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Freedom ...



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Chief Adviser Professor Dr. Muhammad Yunus places a floral wreath at the National Martyrs' Memorial, Savar on 16th December, 2025 marking the 55th Victory Day



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Flying tufted ducks : depicts freedom
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Editorial

People create story, people create history. The history of our Liberation War in 1971 is also a combination of numerous stories. But to understand our Liberation War as a whole – lifting the veil of influential narratives is a core necessity. It will reveal mass people's demand at that time. And thus, the path of a people centric State formation can easily be understood and advanced.

The youth of Bangladesh are so dynamic and smart that this group has become a symbol of change. Keeping pace with the modern world, our youth are solving problems at different corners of the country using technology. Startup is an excellent example, where the basic issues like health, agriculture etc. have been addressed. And the solutions provided through startup are easier, cost friendly, time saving and hassle free.

Bangladesh is a land, enriched with natural beauty, seasonal diversity and cultural heritage. We have Sundarbans, the largest mangrove forest in the world; Tangua haor, one of the largest natural water reservoir in South Asia, rich with biodiversity. Our food habit, our religion have also shaped the culture and heritage of the country. We should protect and preserve our own resources and traditions for the sake of our existence and uniqueness.

Articles on the above-mentioned aspects have been incorporated in this issue and also other regular news events.

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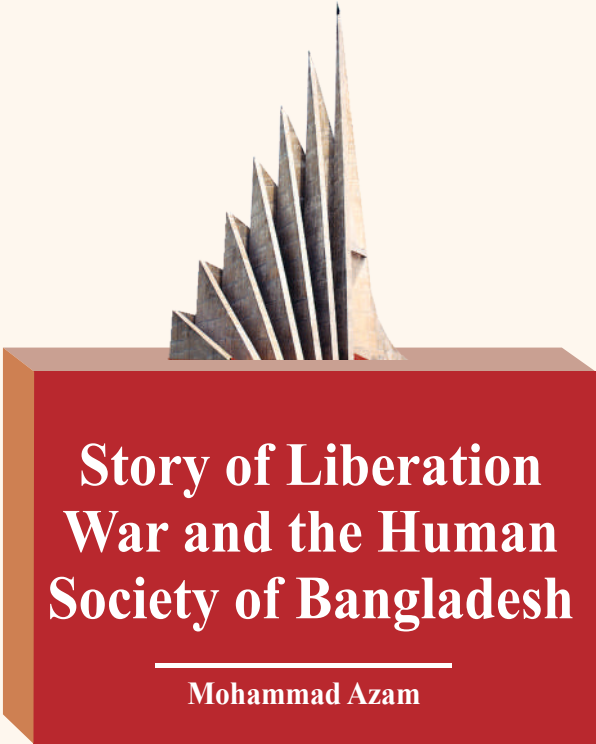
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Story of Liberation War and the Human Society of Bangladesh

Mohammad Azam

Many people say that humans live through stories. Stories are their habitats; their existence; past; future. This statement is applicable even more in case of languages. Many pundits have said, language is man's habitat; man's existence. It undoubtedly has many philosophical and existentialist ramifications. But simply said, the raw materials accumulated and manifested in languages ultimately become the main refuge for human existence. Stories are the greatest among these raw materials. In other words, the subtle ingredients conserved in the shape of stories are the best suppliers of that raw material.

In this context, we can mention a speculation about early humans. Many scientists hold the view that more than one species like the Homo Sapiens had flourished on earth. Out of them, one species has survived. How? That must have happened through numerous blood-spilling struggles. But what advantages did the Homo Sapiens have in that struggle? What was the reason? It



Freedom fighters of Liberation War 1971



Freedom fighters with their leaders were planning new strategy during the Liberation War 1971

is assumed that the main reason was stories. The Homo Sapiens could advance much in life's struggle because of the accumulated stories related to their mutual and collective struggles. Besides, sudden events and favour from nature were also there.

What does a story do? From where does its big role come? The main task of a story is the creation of mutuality between individuals. Stories create an average picture by gradually reducing the innumerable distinct attributes of individual human beings. Images of life are presented through stories. People observe one another, but how much can they see? Much of the huge population remain outside their purview. However, stories present many such characters who gradually generate the concept of average human beings. Through this, man's own shape and boundary are also created. Story itself is a structure or framework. Natural and manmade structures remain present there. The collective human is also there. The individuals in the stories perform individual actions inside the diverse structures and events of collective humans. The humans can visualise themselves in this beautiful structure of collective framework. They can observe their surroundings. They become engaged and related to each other.

But it does not end there. The motley mixtures and innumerable complex collection of feelings that construct the stories also generate feelings and realizations of similar nature. Humans become aware of their dormant and obvious ideas in this way. At the same time, they enter the process of becoming one with the collective. Besides, the world of experience is always there. It is true that humans gather experiences through words or deeds only; but how far can that extend? And how far can a person stretch the boundaries of his experiences? The events or actions –

whether of individual humans or of the collective – can travel very far by crossing the geographic boundaries, and can even transcend the boundaries of time if they wear the garb of stories. If the stories permit the small and big collections of experience to travel great distances, only then can individual experiences expand by accepting the companionship of the collective.

But it does not end there. The real magic of stories commences in the next phase. The words of stories routinely travel from one mouth to another. They go through a reduction process. Their shape becomes more and more complex. By breaking the boundaries of place and time, they become storehouses of multidimensional knowledge. Myths are born. From the structure of myths, many people get the raw-material for attachment to the collective. The human society grows in this kind of backdrop. They become inter-related groups of people, who consider themselves to be of similar type up to one degree or another.

New types of stories and new myths occupy the lives of modern humans in perennially new forms, in such a manner that it appears as if we have emerged from a world of stories. As if, the stories no longer have much role in the making of individuals and the existence of the collective. But the reality is not at all like that. It is not long ago that humans started to recognize and identify themselves as nations. Many theoreticians have shown decisively that the stories of religious-books, magazine-stories, especially those of novels have played a critical role in the shaping of at least the Western nation-states. They have shown that by emerging from the glorious world of myths, humans have been living under the collective reign of new myths. Humans cannot become free from the reign of tales!

The people of Bangladesh have gone through their biggest experience in the long (or known) history of collective life during the liberation war. The period might not have been very long. But through consolidation, a comparatively brief period has given rise to long experience. The territory centring which the web of events revolved had a flawless particularity. These heartrending experiences were gathered from the particular place and populace where we live even today.

We have penned numerous accounts of those experiences. We may not have touched the refined process observed in the practice of writing world-history. But we have certainly written history. History – whether elegant or comparatively weak like ours, has an academic flow that is detached from the people. It has a spirit, which does not capture the experiences of human society in many instances. History even becomes absolutely anti-people on many occasions. However that may be, it is not comparable to the stories that emerge from the accepted and lived experiences of human society. Many branches emerge from the stories of the common people, one intersecting another. Often, rumours and propaganda become reliable partners of those stories. Individuals start to participate in the stories of the collective in line with their convenience.

What an experience the liberation war had been for the individuals! One segment was engaged in frontal combats, running from one terrain to another by betting their own lives. It was driven by an endless desire for embracing death or killing others. Another segment could observe a big part of the tale by remaining at a convenient location inside or outside the country. They may also have been



Liberation War 1971, a combination of of stories

controlling the situation slightly. Some were sticking to their political standpoints; others were dying before death arrived by viewing the existential crisis as the lone constant. Or, they were jumping into the huge cavalcade of life from the lap of death. Stories were being created, whatever the situation might have been. Those stories were reaching the collective after passing through the individuals. They were being fused together. Joint stories were prepared and myths were created.

If war had arrived for the people of this country despite this segment of population being not part of the overall reality, even then stories would have been definitely generated, as during the First or Second World War. But the liberation war was no such thing. It was a reality embedded in the depths of existence for all the citizens collectively. Its all-pervasiveness was much more, as the event had taken place inside the framework of a modern state. The liberation war was a people's war for the inhabitants of East Bengal, the boundary of which was determined much earlier. The people of this region had to fight even during 1947. They did this almost likewise as the population of East Bengal. But the state-boundary that was created owing to that fight lacked the unity of a tale. The people of East Bengal shared only a bit of that story with West Pakistan. Human society cannot be created with such an insufficient story. Collective story cannot emerge from such dissimilarity of experiences. That was, however, related to the state. The stories of human societies also possess separate layers outside the state-experiences. Therefore, the people of East Bengal accumulated the raw materials for their own collective stories based on their experiences of centuries-old combats and liberation struggles.

The story was different during the Anti-British Movement. The movements against the British had unique dimensions due to own realities of the population and diverse arrangements of existence, which did not resemble those of the people of West Pakistan. Those experiences could be distinguished even from those of the people of West Bengal as well. When the peasant movements were taking place here under various names and ideals, did those resemble the experiences of northern or western India, or even West Bengal? In fact, the story of that long-running struggle resembled that of West Bengal only slightly. With the nomenclature of peasants-tenants, the people of this region could then become the owners of a beautiful story! That story was incomparable. The story was of people's own making. And when the people changed that story to align with the Muslim League for worldly reasons, that still had huge dissimilarity with All-Indian Muslim Politics. The trend of politics after 1947 could change so much because of the distinctiveness of those stories. None had to be told; it happens like this. The story that emerges from the core of existence provide fodder to the flow of subsequent story. Through the accumulation of their own story over a long period, people confronted a new story in 1971. Therefore, the raw materials of a long story piled up layer after layer in that tale. Variegated stories and directions accumulated over the previous decades left distinct imprints in the new silhouette.

Our historians must have tried to discover the order of that story in various ways. But it appears from numerous signs that many of them could not track the long accounts of previous stories in the tale of liberation war. They could not fathom the vital importance of that tracing. By prioritising ideological construction over the experiences and stories that piled up in public domain, they spoiled the multilayer significance of the story. Some even tried to reverse the assembly of fresh stories that happened before people's very eyes in such a way as if to give the impression that nothing like that had ever happened. It appears from various indications that many story-tellers lost the essence of the story while attempting to translate it in the context of mere power and state-structure, a story that pervades the core of a huge population. Can the essence be found if attempt is made to separate and fit the ingredients scattered in the public domain in conformity with one's preferred mould and measurement?

