



TANGUAR HAOR

a magical place worth revisiting



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While chatting with my seniors at a cafe in Purana Paltan, Tipu bhai casually mentioned that he was going to Sunamganj to visit Tanguar Haor with a travel group. Since I had never been there, I asked him to include me in the team. Tipu bhai agreed.

With all our belongings, I, along with 11 other members, commenced our journey from Sayedabad Bus Terminal by bus on the night of September 7 and arrived at Puran Bus Stand in Sunamganj around 8:30am the next day.

After having breakfast at Panshi restaurant, we hired a Leguna to reach Tahirpur. The journey from Sunamganj to Tahirpur was so captivating!

Although the ride was bumpy due to the bad condition of the road, the scenic beauty on both sides made us forget the inconveniences. The waterbodies, trees, and hills that appeared quite close to us made



PHOTO:
ASKER IBNE FIROZ



In the rainy season, the haor's sea-like expanse may mesmerise one, while in winter the view changes dramatically -- rivers with crystal clear water and the lush greenery can be a soothing experience.

PHOTOS: MD ABBAS

our journey more beautiful and satisfying.

After a one-and-a-half-hour journey, we reached Tahirpur ghat. Our tour host, Abdur Rahman Patwary Roni, who runs Dream Adventure Travel & Tourism, waiting for us with a medium-sized boat.

Tanguar Haor, a massive wetland, is located between Dhormopasha and Tahirpur Upazilas in the Sunamganj district of greater Sylhet. Covering an area of approximately 100 sq km, this is the second-largest freshwater wetland in Bangladesh.

Tanguar Haor attracts a lot of tourists who visit this unique place to see the Meghalaya mountains in the distance, the crystal-clear water flowing from the springs and rivers, countless birds, and the breathtaking beauty of the Koroch-Hijol forest. The haor is home to more than two

hundred species of plants, including the blue water lily, Helancha, and Swarnolota.

The haor is also a valuable ecological treasure. With every season, the haor transforms itself. In the rainy season, the haor's sea-like expanse may mesmerise one, while in winter the view changes dramatically -- rivers with crystal clear water and the lush greenery can be a soothing experience.

An additional advantage of visiting the haor in the winter season is the opportunity to see 250 species of birds, including 30 species of migratory wild ducks, along with the natural beauty of many beels, small islands, and reed beds.

Among the local birds, you will encounter various species, including Balihash, Ganchil, Egret, and Stork. Tanguar Haor serves as a sanctuary for two birds called Leuchchamara and Berberiar Beel.

It holds the distinction of being a Ramsar site, a protected wetland hotspot for biodiversity, with over 200 species of aquatic animals. Additionally, it functions as a natural fish habitat, home to at least 200 species of fish. Its flora exhibits remarkable diversity.

We boarded the boat to explore the Jadukata River, a joint river that originates in India and flows into Bangladesh from the Tekerhat border.

On the way, we sang all our favourite songs with our amazing tour companions. After our boat anchored at the shore, we

disembarked to explore Zero Point and enjoyed the natural beauty around.

Later, we refreshed ourselves with baths in the river and enjoyed the best lunch ever. Before coming here, I could never have imagined having such a lunch in such a beautiful place surrounded by water and hills.

The meal options were limited but satisfying. Fried haor fish, mashed potatoes, and mashed dried red chillies, onions, and lentils were our lunch items.

After lunch, our boat resumed the journey again and anchored at a location adjacent to the famous Shimul Bagan. I was quite excited about it, as I had seen several photos and videos of the garden on social media. Although it was not the best time to visit the garden since there

were no Shimul flowers in the garden, we still enjoyed the well-maintained garden. We captured several photos and videos. According to locals, the best time to visit the Shimul Bagan is in February.

When we left Shimul Bagan, the sun was about to set. The journey from Shimul Bagan to Tekerghat, where we would spend the night, was one of the memorable journeys, thanks to riot of colours.

Finally, at 8:30pm, we arrived at Tekerghat and explored the area. Later that night, we had our dinner, which included duck meat, and the taste of it was so good.

After dinner, we enjoyed the night by singing songs until 3:30am. This is the first time I stayed overnight on a boat. It was memorable experience.

In the morning, after having our breakfast, we explored Niladri Lake with a small boat. Later, our boat headed for the Tanguar Haor Watch Tower, which, according to our host, was the most attractive destination of the tour.

On the way to the Watch Tower, I understood why. The aquatic beauty of this unique wetland at the foothills of Meghalaya was simply mesmerising.

We reached the Watch Tower around 2:00pm. There, we were divided into several groups of two to explore the surroundings better on small dinghies.

After exploring the spot, we took a bath and enjoyed the best lunch in the haor. After resting for a while, we returned to Tahirpur.

At Tahirpur bazar, we had tea. After that we headed back to Sunamganj, from where our bus departed for Dhaka.

On the bus, as I recalled the magical moments spent in the haor, I knew I would come back here.

