

Enjoying Nature in Bangladesh

English translation:

I will talk a little bit about our country. Our Bangladesh is like a beautiful fairy. We are impressed with the beauty of the country's landscape -- the rivers, the fields, forests and the mountains. The miles and miles of cultivated land ... the southern breeze blows... the southern breeze blows through the crops. Rivers flow through green meadows. White sand glitters beneath the crystal-clear water. A diversity of wildlife inhabits the mountains and the forests. Colorful birds fly around the branches of the trees. The sound of their sweet chirping fills our hearts with contentment. The capital of Bangladesh, Dhaka, is a big city. Throughout the country, many towns and cities have been established and many had been there from before. The tall buildings in these cities are built with bricks, timber, and stones. The city roads made from cement and tar are quite wide. Buses, trucks, rickshaws, auto-rickshaws, cycles, etc. run through these paved roads. The pedestrians walk on the sidewalks.

City people are always busy with their work. Some work in offices, some in courts, some do trade and business. Laborers work in factories and warehouses. Other than this, people from various professions migrate to the cities every day to earn a better living. For recreational activities, the cities have parks and greens. In their leisure time, the city people go to take a stroll in these beautiful lush green parks. On weekends and holidays, some people go to the museums, some to the zoo. The zoo has many different animals from countries all over the world. Beyond the city are the villages. Rivers flow beside these tranquil, sheltered villages. Many settlements have grown beside these rivers. People from these settlements have built their homes there, and villages have gradually grown. Mango trees, jackfruit trees, berry trees and bamboo shoots shelter these villages. The houses in these villages are not built with bricks, timber, or stones like the city houses. Bamboo sticks and timber make up the basic structure of the village houses. The roofs are made straw, hay, and leaves such as *golpata* and *hoglapata*. The walls are made from split-up bamboo sticks and jute fiber or clay. The builders make some very nice double-roofed or quad-roofed huts with straw. They decorate the inside of the walls with cane and jute rugs. Almost all houses have kitchens. Some village houses are made of tin.

Bangladesh is a riverine plain, and many rivers flow through the land. The people of this land and the rivers share a deep friendship. Padma, Meghna, Jamuna and Brahmaputra are the bigger rivers of Bangladesh. There are many small rivers as well. Their names are very sweet, such as Tista, Korotowa, Ichhamoti, Gorai, Mohanonda, Dhaleshwari, Sheetalakhya, Surma, Karnaphuli, Shangu, Matamohori... are just a few. Many types of boats sail on these rivers. The names of these boats are also very lovely, such as *kosha*, *dingi*, *chhish*, *balam*, *bojra*, *panshi*, *patam*, *shampan* and *moyurpakhi*. On the banks of these rivers are the villages of the fishermen. The fishermen float about in the waters all day with their nets and catch fish. In Padma and Meghna, tons of silver *hilsa* fish are caught. One can find many different types of fishes in our sea, rivers, streams and canals. Among the sea-fish there are *rupchanda*, *koral*, *loitta*, *chhuri*, *faishsha*... and many other species of fish. Fish such as *rui* (carp), *katol*, *mrigel*, *bhetki*, *bhangan*, *chitol*, *bowal*, *shoal*, *koi*, *magur*, *shing*, *pabda*, *puti* and other types of fish can be found in the rivers,

lakes, and streams. Rice and fish is the favorite food of Bengalis. Thus the expression “*maachhe-bhaate bangali.*”¹

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¹ Rice and fish make a Bengali.