In this destitute nation of historical and political tales, the status of art and literature may be in a bit better position. Fine arts tell stories, the tales of humans. It transcends to a collective level from that of individual one. It places the person in the domain of the collective within natural and manmade frameworks. This genre comes very close to the stories prevalent in human society. Therefore, when our story-tellers, novelists or cinema-makers told stories about the liberation war, the tales from the public domain appeared with much more success in those structures. But it seems there were some flaws somewhere. Our liberation-war-based fine arts have seldom seen success for the same reasons that did not allow historical tales to become all-pervasive by coming out of small confines or through touching the variegated terrains of public life. Fine arts have also witnessed excesses in ideological dispensations. However, the main limitations of our fine arts in using the tales of liberation war have probably been a failure to access the intimate narratives of individuals. This needs some elaboration.

The stories become attractive only when the individuality of people get a chance to fly on its wings. Therefore, we always see in the outline of stories the inseparable organic relationships with the collective; the individuals appear in the collective symphony in such a degree within the framework of interpersonal relationships that the consumer can find a parallel existence for himself. If the bigger shapes get prominence in fine arts by attaching lesser importance to this aspect, if ideological moulds are set firmly like immobile stones in the tales of humans, then where can one find



Women freedom fighters on training at Azimpur field, Dhaka in 1971

the real story, or how can fine arts prosper? Here, maximum number of fine arts have been created based on the lone event of the liberation war. Quite naturally so. Where else can one find such types of experiences, or the supply of experiences immersed in the blood of existence? Many people say that the experience of the liberation war is so near having such close proximity to real life that necessary distancing required for disenchantment has not yet occurred. That may be true. But there is no doubt that the naive desire to bring all discourses under the cover of the liberation war has been a major reason for this failure.

Yet, what an infinite storehouse of stories is our liberation war! There may have been political mistakes in that. There may be numerous accounts in favour or against. The presence of innumerable episodes of intentional or unintentional fraudulence is also not surprising. But that does not nullify the innumerable micro and macro-level stories, the many colours of measurable or immeasurable feelings, the told and untold narratives of original or composite experiences that emanated from the liberation war as a profound and widespread occurrence in the routine lives of the public. The liberation war was a time of limitless fear; at the same time, it was a glorious tale of valour. The liberation war was like an unresolvable laboratory for testing our multi-coloured existence. It was an all-out people's war.

For many people, this war was a sudden event coming from the blue. It became a liberation war by testing the depths of our existence. For many people, the



Mass people cheering for new country as the Liberation War comes to an end

liberation war was an inevitable expression of their aspiration. However, that aspiration may have been transformed into infinite bitterness after passing through the experiences of reality. The stories of many people have been added to the painful experiences of others. They became united, or got involved in blood-feuds. Many went to the battlefields with meagre resources; maybe, some of them could not even see the battleground. It was such a profound experience that touched all inhabitants of this territory. The grammar of taking sides changed constantly. People could see the real faces of themselves and others. This kind of all-pervasive story does not happen in the lives of all communities.

The stock of this kind of all-pervasive stories is used by most communities of the world for building themselves. This task can be accomplished due to the presence of structural relevance in the experiences of public life. Not messages or words, it is the stories that touch the humans most intimately. The universality of stories quickly makes people unified. Therefore, this type of storehouse of universal stories is conducive for the endeavour called nation-building, or for the process called politics of state-formation. A sad aspect of our experiences has been that, we could not utilise this extraordinary depot of stories in building a human society.

This failure may be explained in this way. The parts of liberation war that we have used in history or fine arts or politics have been claimed by us as the whole thing. Some ideological conflicts or well-organized activities of ideal-based parties may be explained by claiming such wholeness within limited boundaries. But the event or activity that is linked to crores of people, where crores of people got involved by neutralising their personal wishes, how can that be explained through the delusion of 'for and against'? 'For and against' must be an important matter, as the liberation war was at the same time a political event; but the claims that are made in history, fine arts or politics of getting the whole in the partial mould of 'for and

against' is akin to denying the huge expanse of the liberation war. It should also be said that the mistakes of those who provided leadership to the liberation war in various ways, or the crimes of those who opposed the war, are not sufficient for capturing the whole liberation war, as they represent only a tiny fragment of the story of liberation war.

This lack of comprehension has been devastating for our politics or state-building. The failure to utilise the extraordinary opportunity that we had and still have for forging the feeling of unity by discovering individual and collective lives in the shape of stories has been a terrible experience for our community. We are bound to be pained by this. But that is not the last word, nor is it a conclusive statement.

There are histories that remain beyond the ones written with pen and paper. It should also be said that aspects not captured in writing may be the real history. Only a small fragment of the stories in man's lived experiences are expressed through fine arts. It may often become impossible for fine arts to search for those complex knots in public domain that remain intertwined with the stories. But the tales of public lives endure. And to speak about politics, especially party-politics, it must be said that this arena usually remains active based on some narrow, self-centred, and motivated stories. Its objective most often does not include a commitment towards the stories of public lives. Therefore, what has been said about the liberation war in diverse forms and what would be spoken about it in future are only small parts of a whole – distorted in many instances.

The real liberation war exists in the public sphere; it will be even better if we say, 'in the stories of public life'. That story may sometimes lose its direction due to the pressure of influential narratives. That story may sometimes hide itself after becoming cornered due to the signals of directly-experienced reality. However, it can never erode as it has been obtained from life. It can emerge with all its appeal and full force on the fresh ground of dynamic life in opportune moments, because of its deep kinship with life beyond imposed relationships. Therefore, this vast and diffused liberation war holds promises for us. If the learned society becomes collectively pledge-bound to conserve these stories in the liberal arena of history or fine arts, if the liberation war of the common people starts to get translated at a higher rate through direct involvement of politics, only then can we advance on the path of people-centric state-formation. That would not only be an indication of our development, it would also be the chief catalyst for progress. The latent potential of the liberation war of Bangladesh's human society has persisted over the past fifty-four years; it will remain in the coming days as well.

Translation: Dr. Helal Uddin Ahmed

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Reference and Courtesy : Special supplement on 16 December 2025, Press Information Department.

Sacrifice for Freedom of Speech

Rezauddin Stalin

The first condition for freedom of speech is self-sacrifice
The sound 'freedom' emerging from the tongue's oscillation
Infects the towns and villages like the sounds of sea,
But it was blocked constantly by the walls of blood-red eyes
Even the prisons became research-labs of imposters in twenty-first century
The years rolled on through the hands of my resistance
And my entries for the diary got edited incessantly
Like myriads of stars.

Where the humming of bees and the news of paddy-sheaf are not rare
Nor are the ripples of rivers and the cries of hornbill infrequent,
The sound of the farmer's footsteps wet with dew, unending stream
Of tears flowing from the eyes of a child waiting for father,
The fleeing of emperor, the shouts of grocery-owner,
Or the rise and fall of the share market.

The second condition is the stirring of beauty filled with victory's feat
Beauty implies love engraved on the letter of dedication for spring –
Those who returned for vengeance – riding on liberation war's wagon
Let them feel the caution of the secretive hunter while standing
Before the burning coal of sunrise on Asia's coast,
Let them see the fire in the eyes of wildcat, or read
My poem flooded with the moonlight of alkaline ice.

The third condition is to seek a crown adorned with the diamond of pledge
Removing the signal of traffic-rabbit on a path laid with tinsel of golden leaf
Searching like the squirrel through the gaps of tree-leaves –
And for that we need the self-sacrifice of Titumir or Khudiram –
In whose crystal-clear eyes the whole of Bangladesh can bathe and cleanse,
In real terms, the third condition is the inheritance of age-old tradition
A bright essence like the sizzling geranium
Made of copper, zinc, silver, and steel plates.

We shall have to traverse our path by turning the conditions centring
Beehives of lungs into noun at one point and adjective at another,
We shall have to take preparation like the ants' silent journey,
I believe the gold-plated crown shall be found in a termites' mound
Or inside the hole of rats, and then the time shall be transformed
Into an amazing rosy season – the spring.

Translation: Dr Helal Uddin Ahmed

Reference and Courtesy : Special supplement on 16 December 2025, Press Information Department.



Startups from the Streets: How Young Tech Innovators Are Solving Bangladesh's Everyday Problems

Nasrin Jahan Lipi

In Bangladesh, where systemic challenges often hinder access to healthcare, education, and finance—especially in rural areas—a new wave of youth-led startups is emerging. With limited resources but abundant creativity, these entrepreneurs are using technology to build solutions deeply rooted in the local context. From telemedicine to mobile banking, these “startups from the streets” represent a grassroots innovation movement reshaping the country’s digital future.

In a sunlit village outside Barisal, a doorstep-to-doorstep health service helps farmers consult doctors through a local pharmacist. In Rajshahi, an agent logs patient symptoms into a tablet, connecting villagers to urban specialists via video. Elsewhere, livestock farmers secure microloans

and investors via mobile platforms. These innovations represent a rising tide of youth-led tech startups built to solve local problems—the kind of grassroots innovation redefining life beyond Dhaka’s startup scene. Across Bangladesh, a silent revolution is unfolding—led not by corporate giants or foreign investors, but by young, local entrepreneurs building tech startups with street-level relevance.



Startup : A tech-based innovation for solving problems



Startup technology has opened a new horizon in the agricultural sector

From healthcare to finance to education, these youth-led ventures are tackling problems that formal institutions have long struggled to solve.

A New Kind of Startup Scene

Bangladesh's startup ecosystem has typically centered around Dhaka. But over the past few years, a new breed of innovators is emerging—not from elite tech hubs, but from local schools, public universities, and even roadside tea stalls. These are the “startups from the streets”—born out of real-life struggles, not pitch decks.

