hit their motorcycle. The collision killed Bhutto on the spot, while the two others were injured.

Following the collision, locals of the area vandalised the tractor. Later, police seized the vehicle, said Soroj Kumar, OC of Pirganj Police Station.

In Jashore, a man was killed and his daughter critically injured after a bus hit

his motorcycle in Satmile Gohata area on Jashore-Jhenaidah road in Sadar upazila on Thursday.

The deceased is Moazzem Hossain (55).

According to relatives, Moazzem died when a bus of 'Gorai Paribahan' crashed into his motorcycle when he and his daughter Falguni were returning from Kaliganj. He died on the spot, reports UNB.

Falguni was taken to Jashore General Hospital where doctors described her condition as critical.

Meanwhile, a woman was killed and ten others were injured when a speeding bus overturned in Chaudhagram.

The accident occurred near at Nankora bazar on Dhaka-Chattogram highway at 3pm, said police, adding that the bus lost control while trying to overtake a truck.

The deceased is Amena Begum (50), reports our Cumilla correspondent

Abu Bakar Siddik, SI of Mia Bazar highway police outpost, said, "The injured were taken to Chaudhagram Upazila health complex and released after primary treatment."

2-day literature conference begins at RU

BSS, Rajshahi

A two-day conference on "Literature, History and Culture" began at Rajshahi University yesterday.

VC Prof Abdus Sobhan inaugurated the event as the chief guest at Senate Building, hosted by the RU arts faculty.

Chaired by the faculty dean Prof Fazlul Haque, the opening session was addressed, by pro-VCs Prof Ananda Kumar Saha and Prof Chowdhury Zakaria.

The conference includes three plenary speeches and 21 academic sessions through presentation of 123 papers. More than 200 academics, researchers and professionals from home and abroad are taking part in the conference.



On the banks of Sylhet's Piyain river, Mohammad Abu Bakr (60) lays out his clay pots under the winter sun, before they make their way to the nearby Gowainghat bazar. Every November, Abu Bakr brings his cooking pots, clay lids, pitha moulds all the way from Dhaka. He expects this year's Tk 3.5 lakh haul to sell for double the price. If all goes well, these will be sold this week, and the seasonal trader will go home in relief. It has been a good few years for business, as people are coming back to clay pots out of health concerns, said Bakr.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Cold wave, fog disrupt communication in Ctg

BSS, Chattogram

Dense fog and cold wave largely paralysed life in Chattogram and its adjacent areas, causing disruption of air, water and road communications and bringing acute suffering to thousands of people.

Chattogram has witnessed severe cold with dense fog as a cold wave is sweeping over different parts of the region, said Mahamudul Islam, a meteorologist at the district Met Office. He said temperatures are likely to rise from Monday.

The lowest temperature recorded in Chattogram was 14 degree Celsius at the city's Patenga yesterday, Mahamudul said.

Many children and elderly people have been suffering badly from various cold-related diseases, Dr Kutub Uddin of Chattogram Medical College Hospital, told the news agency.

Homeless people were seen lighting fires to keep themselves warm, as the sun remained invisible yesterday morning due to dense fog.

Air traffic control room sources of Chattogram Shah Amanat International Airport said dense fog disrupted flights' operations, as schedules of domestic and international flights were moved for one to three hours due to fog.

Omar Faruk, secretary of Chattogram Port Authority, said plying of all kinds of ships in the port channel remained suspended for two or three hours early yesterday.

Port authorities were compelled to impose a ban on movements of all vessels till 9am to and from Chattogram, owing to poor visibility, said radio control room of Chattogram port sources.

Teenager stabbed dead in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A teenager was stabbed to death by unidentified miscreants at Manda area in the capital last evening.

The deceased was identified as Mahin (17), a construction helper, said police.

Mahin and two others set up a fire on the roadside to seek relief from cold in the area at around 6pm, said Officer-in-Charge of Mugda Police Station Proloy Kumar Saha.

A group of 20-25 miscreants chased and stabbed them with sharp knives, he added.

Mahin was killed on the spot, and the two other injured were taken to Mugda General Hospital for treatment, he added.

The OC said police are yet to know why the killing took place, and who the assailants were.

The body of the deceased was sent to Dhaka Medical College morgue for post-mortem.

Proloy Kumar said Mahin lived in Jatrabari area. Mona, one of the two injured persons, called him over cellphone to meet at Manda area earlier in the day.

JnU STUDENTS' UNION

Draft constitution to be published online soon: VC

JnU CORRESPONDENT

The draft constitution of Jagannath University Central Student's Union (JnUCSU) is set to be published -- for taking everyone's opinion -- on the university's website soon, authorities said.

"The draft constitution of JnUCSU will be published on the university's website soon, seeking opinions from stakeholders," JnU Vice Chancellor Mijanur Rahman told The Daily Star. The draft will undergo necessary modifications based on stakeholders' feedback, he added.

The decision was made at the 81st syndicate meeting of the university held at the VC office on Thursday.

The draft constitution will be available

on the website for 90 days. Within this time, anyone can provide their opinion on it.

"Suggested modifications will be discussed during the next syndicate meeting," the VC said.

On July 1 this year, the university authority formed a committee led by law department Prof Sarker Ali Akkas to provide necessary recommendations for amending the JnU Act, 2005, which had no section or sub-section regarding student union polls.

The committee submitted their report to the JnU VC on September 22.

JnU is yet to hold a JnUCSU election since the former Jagannath College turned into a university in 2005. Legal limitations prevented the elections from taking place, officials said.

A day with butterflies

JU holds 10th edition of annual fair



Holding toys shaped like butterfly, a little girl tries to find one of these alluring insects inside an enclosure at Jahangirnagar University butterfly fair yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

JU CORRESPONDENT

Defying chilly and foggy weather, a large number of visitors thronged the premises of Zahir Raihan auditorium at Jahangirnagar University (JU) yesterday, that hosted the annual Butterfly Fair for the tenth year.

The zoology department of JU organised the fair in association with Cute Ltd, Prokriti O Jibon Foundation, and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

The number of children at the

fair was noticeable, most of them accompanied by their parents coming in to attend an art competition.

"They are so beautiful to look at! For the first time, I attended the art competition, where I drew a butterfly," said an elated Kaniz Fatema, a third grader at Savar Cantonment Board Girls High School, who came with her mother to attend the art competition.

Mahiya Tasnim Mahi, a sixth-grader of Teachers Ideal School and College, also said, "This fair will help

me be more conscious about the environment."

Prof Abdul Jabbar Hawlader, dean of Biological Sciences Faculty, inaugurated the fair, where zoology department Chairperson Prof Golam Mostofa and Prokriti o Jibon Director Mukit Majumder Babu were present.

Prof MA Bashar of Dhaka University was awarded the "Butterfly Award- 2019" for his contributions to research on butterfly and overall achievement in the field of zoology

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