

#TRAVEL

A breath-taking early winter ride on the Marine Drive

Winter is gently knocking at our doors, while the traces of monsoon still linger in nature's embrace. Last week, I travelled to Teknaf through the Marine Drive on my scooter with one of my friends.

We set out early in the morning to savour the cool, solitary beach and the rhythm of fishing boats. The experience feels deeply fulfilling. Cox's Bazar has been my home for years, and countless journeys along the Marine Drive have become part of my life. Yet, the magic of the endless stretch of sea meeting the emerald hills never fades and still leaves me in awe every single time. I believe no soul can remain untouched by such raw beauty, as it's a sight that refreshes the spirit and pulls you in with an irresistible charm.

To be specific, two things along this coast have always captured my heart. One, the vibrant fishing boats and two, the raw beauty of live fishing on the beach. The boats, with their bold colours and graceful curves, line the shore like strokes of an artist's brush. While locals call them "nao," tourists often call them "moon boats," a name inspired by their moon-like shape.

In December and January, tourists rush, and crowds spill everywhere, leaving hardly a breath of space. The serenity fades, and even nature begins to lose its vibrant hues, turning pale under the grip of the dry season.

November, in my eyes, is the perfect season to embrace the splendour of Marine Drive. The paddy fields along it shimmer in golden hues, trees stand lush and green, the hills rise like emerald guardians, and the gentle waves on the beach stretch endlessly in shades of blue.

The beach lies pristine, various sea fish

being dried up along the way, while the air carries a soothing balance. A slow, unhurried scooter ride, pausing wherever the heart desires, becomes more than a journey; it turns into a memory etched in time.

From Shamlapur to Teknaf, at many beach points, fishing by seine net is commonly seen every morning in the winter season. The smaller waves crashing at the shore create a breath-taking scene for visitors on the beach. It is very exciting to see live sea fish being caught. Many saltwater fish that are rarely seen alive can be observed at Teknaf beach, making it a unique experience for onlookers.

Cox's Bazar beach points remain often crowded, but Teknaf beach looks like a solitary private place. It is perhaps the quietest and brightest, cleanest of all natural beaches in the country. On top of it all, what makes it unique is the buzzing beach fishing and the colourful moon-boats.

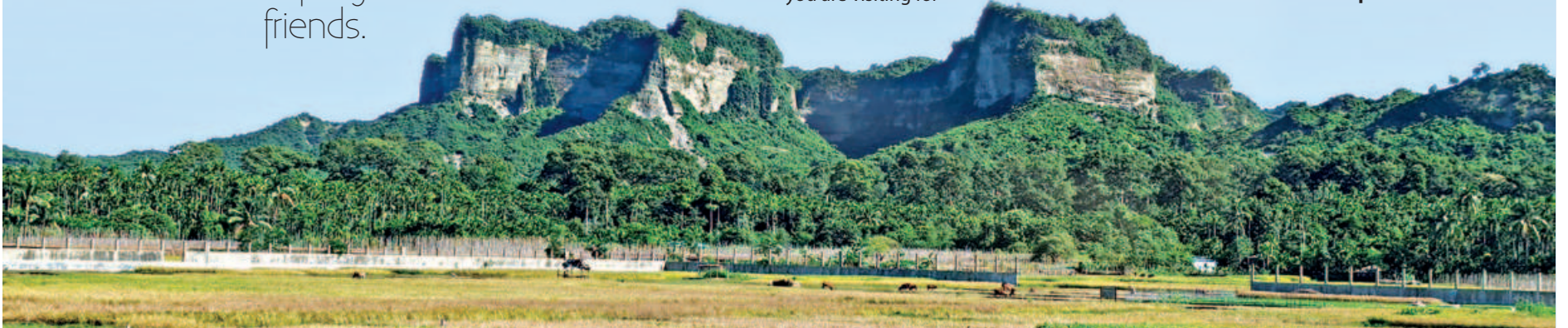
Apart from the fishing, Teknaf has many natural wonders. It is surrounded by many beautiful natural landscapes, from lush green lofty hills in the north to the sandy beach and aqua sea in the west, the pristine Naf River in the east, and Saint Martin's, the only coral island of the country, in the south.

November unveils the finest face of nature along Marine Drive. It's a time when the beach feels secluded and refreshingly serene. If you are visiting for



the first time, the journey will be nothing short of thrilling. The road runs like an endless ribbon, weaving between sea and hills, inviting you to lose yourself in its beauty.

By Parvez Uddin Chowdhury
Photo: Parvez Uddin Chowdhury
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