Sanjida Alam, founder of Soowgood recognized that the root issue was fragmented access to care, not lack of facilities, and committed to building a more inclusive telemedicine solution during a visit to Bangladesh after losing a family member to congenital illness. Soowgood aims to bridge the rural-urban health divide—on boarding local agents in villages who help patients' access online for having doctors consultations. As of April 2025, the platform had on boarded 187 doctors and served nearly 25,000 people nationwide, with appointment growth of 59% month over month. The model pairs WhatsApp-based video calls with on-the-ground agents who assist in booking, diagnostics, and record-keeping. During the Cumilla floods of 2024, Soowgood mobilized volunteer agents with internet access to assist stranded patients via teleconsultations, offering free services to children, elderly, and others.

In earlier years, mDoc deployed tablets in partnership with local village pharmacists, enabling real-time doctor consultations. These pharmacists register patients, take vitals, and the doctor provides prescriptions printed on site. This initiative significantly improved access to trained care and reduced prescription errors in rural communities. mDoc's model leverages existing village pharmacists, training them to serve as frontline agents—a human-centered design that has been recognized by global platforms like Spring wise.

The famous agrotech startup named iFarmer connects livestock and farm owners with investors using digital monitoring and training tools. This platform helps under-capitalized farmers raising funds, monitoring progress, and securing financing. In 2024, Razor Capital led a Series A round recognizing iFarmer's potential in agritech and rural finance expansion.

Targeting youth, women, and small entrepreneurs, 360 Degree offers an easy digital loan platform. Founded in 2021, it enables groups often ignored by traditional banks to access microcredit via a user-friendly interface.

What makes these startups stand out isn't just their tech—it's their deep social awareness. Many of the founders have lived the problems they're trying to solve. That gives their solutions an authenticity often missing from more top-down approaches. Instead of relying solely on smartphone apps, many startups empower local intermediaries or use USSD, tablets, or SMS to reach non-smartphone users.

All these startup platforms are reducing friction in rural finance while empowering marginalized groups. More than 2,500 startups are actively creating jobs and addressing critical needs across various sectors like fintech, e-commerce, and



Health issues have become more easier because of telemedicine

logistics. This growth is fueled by a young, tech-savvy population, increasing foreign investment and government initiatives supporting entrepreneurship. Startups are a major source of employment, directly and indirectly supporting 1.5 million jobs. Fintech startups, like bKash, have gained significant traction, transforming financial services and digital payments. E-commerce platforms are connecting consumers with businesses, expanding market access, and creating new opportunities. Startups are tackling issues like healthcare access, education, and agricultural challenges through innovative solutions.



A women of remote area can now avail the facilities of her need through the startup platform

Hurdles on the Road

Despite their impact, these startups face daunting obstacles. Funding is scarce outside of Dhaka. Most local banks are reluctant to support tech ventures, especially those led by students or women. Infrastructure issues—like unstable electricity and slow internet—can stall development for weeks. Yet momentum is building. A new generation of rural entrepreneurs is emerging. Social perception is changing. Manob Sheba's pilot is government-backed. iFarmer's VC funding confirms investor interest. Soowgood continues onboarding doctors and expanding the service during crisis response. A new generation of rural entrepreneurs is emerging. Programs like Startup Bangladesh, the GP Accelerator, and some international NGOs have begun offering seed grants, mentorship, and bootcamps tailored for rural or underrepresented founders.

Despite success, startups face regulatory and financial roadblocks. Bangladesh faces significant structural and regulatory challenges that impede its economic development and business environment. These include complex and cumbersome regulations, bureaucratic inefficiencies, a lack of transparency, corruption, and infrastructure limitations. Addressing these issues through streamlining processes, promoting digitalization, and enhancing regulatory clarity is crucial for attracting investment and fostering sustainable growth.

Bangladesh's regulatory landscape is characterized by complex procedures, lengthy registration processes, and multiple layers of bureaucracy. This makes it difficult and costly for businesses, especially SMEs, to start and operate, hindering investment and innovation. Corruption is another major problem, with businesses frequently citing it as a significant barrier. This lack of transparency in regulatory processes and enforcement further discourages investment and distorts

the market. Inadequate infrastructure, including unreliable power supply, limited internet access, and poor transportation networks, poses a major constraint on business operations and competitiveness. SMEs face significant challenges in accessing finance due to a deficient credit information system and the complexities of obtaining loans.

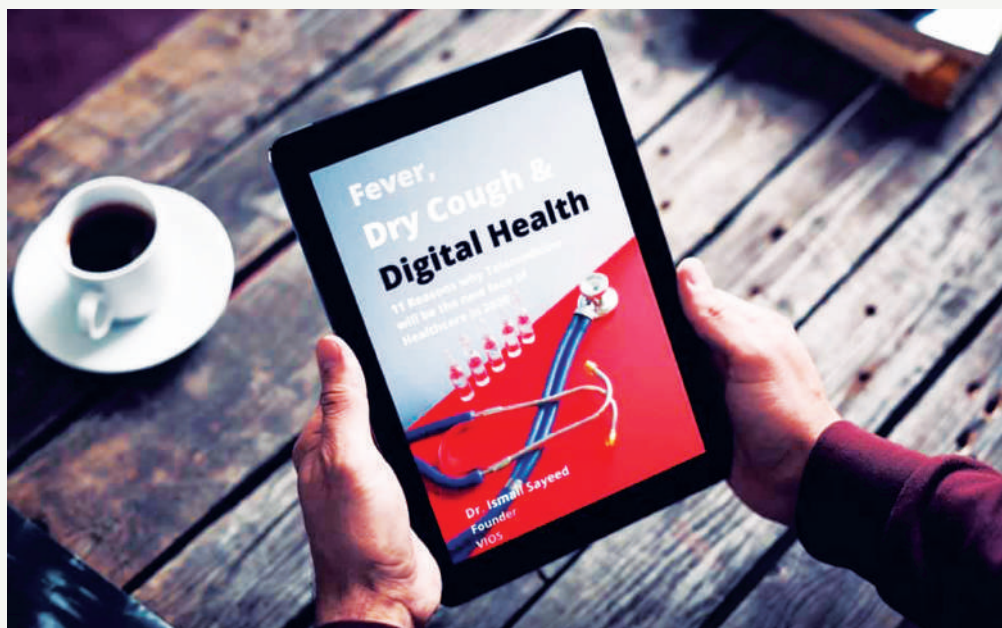
From Grassroots to Global?

The real question is: can these grassroots innovations scale? Many of the founders believe they can—but only if the startup ecosystem becomes more inclusive. Already, some of these startups are gaining recognition abroad. Bangladesh's young tech entrepreneurs aren't waiting for change; they're building it, app by app, village by village.

The Chief Adviser to the interim government Professor Muhammad Yunus said, 'Bangladesh is ready to push startups, business initiatives for youth'. Bangladesh is ready to convene the first multi-stakeholders meeting in 2025, the Chief Adviser said this as he addressed the 11th Summit of the D-8 Countries in Egypt's Cairo on 19 December 2024. The young entrepreneurs are eagerly waiting for some effective reforms in this regard. Hopefully Bangladesh will simplify registration processes, reduce bureaucratic hurdles, and harmonize regulations across different sectors. We need to promote digitalized government services, including business registration and licensing, to enhance transparency and efficiency. And also we need to improve the capacity and efficiency of public institutions, ensuring accountability and transparency as well as implementing robust anti-corruption measures and ensuring the effective enforcement of laws. Bangladesh would invest in infrastructure to improve including power, transportation, and internet access, to support business operations and attract investment; need to improve



Cheif Adviser Dr Mohammad Yunus with the leaders of the D-8 countries at the 11th Summit of the organisation of the developing 8 countries for economic cooperation



Digital health service is no more a myth in Bangladesh but a reality

the credit information system and facilitate access to finance for SMEs; need to ensure clarity and consistency in regulations to reduce uncertainty and encourage investment.

Where others see constraints, the startup founders see opportunity—and they’re proving that scalable change doesn’t need big capitals—it needs big empathy. By addressing these structural and regulatory challenges, Bangladesh can create a more conducive environment for businesses, attract investment, and achieve sustainable economic growth. These youth-led innovations are tearing down traditional barriers—bringing healthcare, financial access, and information to those long overlooked. Bangladesh’s tech revolution is no longer just a Dhaka phenomenon; it’s blossoming where it matters most: in villages, fields, and small towns.

Local Innovation and Social Impact

The development of tech-based solutions is closely tied to the quality of digital literacy and access to technical education. Although Bangladesh has made strides in primary education enrollment, digital skills remain concentrated in urban centers. Grassroots startups often struggle to find technically skilled personnel within rural or semi-urban areas. Bridging this gap requires strategic partnerships between public universities, polytechnic institutes, and local startups. Furthermore, coding bootcamps, mobile tech labs, and digital literacy campaigns led by NGOs can expand the talent pool available to these ventures. Without such investments, innovation will remain limited to a few clusters, undermining national inclusivity goals.

Women-led startups face unique challenges, from limited mobility and social stigma to unequal access to finance. Despite this, female entrepreneurs like Sanjida Alam of Soowgood are paving the way for others. According to CPD (2024), systemic reforms are needed to ensure that gender equity is built into the startup ecosystem—not just as a target but as a measurable outcome. Incubators and accelerators should prioritize diversity in their mentorship programs and funding evaluations. Digital platforms that provide child-care support, remote work options, and flexible funding mechanisms can further facilitate women’s leadership in this space.

An emerging but underexplored aspect of grassroots innovation is potential for climate resilience and environmental sustainability. With Bangladesh facing rising climate risks, youth-led startups can be pivotal in developing low-cost, eco-friendly technologies. For instance, startups focusing on clean energy, waste management, or climate-smart agriculture could fill critical gaps in adaptation strategies. These innovations not only generate local employment but also contribute to global sustainability goals. Government and development agencies should offer green innovation grants, climate-risk insurance, and technical support to nurture this sub-sector of the startup ecosystem.

To translate startup success into long-term national impact, coherent policy alignment is essential. Presently, Bangladesh’s startup policies are scattered across ICT, commerce, education, and finance ministries—creating duplication and administrative friction. A centralized regulatory body or inter-ministerial task force could harmonize regulations and build a transparent, one-stop platform for startup registration, IP protection, tax compliance, and investment approval. Such a structure would lower entry barriers, enhance investor confidence, and reduce inconsistencies in implementation. Additionally, data-sharing frameworks



A group of young and smart startup founders of Bangladesh



A group of people have made digital health service easier through start-up platform

between agencies could help monitor startup performance and social impact metrics more effectively.

Many Bangladeshi youth working in the global tech sector maintain strong ties with their homeland. The government could facilitate diaspora-led startup investment by easing remittance-based equity funding, offering dual-residency startup permits, and creating returnee founder networks. International collaboration through programs such as UNDP's Youth Co:Lab and the World Bank's Digital Entrepreneurship Program can also unlock new opportunities. By integrating global knowledge and standards, local startups can raise their competitiveness and scale across borders, thus positioning Bangladesh as a regional tech innovation hub.

Conclusion

The story of Bangladesh's youth-led tech startups is not just one of digital innovation but of social transformation. These ventures represent a generational shift in how development challenges are understood and addressed—from top-down aid models to bottom-up, tech-enabled problem solving. Yet, to realize their full potential, a supportive ecosystem is crucial: one that includes inclusive policy, merit-based funding, regional equity, gender inclusion, and global connectivity. With sustained investment and strategic reform, these 'startups from the streets' could indeed lead Bangladesh into a more equitable, resilient, and prosperous digital future.

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The Surrounding Rivers and Canals of Dhaka City : Role in Protecting the Environment

Dr. Forqan Uddin Ahmed

The loss of natural flow and ecosystem of the rivers and canals has made the failure of water drainage during the rainy season more evident. The surface water is becoming polluted, the groundwater level is also decreasing day by day leading to a growing water crisis. Encroachment and waste pollution have become major challenges to Dhaka's environmental sustainability. Due to mismanagement and

The surrounding rivers of Dhaka are Turag, Balu, Shitalakshya, and Buriganga. These rivers were once the city's main sources of water and played a vital role in draining flood and rainwater. In addition, Dhaka once had more than 54 canals within the city that controlled the flow and circulation of water. However, most of these canals have now been encroached upon, polluted, and filled with waste, causing blockages in the remaining canals and rendering them largely ineffective. Plastic, polythene, industrial waste, and household garbage—along with rampant encroachment—have severely degraded the environment of these rivers and canals. As a result, waterlogging during the monsoon has increased creating serious problems for city dwellers.



Once the surrounding rivers and canals of the Dhaka city



The Buriganga

illegal occupation, the natural condition of the rivers and canals is disappearing. The lack of proper waste management results in large amounts of garbage being dumped directly into the rivers and canals, reducing water quality and destroying biodiversity.

Once Dhaka's lifeline, the Buriganga River now reflects the city's worrisome decline. One of the world's most polluted rivers nowadays is the Buriganga. Dhaka is one of the world's most unlivable cities. Every day, about 4,500 tons of waste—including plastic, sewage, rotten goods, dead animals, petroleum, and industrial chemicals—are poured into the river. Unbelievably, 80% of this sewage is still untreated. Over the past five years, pollution has gotten worse despite promises of action. Despite being required by law to install ETPs, many factories either do not have them or keep them inoperable. The predictable outcome of treating the river like a landfill is ecological death. Dhaka will be pulled down with the Buriganga's decline if environmental regulations are not strictly monitored and enforced. Time is rapidly ebbing away for both the city and the river, whose fates are inextricably linked.

The rivers and canals in and around Dhaka, suffering from pollution, include the Buriganga, Turag, Balu, Rampura canal, Kalyanpur canal, Begunbari canal, Hazaribagh canal, Ramchandrapur canal, Badda canal, the old Buriganga, and Rupnagar canal. In November 2021, the National River Protection Commission requested the Department of Environment to submit a list of polluters of these rivers and canals. The department identified 280 sources of pollution. Among these, 220 were hospitals, with the rest being mostly textile dyeing, printing, washing, metal, and ice cream factories. Pharmaceutical factories, government and private hospitals, specialized hospitals, and private diagnostic centers were also included. It was discovered that most government hospitals in Dhaka lack

ETPs. Strict regulation are hardly applied on hospitals for obtaining ETPs or permits that often leniency is even offered due to their nature. Experts say, Dhaka was once crisscrossed by major rivers, but many have vanished due to unplanned urbanization. Be it hospitals or factories, action must be taken against those, responsible for polluting rivers and water bodies.

Pollution of all kinds has become an inseparable part of our daily life. For Dhaka residents, pollution has almost become a cultural norm! Dhaka suffers from air pollution, noise pollution, river and canal pollution, plastic and polythene pollution, water contamination, waste pollution, and waterlogging. Although various initiatives have been taken to stop the encroachment and pollution of surrounding rivers like Buriganga, Turag, Balu, and Shitalakhya, nothing seems to be stopping the degradation. The city's canals also continue to be encroached upon. Once, there were over 54 canals in Dhaka; most are now lost due to encroachment and waste. About 23 canals barely exist today, and these too are severely polluted. As connections between these canals and surrounding rivers have been cut, waterlogging during monsoons has become a nightmare for residents. Meanwhile, the groundwater level continues to drop, increasing future dependency on surface water. Thus, cleaning and restoring the rivers around Dhaka has become a necessity.

Due to industrial waste, polythene, and human waste, the waters of Buriganga and nearby rivers have turned black. Authorities and the administration must act more strictly to protect rivers and canals. Although polythene bags are legally banned, they still remain extremely popular. The main reason is the unavailability of affordable alternatives like jute or paper bags. Being easy to use and free for customers, polythene remains one of the most dangerous enemies of the environment. This non-biodegradable product damages drainage systems and poses a significant environmental threat. This pollution will not stop unless polythene production and marketing are addressed with long-term and continuous enforcement. Simultaneously, widespread public awareness campaigns about the harmful effects of polythene are essential. Marketplaces and shops across Dhaka—and indeed the country—must be targeted with inspections. Importantly, if sellers stop distributing polythene bags, buyers will automatically stop using them. To popularize jute bags as alternatives, the government must initially offer substantial subsidies. Making jute bags readily available and meeting demand could save the declining jute industry while protecting the environment.

Dhaka is one of the most air-polluted megacities in the world. According to a recent World Bank report, pollution of air, water, and the environment causes Bangladesh an annual loss of approximately 54,000 crore taka. Due to the lack of modern and sustainable waste management, garbage is strewn across streets. Trash collection points, or “Secondary Transfer Stations” (STSs), have been established next to roads, exposing city dwellers to waste pollution constantly. If waste were collected separately by type, it could be turned into electricity, glue, fertilizer, and other valuable products. Making the city clean and pollution-free is a shared responsibility of all authorities and citizens. According to the Environmental Performance Index, Bangladesh ranked 179th out of 180 countries in 2018 in preventing environmental pollution. Each year, World Environment Day is observed with much fanfare, and various initiatives are discussed. But are we really reducing pollution? Are we truly protecting the environment? With



It's high time to get aware of river pollution of Dhaka city

continued pollution, are we not killing ourselves? If we continue destroying the environment, the day will come when only unplanned development, pollution, and disease-ridden lives remain. At that point, no cost will be enough to restore a healthy environment or life.

Rivers and canals are not just bodies of water—they are the lifeline for urban life. If they are destroyed, the city's temperature will rise, the risk of floods will increase, aquatic life will collapse, and city residents will face serious health hazards. Moreover, the beauty and social heritage of waterways will also be lost. A healthy river carries environmental, social, and economic value at the same time. This crisis cannot be confined only to the administration or environmentalists—it also requires the active participation of citizen warriors. Unless educational institutions, businesses, civic committees, and the government work together, the rivers will eventually vanish. Unfortunately, we are wasting precious time. Every year of delay means the cost of restoration multiplies. Immediate well-planned, regular, and transparent action is essential. In short, Dhaka's environmental problems are serious and multidimensional. The rivers and canals have become lifeless due to pollution and encroachment. In addition, air pollution has reached an alarming level, and unplanned urban development is largely responsible for this environmental disaster. Without timely and effective measures, these problems will become even more harmful to human life.

In conclusion, to rebuild and beautify the city of Dhaka, we must save the Buriganga. The role of the environment in Dhaka's development and civilization must be given the highest importance. Therefore, the governance and restoration of the Buriganga should be prioritized. Furthermore, to prevent this environmental disaster, realistic and successful actions must be taken using eco-friendly technologies. A positive attitude towards the environment must be nurtured, turning environmental protection into a mass movement. The people of Dhaka now live in constant fear and under severe distress. Relevant departments and authorities must act immediately and take timely measures to address this crisis. All government, private, and NGO actors must formulate integrated programs and ensure their sincere and effective implementation to save our rivers, especially the river surrounding Dhaka city.

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Reminiscence of the Sundarbans

Sahida Sultana

to Launch ghat to avail the ship by auto rickshaw. It takes only 15 minutes to arrive at the launch ghat. It was then around 12.30am. We boarded on an engine boat and moved towards ship which was anchored in the deep river. When we entered into

The torrential rain in the canal, surrounded by wild calm environment except the sound of rain, a cup of tea or coffee is mind blowing. Reminiscing the memories of travelling Sundarbans soothes the bustle of the busy city life. Travelling is exciting but it's reminiscence is soothing and refreshing to the visitor.

The tour, designed for 3 nights and 4 days from Dhaka to Sundarbans; was well organized and comfortable. We, the group of 45 people, started our journey at 8.00 pm by train namely 'Jahanabad Express' from Dhaka to Khulna. When we arrived at Khulna Railway station we were carried



A tourist group at Andharmanik, Sundarbans



The scenic beauty of Sundarbans can best be enjoyed through the river path

the ship with having a floral reception on behalf of the tour management company along with welcome drinks, refreshes us. The steaming hot food filled our appetite and the journey towards Sundarbans began with a very good start.

Some of us went to their cabin for taking rest and the others stayed on the deck and enjoyed the midnight at the midst of the river. The moment was very personal for everyone. That very special time might have been spent through connecting with



The breathing roots of the trees of the Sundarbans the largest mangrove forest of the world

the Creator, or humming some verses or recalling or only keeping mum and enjoying the journey towards Sundarbans. The main rivers which we crossed from Khulna to Sundarbans are the Pashur and the Baleshwar.

The tour was designed to travel by ship, boat and on foot. We cover the places– Andharmanik, Kotka, Jamtola Beach, Dimer Char, Tiger Point, Karamjal etc. The sun, rising in the river, is one of the precious experiences. The golden ball rings the bell of a new day. The ship was on move at night and in the morning it stopped for exploring Andharmanik (our first tourist spot).

The ship anchored in the deep river and we used



Tourists at the engine boat on the way to Kotka



Tourists along with forest guard at Jamtola, Sundarbans



Sundarbans is not only the largest mangrove forest but acts as a shield against natural disasters

engine boat to reach the spot. This short journey in the open river was very exciting. We had to wear lifejacket, also had to carry drinking water, umbrella, sunglasses etc. Andharmanik is an ecotourism center in the Sundarbans, located under the Chandpai Range of Mongla Upazila of Bagerhat district. To see the natural beauty of the Sundarbans, the Royal Bengal Tiger, various birds and the Chitra deer Andharmanik is a suitable place. A pontoon serves as the entry point, leading



The Chitra Deers of Sundarbans

the visitors into a peaceful standing from where they can enjoy the serene beauty of the Shela river. The elevated foot trail provides a safe and engaging way to explore the forest. The watch tower helped us to visualize the beautiful landscape of the river and forest together.

While returning from Andharmanik the tour agency provided some drinks and fruits which refreshed us. We then got prepared for another spot Kotka. Kotka is located in the deep of the Sundarbans and it offers visitors to experience nature, ecosystem of biodiversity. Kotka Sea Beach is



A few tourists at the Jamtola Tower, Kotka, Sundarbans



The river and the forest together created an indescribable natural beauty



The Barbecue dinner, along with other dishes was a truly enjoyable experience

situated in Koyra Union of Koyra Upazila of Khulna District. To reach Kotka, tour boats navigated Pashur and Baleshwar.

We went to that point which was part of the administrative Shoronkhola Range, called officepara. We found the seeds of Sundari trees and observed nature's self reconstruction of its damages. That was a unique place of sea along with forest. The wave of the sea made us unmindful, on the other hand the survival of the



The vast area of Sundarbans- a sanctuary for wildlife



A group of tourists at the Karamjal, Sundarbans

nature made us also optimistic. While the team returned from Kotka, the ship started to move towards another spot.

The team enjoyed the sunset, spent their personal time with group or alone. After having yammy snacks in the evening, there was some formal sessions which concluded with cultural activities. After having dinner that day we went to sleep.

We woke up early in the next morning and travelled to Jamtola Sea Bach to watch the sunrise. Jamtola Sea Beach is located on the Bay of Bengal coastline within the Sundarbans mangrove forest, and is surrounded by a complex network of tidal rivers and canals. The black sand on the beach is a result of rich mineral contents, carried by the larger river systems that feed into the area. This place is named for its jujube (Jam) trees. This spot covers almost 6 kilometers in a round trip. Walking through the forest and came out to the open sea shore was an unspeakable memory.

The great Sundarbans was waiting with its treasures for the visitors- returning from Jamtola, we took breakfast and rushed to “Dimer Char”. Dimer Char is a small island spanning 6.5 km² with a coastline of 15.6 km. While reaching there we found few boats of fishermen returned after hilsha fishing. Some of us bought fresh hilsha from there. There were Kans Grass surrounding the island. We collect dead snails and oysters from the beach. The fresh air from Bay of Bengal, blue sky, sunny day, birds, snails and oysters, trees at the edge of island made the place remarkable and unforgettable.

After lunch the ship along with us started towards “Kachikhali Tiger Point”, another



Indescribable beauty of Kans Grass at the Tiger point gives tourists a thrilling experience

place of tranquility to find the den of majestic Royal Bengal Tiger. This short trip covers boat riding, walking through the forest full of rich biodiversity. There were Kans Grass in the midst of the walking way and it was a nice experience walking through the Grass. While climbing on the tower, it was about to dusk, the sun was almost set; the forest, wild environment and evening arrival- all thrilled the us all. We were satisfied seeing only the deers from the tiger watching tower.

The sight of the forest was clearly visible when the sunlight pierced the fog, turning the dark canals into glittering waterways. This is a powerful memory. The green canopy, meandering streams, and the unique sight of mangroves along the riverbanks and the silence of the forest is replaced by a “chorus of life” as the day began and filled with the calls of birds and other wildlife. The experience can be described as breathtaking, magical, and serene, evoking a sense of fascination and enthusiasm for nature’s power and beauty.

The forest is remembered for its rich biodiversity, especially the chance to spot the elusive Royal Bengal Tiger, a symbol of the Sundarbans. Many visitors fondly recall sightings of spotted deer, crocodiles, various species of birds, and even dolphins in the waterways. Memorable encounters include seeing a tigress with her cubs, a Monocled Cobra, or playful monkeys at crocodile breeding centers. A central part of the memory is traveling through the forest on boats, sailing through the endless labyrinth of rivers and creeks. The experience includes enjoying hearty meals and refreshments on the ship, which creates a sense of community with fellow teammates and thus changes ourselves to move forward with refreshed energy.

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A Heritage Institute of Khulna: Jamia Islamia Arabia Darul Uloom Khulna and Talabwali Jame Masjid

Abdul Awal

“**J**amia Islamia Arabia Darul Uloom Khulna” is located in the heart of Khulna city, surrounded by the shade of the Sundarbans, a beautiful natural landscape on the shores of the Bay of Bengal, in the southeast of green Bengal. The land and people of this region are blessed with the feet of the historically recognized spiritual leader ‘Hazrat Khanjahan Ali (RA),’ through whose bridge, the people of this region have achieved a relationship with the great Allah and the Holy Prophet (PBUH). And the final destination is decided, in the golden city of Medina.

Therefore, inspired by the ideals of the Prophet and influenced by the spirit of freedom, the land and people of this region have built many Qaumi Madrasahs in their laps in the outline of Darul Uloom Deoband. Jamia Islamia Arabia Darul Uloom is a unique institution representing all the Qaumi Madrasahs of this region. Its root goes back to the Suffa Masnad of the Prophet’s Mosque.

History of Establishment

Jamia Islamia Arabia Darul Uloom Khulna is one of the best Qaumi institutions in South Bengal, located in the Mussalman Para area, the heart of the Khulna metropolis in the southern part of Bangladesh. The madrasah is known as an ideal center for spiritual peace, love and religious knowledge for the devout Muslims of Khulna and its surrounding areas.

And the name of the mosque adjacent to this madrasah is Talab Wali Jame Masjid. The mosque was used as the third center of the Tabligh Jamaat in Bangladesh since its establishment. Later, the center of dawah and tabligh was shifted to its own land, the Nirala Tabligh Mosque. The Talab Wali Jame Masjid is better known locally as the Darul Uloom Madrasah Masjid.

With the inspiration of Maulana Maqsumullah (Rahmatullah Alaihi) (Peer Sahib



Administrative Building of Jamia Islamia Arabia Darul Uloom Khulna, Bangladesh, Estd: 1967

Talgachiya) and Mujahid-e-A'zam Allama Shamsul Haque Faridpuri (Rahmatullah Alaihi), under the patronage of the then Ameer of the Tablighi Jamaat of the world, Maulana Yusuf Sahib (Rahmatullah Alaihi) and Maulana Abdul Aziz (Rahmatullah Alaihi), and with the overall efforts and funding of the distinguished scholar Alhaj Abdul Hakim Jamaddar Sahib, by the grace of Allah Almighty, Jamia Islamia Arabia Darul Uloom Khulna was established in 1967 according to 1387 AH.

The late Abdul Hakim Jamaddar Sahib served as the Mutawalli of the Madrasah and Mosque from the time of its establishment until his death. After his death in 1984, his worthy son, Alhaj Abdul Jabbar Jamaddar Sahib, took over the responsibilities of the Mutawalli. It is through his tireless efforts that the present mosque has emerged as a legacy of modernization and architectural art.

Muhtamims

The current Muhtamim of the Jamia is Allama Mushtaq Ahmad Sahib (D.A.)

Former Muhtamims

1. Hazrat Maulana Mujibur Rahman Sahib (D.A.)
2. Hazrat Maulana Ishaq Sahib (R.A.)
3. Hazrat Maulana Muhibbur Rahman Sahib (R.A.)
4. Hazrat Maulana Shawkat Ali Sahib (R.A.)
5. Hazrat Maulana Mahmudur Rahman Sahib (R.A.)
6. Hazrat Maulana Rafiqur Rahman Sahib (R.A.)

The beginning of the Darse-e-Hadith

The first Daura-e-Hadith was opened in this Jamia in 1399-1400 AH in 1979-1980.

Current Shaykhul Hadith: Allama Imdadullah Sahib (D.A.)

Previous Shaykhul Hadith

1. Hazrat Maulana Muhibbur Rahman Sahib (R.A.)
2. Hazrat Maulana Mufti Waqqas Sahib (R.A.)
3. Allama Mahmudur Rahman Sahib (R.A.)

Number of Teachers and Staff

There are 50 teachers who are aware of the era and have passed the criteria of talent and experience in all departments of the Jamia and about 12 employees working in other services of the institution.

Number of Students

About one and a half thousand students, both residential and non-residential, are studying in various departments of the Jamia.

Ideology: Higher religious education system based on the spirit of Ahle Sunnat Wal Jama'at.

Goals and Objectives

(a) To achieve the satisfaction of Allah and His Messenger, and to achieve liberation in this world and the hereafter through the preservation, propagation



A part of Jamia's Academic Building



Talabwali Jame Masjid Khulna, Bangladesh

and dissemination of knowledge of religion and the establishment of the Sunnah of the Prophet.

(b) To establish justice and principles and to introduce an Islamic social system at all levels.

Unique architectural style and construction features

The Talabwali Jame Mosque is a unique architectural monument. The mosque is a spiritual and aesthetic center for the devout Muslims of Khulna. The modern construction work of the mosque began in 1998 and was completed in 2007.

In addition, work is constantly underway to modernize and develop the mosque. The mosque is three-storied. Currently, some work on the 3rd floors of the mosque is left.

More than thousand worshipers can pray in the mosque at a time. The main attraction of the mosque is the mosque's luxurious domed main gate and a very beautiful minaret 226 feet high. The minaret is one of the tallest minarets in Bangladesh. The minaret can be seen from far and wide which acts as a landmark. Local worshipers, including students of Jamia Islamia Arabia Darul Uloom, offer five daily prayers in the mosque. Friday prayers, Eid prayers, Khatam Tarawih during Ramadan, and often the funeral prayers of prominent figures of the society are held in this madrasah and in the mosque premises.

Many people come to this madrasah mosque from far and wide to offer Friday



Old building of the Jamia

prayers and enjoy the unique beauty of this mosque and madrasah. Any person will be filled with joy when they see the surroundings and the beautiful scenario inside this mosque. May this mosque and madrasah remain in the hearts of the Muslims of this region until the Day of Judgment, as a symbol of the heritage of Islam and the love of the Muslims who love the religion of this region.

Madrasah and Mosque as Keepers of Tradition

Jamia Islamia Arabia Darul Uloom is not only an institution providing religious education; it is a living keeper of tradition. Every year, a two-day-long annual waz mahfil is organized in this Jamia. Where eminent Ulama-e-Keram of the country take the tasrif. Hundreds of devout Muslims from this region and neighboring districts and hundreds of former students of the Jamia join the mahfil from far and wide. This annual gathering, held to please the Almighty, is considered a keeper and bearer of tradition for the devout Muslims of the region.

The teachers and former students of the madrasah are considered advisors and dignified figures in the local society in matters of religious rituals, marriages, deaths, and resolving social conflicts. This social role has made the madrasah a keeper of local tradition.

On the other hand, the Talabwali Mosque is considered an ideal center for Islamic rituals, sacrifices, religious festivals, worship, and various religious education for the devout Muslims of Khulna. It is also a part of modern architectural heritage. The

high minaret and night illumination of the mosque have added a new dimension to local tourism.

Jamia's Educational Program

The Madrasah teaches at various levels in imitation of the Qawmi education system. There is a system of class-based teaching from the nursery class to the highest level of religious education, Dawra-e-Hadith (Takmil/Masters), Ifta and Tafsir. In the well-organized syllabus, the basic subjects such as the Quran, the Hadith, Fiqh, Tafsir, Usul, Aqeed, Arabic literature, Urdu, Persian, Nahu, Saraf, Balagat along with Bengali literature, English, Mathematics, History, Science, Geography, Philosophy, Islamic Economics and Computers are taught in stages.

Departments of the Jamia

1. Maktab and Noorani Department
2. Hifz Department
3. Kitab Department
4. Ifta Department
5. Tafsir Department
6. Dawah Department
7. Adult Religious Education Department
8. Computer and Technical Department



A part of the Academic Building of Jamia Islamia Arabia Darul Uloom Khulna, Bangladesh

Jamia's Service Projects

1. Fatwa Department

Skilled Mufties from this department provide free fatwas in the light of Islamic law to solve various complex problems related to faith, worship, morality, transactions and mu'asharat etc. at the personal and social levels.

2. Fara'iz Department

This department provides an outline for the fair distribution of the movable and immovable property left by the deceased among the heirs according to the provisions of Sharia.

3. Da'wah and Tabligh

Students go out on the path of Allah in every vacation to invite the common people to the religion, teach them their religion, and build their own practical lives. Regular 24-hour congregations are held every week, and students also travel to remote areas during vacations to invite Islam among non-Muslims.

4. Majlis-e-Dawatul Haq

Through the implementation of the program of Majlis-e-Dawatul Haq established by Hazrat Maulana Shah Abrarul Haq (Rahmatullahi Alaihi Wasallam), the common educated people are motivated towards the religion and the Sunnah is propagated to eradicate bid'ah and superstition. A vigilant eye is always kept against falsehood and on the path of truth.

5. Free education

Orphans, poor and helpless students are provided with free food, clothing, books, medical treatment and accommodation throughout the year.

6. Social service and relief activities

Free animal slaughtering services, distribution of winter clothes among the local helpless poor, and relief funds are formed and relief work is carried out during various disaster situations.

Social impact and community bonds

Madrasahs and mosques play an important role in shaping the moral and social values of the local people. Special funds and projects are kept here for financial and educational assistance to the socially weak, poor and orphans. In addition, the mosque is a local meeting place where social gatherings and public gatherings are also held apart from religious ceremonies; as a result, it further strengthens the social bonds of the area.

This Jamia, run in a very pleasant residential environment under the overall supervision of the brave son of the time - Allama Mushtaq Ahmad Sahib and with the sincere efforts of the experienced faculty, is moving forward at a smooth pace towards achieving its ultimate goal. May the activities of Jamia Islamia Arabia Darul Uloom be more dynamic and successful for the welfare of the country, nation and religion.

Ameen.

The writer is English Teacher of this Madrasa



Pitha Puli of Cumilla: A Culinary Journey

Shruti Dutta

The Pitha celebration is a centuries-old custom deeply ingrained in the history and culture of Cumilla, one of the prominent district of Chattogram, Bangladesh. Bangladesh's regional cuisines are distinct from one another. Pitha pulis from Cumilla are live versions of the history and identity of the area, not merely sweetmeats. Through the sensory experience of cooking and sharing, the yearly Pitha festival—especially during the winter months of (Agrahayan-Magh) - is a genuine custom that unites generations. Pitha creation is transformed into an art form that upholds tradition while fostering family ties by the scent of date jaggery and the meticulous mixing of rice flour and coconut, enhanced by the tender hands of mother's. The culture of Cumilla and its residents is genuinely honored by this amazing representation.

While winter is regarded as the pitha season across Bengal, Cumilla's pitha history has gained a distinctive reputation due to the inventiveness of its people and their



Pitha Puli: represents the Bengalis' age-old tradition



Pua Pitha

ties to rural life. Pitha-making in Cumilla goes far beyond any one event, however Nabanno serves as a lovely backdrop for celebrations of new rice, fresh harvests, and handcrafted treats. It embodies the joy of sharing carefully prepared meals as well as common warmth and welcome.

Cumilla's pitha culture indeed reflects a rich culinary heritage, blending tradition, artistry, and community pride. The Khaja pitha, with its crispy layers and sweet syrup, stands out as a symbol of festive joy and family legacy, especially in Daudkandi. Meanwhile, the Vapa Puli offers a gentler, aromatic experience, showcasing the finesse of local cooks through its hand-crafted, steamed delicacy filled with coconut and date palm jaggery. Both pithas beautifully embody the region's dedication to preserving and celebrating its unique flavors and time-honored techniques.

Chittoi pitha is a common sight in both rural and urban homes in Cumilla throughout the winter. Made with freshly ground rice batter, it is soft and somewhat chewy with a straightforward comfort. These pithas are frequently eaten with milk, molasses, or a



Vapa Pitha



Patishapta Pitha

blend of coconut and toasted sesame, creating combinations that haven't altered in decades. Making pitha at this time of year is a means for many people to respect continuity, tying together celebrations from the present with childhood memories.

The pitha culture of Cumilla is dynamic despite its strong traditional roots. Households have created their own versions over time, experimenting with various grains, adding richer fillings, and creating novel forms. However, the fundamental idea is still the same: pitha is never only food. It is an affectionate gesture that people from different generations and neighborhoods share. Steaming Vapa pitha entices visitors with both nostalgia and hunger at roadside winter kiosks, filling the air with the perfume of rice and jaggery. Office workers, students, and tourists

stop by these vendors for a brief taste of home, reflecting an everyday festivity.



Mera Pitha

The sweet, milky treats that take center stage on the dish are 'Dudh Puli' and 'Patishapta' after that. These pithas resemble dumplings and are filled with a delicious blend of jaggery and shredded coconut. The flavor of these pulis gets stronger when they are submerged and cooked slowly in rich, thickened milk, or kheer (reduced



Nakshi Pitha

or “Golla Pitha” is prepared by steaming balls of kneaded rice dough; although it has a simplistic flavor, the main feature is the pure rice’s freshness. And finally, ‘Kholaja pitha’ or ‘Dim Kholaja’ (a variant of Chittoi pitha) is cooked on an iron or clay griddle. This rough-textured pitha is eaten with various spicy vegetable mashes or savory meat curries, adding a necessary contrast to the abundance of sweet pithas.

Pitha frequently acts as a discreet link in Cumilla’s social life. On winter morning families congregate in the kitchen or backyard to prepare them together, neighbors trade plates, and kids anxiously await the first batch beside the stove. The desire to replicate these seasonal tastes unites individuals even in contemporary families with hectic schedules. The act of grinding rice, forming the dough, packing the coconut filling, steaming, or frying is a communal experience in and of itself. It revives the feeling of taking your time and working with your hands and heart in lieu of hurrying.

However, the love for pitha infuses everyday life even outside of festivals, transforming boring winter days into little festivities. In this way, Cumilla’s pitha culture offers hospitality to individuals from all walks of life who only value the flavor of heritage.

Cumilla’s pitha is exceptional not just for its recipe but also for its emotion. It is a living legacy that is gently passed on without making big announcements. Every household where steam rises from the vapu pot or oil crackles for khaja pitha has

milk). Conversely, Patishapta asserts its position on the bengali pitha plate with its own sophisticated shape. It is made with a thin, soft rice-flour crepe, filled with a coconut-jaggery combination called ‘kheer’, and then folded up for serving. Making Patishaptas is a skill in and of itself; the wrapping needs to be as smooth and delicate as muslin. These two pithas are vital for their taste as well as for distributing warmth and sweetness.

The rural areas of Cumilla are home to a number of various pithas that encapsulate the culture of the area. “Mera Pitha”



Dudh Puli Pitha



Dudh Chittoi Pitha

a backstory: a mother getting ready for visitors, a grandmother instructing her granddaughter, or a family bringing back customs they witnessed as children. Pitha acts as a bridge between the past and the present, keeping folks rooted in their heritage despite changes in their immediate surroundings.

Cumilla's pitha is now found throughout the nation in winter fairs, urban bakeries, and internet food businesses. However, the district's kitchens, where the ingredients may be basic but the dedication behind them is deep, are where the original's popularity is still strongest. This custom continues to flourish via the act of creating, sharing, and tasting, serving as a reminder that cultural treasures frequently endure through people's daily decisions rather than through celebrations.

We cherish more than mere flavor when we enjoy Cumilla's pitha. We honor season, memory, and the subtle brilliance of everyday existence. A platter of warm pitha provides comfort that transcends taste— a sense of home, tradition,



Vapa Puli Pitha

any festival and the pleasures that persist throughout generations—whether it's winter morning or just a chilly December evening. The flavor of pitha prepared by a mother's hand and the aroma of date jaggery in the Magh winter continue to connect Bengalis to their heritage, no matter how contemporary life develops. This pithapuli perpetuates the region's customs by passing on the memories of love and cultural heritage from one generation to the next.

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Tradition and Time A visit to Hungary and Its Heritage

Dr. Syed Anwarul Haque

more than 80 degree programs fully taught in English, including Foundation Programs, Undergraduate Programs, Graduate Programs, and PhD/Doctoral Programs, with a large student body of over 28,000.

I visited Budapest, the capital of Hungary, on the way to Debrecen to attend the 14th International Symposium on Fertilizers. Budapest is an old city. The city is bisected by the Danube River. It's the 19th-century Chain Bridge that connects the hilly Buda district with flat Pest. The bridge spans the River Danube between Buda

I had the opportunity to participate in the CIEC 14th International Symposium of Fertilizers held at the University of Debrecen, Hungary, from 22-25 June 2003. From the CIEC (International Scientific Center of Fertilizers), who were present at the Symposium, included O. Van Cleemput, S. Haneklaus, G. Hofman, E. Schnug, and A. Vermoesen. CIEC was established in 1933.

The University of Debrecen, where the Symposium was held, is located in Debrecen city, the second largest in Hungary. It is the oldest continuously operating institution of higher education in Hungary since its inception in 1538. Debrecen was also the capital of Hungary in 1849.

The University of Debrecen offers



University of Debrecen, Hungary

and Pest, the western and eastern sides of Budapest. The cityscape of Hungary has the architectural landmark of Buda's medieval Castle Hill. The bridge was opened in 1849 after the Hungarian Revolution of 1848. It became the first permanent bridge in the Hungarian capital. At that time, it was one of the largest bridges in the world (202m). In World War II, the bridge was blown up on 18 January 1945 by the retreating German forces during their siege of Budapest, with only the towers remaining. It was rebuilt and opened in 1949 over the Danube River.

Hungary is a relatively small country of 10 million people. It has one of the longest histories of European nations, with a statehood of over 1100 years. In Eastern



The Chain Bridge connecting Buda and Pest

Europe, Hungary was my first visit after the then Soviet Union. Hungary was a member of the Warsaw Pact after the 2nd World War. I had the opportunity to come across some Hungarian students during my higher studies in Moscow from 1968 to 1972. My visit to Hungary in 2003 further improved my knowledge of Hungary. I flew to Budapest, the capital of Hungary, two days before the opening of my International Symposium on Fertilizers in Debrecen. On arrival at Budapest International Airport late at night, I contacted the airport reception how to go to Debrecen. The receptionist at the desk told me the way, which stands like this: I have to go close to the Railway Station by a mini-bus, arranged by them, and stay overnight at a hotel which was booked from the airport counter. The following morning had to pick up a train which would pass through Debrecen, where I had to get down. Then, to arrange a taxi to the University, where the Symposium was arranged.

I followed the instructions of the reception counter at the Budapest airport. Accordingly, I got in a Minibus, where some Europeans were already inside. I followed them. When I came close to the hotel booked for me, it was already midnight, about 2 O'clock. The driver told me to get down from the minibus, since it was passing by the hotel for me. According to the driver of the minibus, I pushed the button of the calling bell so that someone could come and arrange my

stay at the hotel. On repeated use of the calling bell, none did come. I was getting frustrated. However, later, a person came down from upstairs and arranged my room to sleep there on the first floor of the hotel.

In the early morning, I got up and had my breakfast. Then I left for the station from where, I would catch the train for Debrecen.

I had my ticket for Debrecen, but I had to wait for a couple of hours for the train to arrive at the station, of course, at a scheduled time. While on the train, I had to know; where I had to get down for my destination, Debrecen, to go to the University of Debrecen. I could find out from one of the passengers sitting beside me the station where I had to get off the train for Debrecen.

Accordingly, I got off the train as it approached Debrecen station. As I got out of the station, I was looking for a taxi to the University of Debrecen. I got one. Fortunately, the taxi driver knew the Russian language well. Hungary after 2nd World War was under the Warsaw Pact countries, which was with the Soviet Bloc along with other Eastern European countries. I knew the Russian language, as I had my post-graduate studies in Moscow. The taxi driver drove me to the University. I came down and was looking for someone who could help me. I got some students assigned to the job of volunteers, who managed to secure a room in the hostel of the University for my stay. Students were off the campus on holiday. The room was good, well furnished with a kitchen and a washroom. I was happy initially to get settled down at the University dormitory.

There was a canteen open for catering food, and also a supermarket close to the hostel. I had my lunch at the canteen. Then I went round the supermarket, and everything for family requirements was available there. I bought whatever I needed for my evening food and breakfast for the next morning. The following day was the beginning of the Symposium at the University. I presented two oral papers at the Symposium, entitled; (1) Performance of urea and multi-nutrient super granules on rice, and the second one (2) Rice straw and sulfur on the growth and yield of rice in different sessions. The Symposium was scheduled for the first two days, while the next two days were for excursion trips in Budapest. On the second day of the Symposium, we had a lunch hosted by the Symposium Organizers. The following two days, we had a tour of some historical places in Budapest, including the Museum of Fine Arts. The Museum of Fine Arts is located in Heroes' Square, Budapest, Hungary.

Museum of Fine Arts

The Museum of Fine Arts was built between 1900 and 1906. It has a collection comprised of international art (other than Hungarian), including all periods of European art, and comprises more than 100,000 pieces. The collection is made up of six departments: Egyptian, Antique, Old sculpture gallery, Old paintings gallery, Modern collection, and Graphics collection. The institution also celebrated its centenary in the year 2006. It was a wonderful art museum. The visit to the museum was a remarkable one.

Hortobagy National Park

We had been to Hortobagy, an 800 sq km National Park in eastern Hungary, rich with folklore and cultural history. The park was part of the Great Plain designated



The Writer in Hortobagy National Park

as a national park in 1973 (the first in Hungary), and was elected among the World Heritage Sites in 1999. The Hortobagy is Hungary's largest protected area, and the largest semi-natural grassland in Europe. The Hungarian Grey, also known as Hungarian Steppe Cattle, is a group of long-horned grey-white cattle, an ancient breed of domestic beef cattle indigenous to Hungary. They are also considered as a national symbol in Hungary. Nowadays, Hungarian Grey cattle are kept mainly as tourist attractions in Hortobagy National Park, and other Hungarian national parks. These herds serve as gene banks, due to their reported resistance to cattle diseases, which affect more highly bred cattle types. The number of such breeds is gradually increasing in Hungary.

To trace the history, the breed probably arrived with the ninth-century Hungarian immigration from the east to the Hungarian lowlands.

In the early Middle Ages and early modern times, the breed was used as a draught animal, but since from 1861 has been bred for early maturity and its beef quality.

On completion of my stay in Debrecen after the Symposium was over, I left for Budapest on my way to home, Bangladesh. I stayed overnight in the city center in a hotel. In the morning, after breakfast, I came out of the hotel to have a look at the place. I crossed the Chain Bridge and went to the older part of the city. I moved to different shops, including souvenirs and food. I bought some souvenirs. My flight was in the afternoon. I flew to Heathrow from Budapest, followed by another flight to Dhaka with a transit at Heathrow.

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Rangpur: A City between Duty and Magic

Hussain Mamun



DFP stall at the Book Fair in Rangpur

Our three-day journey to Rangpur began with the sharp whistle of the railway station. The primary purpose was official duty at the Rangpur Divisional Book Fair 2025. Two shifts, a team of five- there was a fair share of workload, of course, yet the new city, the unfamiliar environment, and the little pockets of free time kept tugging us toward exploration. Alongside our responsibilities, we wandered through Rangpur's heritage, its history, and the quiet blend of tradition and modernity found in some of its most notable places.

From 18 to 25 November, the Public Library grounds at Rangpur Town Hall blossomed into a festival of books. Since we were assigned to the second slot, we arrived on 22 November- just when the fair was at its busiest. Along with stalls from various government and private organizations, there was a delightful courtyard of traditional winter cakes. Every evening came alive with cultural programmes- regional songs, inter-school debate competitions, and more. Standing amid the closing ceremony on 25 November, we realized just how vibrant and alive the pulse of Rangpur's literary and cultural spirit truly is.

Somewhere in the midst of our duties, we made a simple promise to ourselves- returning from Rangpur without touching its history would be unthinkable. And so began our small journey of discovery.

Our first day of exploration took us to the famed Carmichael College. Founded in 1916, Carmichael College felt like a step back in time the moment we entered the



Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur

grandeur of its ancient red-brick buildings. Spread across nearly 321 acres- its vast architecture, towering old trees, and wide open fields together form a living monument of history.

Some students lounged on the field, chatting away; others stood in the corridors with books in hand. There is a serene calmness in the air of this campus. Wandering through its expansive grounds, we couldn't help but feel that studying in such a place would indeed be a privilege.

After that, we made our way to Begum Rokeya University- a beacon of higher education for the new generation. Established in 2008, the university has swiftly become a vital center of learning for students across northern Bangladesh. The moment we stepped onto the campus, we were welcomed by modern buildings, a well-organized environment, and the busy rhythm of student life.

With 21 departments, research institutes, and more than eight thousand students, the entire campus thrums with academic energy. We walked through the administrative building, the academic blocks, and the open courtyard in front of the library. We also had the chance to visit the very spot where Abu Sayeed was killed during the mass uprising of 2024-now marked by a gate named in his honor. Another gate stands named after Felani, the young girl tragically killed at the border.

But the most unforgettable part of our first day was the visit to Tajhat Zamindar Palace. One glance from the outside tells you this is one of the crown jewels of northern Bengal's architectural heritage. The Italian marble staircase, the blend of red brick and white stone, and the wide green lawn stretching before the palace-everything felt so breathtakingly beautiful, as though we had stepped onto a film set. Inside the museum, we found nearly 300 precious artifacts: Mughal-era manuscripts, terracotta works, ancient weapons, and more. It felt as if the essence of the zamindars' lives still lingered in every pillar of the mansion.



Tajhat Zamindar Palace, Rangpur



Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC), Rangpur

After completing our sightseeing for the day, we returned to fulfill our book fair duties. Once our shift ended, it was time to head back to our lodging- the rest house of the Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC), arranged by our office. The occasional call of jackals at night and the calm, chilly silence made sleep unusually peaceful. With the first light of dawn, our second day's journey began.

Early next morning, we set off toward Vinnya Jagat, the renowned amusement park located 11 kilometers away from Rangpur city. True to its name-“A Different World”- the place offered an entirely new experience. Spread across about 100 acres, this entertainment park is not just for children; it is a sanctuary of delight for visitors of all ages. Lakes, shaded pathways, boating, robot zones, 3D movies, a planetarium, even a replica of the Taj Mahal- there seemed to be no end to what it offered.

Crossing the iron bridge felt like stepping into a world apart. The call of birds, the trembling shadows of trees, the ripples dancing on the lake- everything blended nature with modernity in a harmonious embrace. After a refreshing visit, we once again returned to our book fair duties, and later, back to our room at the BADC rest house.

On the third day, we visited one of Rangpur's greatest prides - Rangpur Karupannya Limited, the remarkable “green factory” that has carried the heritage of Bangladeshi shataranji to the global stage.

The moment we stepped inside, we were astonished. Such a vast building—yet



Handicrafts of Rangpur Karupannya Limited

not a single air conditioner or fan! Because of its unique architectural design, the temperature inside remains naturally cool. The seven-storied structure is entirely wrapped in greenery. Every floor contains four water reservoirs, like swimming pools, along with cascading reflections resembling waterfalls. The entire upper section is covered with glass to maintain a constant coolness. Water used in the dining area is purified and circulated back to the floors, preventing wastage. Surrounded by foliage, hanging vines, a rooftop garden named Nandini Park, and resting spaces for workers- the place feels less like a factory and more like an eco-friendly industrial oasis.

Nearly four and a half thousand people work here- 85% women and 15% men. There is a mini-clinic staffed with two MBBS doctors and three nurses. A general store enables employees to take monthly groceries on credit, and the canteen operates with a 50% subsidy.

From scraps of cloth, jute, and cotton, skilled hands weave the iconic shataranji. The rhythmic motion of weaving, the vibrant threads, the artisans' quiet dedication- together they form a living tapestry of craftsmanship. Over 55 countries import these products, and Karupannya Rangpur Limited has earned a long list of national and international awards.

After the factory visit, we made our way to Proyash Army Amusement Park, located inside the Rangpur Cantonment. Its clean, serene beauty offered a completely different kind of experience. The discipline of the military surroundings, the immaculate paths, and the lush greenery together create a tranquil world the moment you enter.

Beyond the main gate lies a wide road lined with trees on both sides. The park has several delightful attractions- children's rides, lakeside walking paths, a small zoo, photo zones, and shaded resting places.

What we loved most was the sense of safety and harmony with nature. With fewer people and hardly any crowd, it felt like the perfect place to sit quietly and breathe. We spent some peaceful moments beside the lake; the cool breeze, soft sunlight, and the calmness of the military environment made it feel as though we had stepped away from the noise of the city.

It was impossible to stop taking photos- the beauty of each corner tempted us again and again. Our time at Proyash Park felt deeply refreshing- a rare chance to inhale calmness amid our busy schedule.

Right beside it stood Karupannya's Shataranji Village, offering floor mats, rugs, table runners, covers, and bedspreads in various designs. Unable to resist, the three of us ended up buying several pieces. And then, once again, it was time to return to the book fair- and eventually back to the BADC rest house.

Our destination on the fourth day was Chikli Beel- a serene natural haven only a few kilometers away from Rangpur city. The first thing that captured our hearts upon arriving was the vast, still, crystalline expanse of water stretching silently before us.



Chikli Beel

Though so close to the city, Chikli Beel remains astonishingly quiet and untouched. Water spreading far into the distance, rice fields swaying gently, narrow earthen paths, and the endless open sky above- together they create the perfect retreat for anyone longing to return to nature.

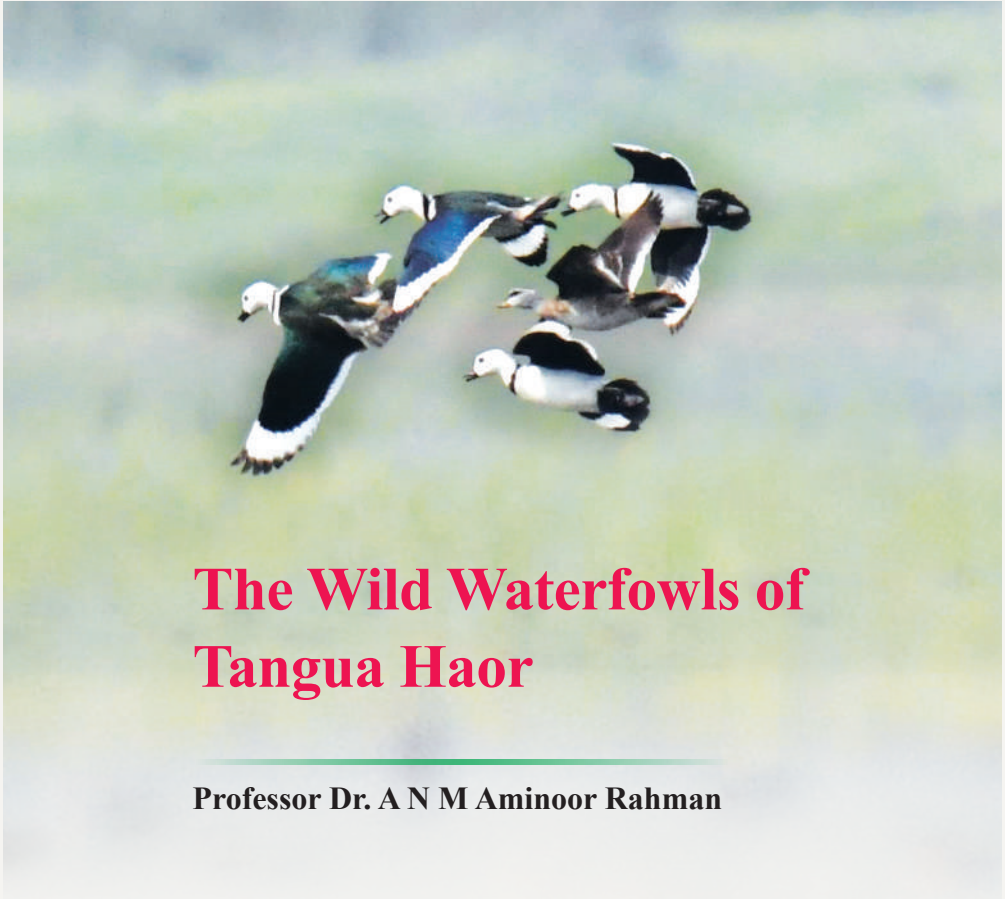
Since we arrived in the morning, the sunlight was still soft. Its golden reflection on the water appeared Chikli Beel even more enchanting. We walked along the banks, took photographs, and spent time simply listening- letting the quiet murmur of nature fill the silence.

What touched us most was the untouched simplicity of the place. It hasn't yet turned into a bustling tourist spot- no crowds, no noise, no commercial clamor. Here, nature exists as it truly is.

The call of birds, the gentle breeze, and the profound stillness- Chikli Beel gifted us a rare sense of tranquility on the final day of our journey. Standing there, it felt as though some inner exhaustion had quietly washed away.

As we made our way back to the bus stand, a quiet realization kept returning to us- Rangpur is more than just a divisional city. It is a complete tapestry woven with history, education, heritage, nature, and craftsmanship. The experience we gathered here was truly wonderful. Though our primary purpose was the book fair duty, the memories from these three days will remain as a peaceful and beautiful pause in the rush of our busy lives.

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The Wild Waterfowls of Tangua Haor

Professor Dr. A N M Aminoor Rahman

A decade ago, our team of six set out to observe the birds of Tangua Haor in Sunamganj, a site recognized both as a UNESCO World Heritage and a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance. The haor, covering nearly 100 square kilometers, lies within the Dharampasha and Tahirpur upazilas. Known as the “Haor of nine-score islets and six-score beels,” Tangua Haor encompasses 46 villages. It supports the lives and livelihoods of nearly sixty thousand people.

In winter, more than 200 species of birds gather in Tangua Haor, among which roughly 92 are waterbirds. As for migratory species, around 98 species visit the haor every year. The haor also hosts over 140 species of freshwater fish. Alongside numerous resident and migratory birds, the haor fills with the calls of about sixty thousand wild ducks and geese of nearly 30 species every winter. On one side of the haor lie green fields and shimmering waters; on the other, the lofty green mountains of India’s Meghalaya state. When you travel across the haor, it feels as though the tall Meghalaya hills have merged seamlessly with the silver waters! What an enchanting sight!

After traveling overnight from Dhaka, we got off the bus at dawn and took a hotel room near the station for two hours to freshen up. After washing up and organizing

our gears, we headed to a nearby restaurant for breakfast. Then waited for the late Bolai bhai, former Ansar Commander of Sunamganj. Our two-day Tangua birding expedition was to be conducted under his guidance.

After a short while, Bolai bhai arrived with seven motorcycles. Each of us boarded a motorcycle with our belongings, and thus began our motorbike journey—about 35 kilometers of broken, uneven roads—toward ‘Sripur Bazaar’ of Tahirpur upazila. After riding 8 to 10 kilometers, we stopped briefly at a rural market for tea. Some couldn’t resist the temptation of freshly fried parathas at a village shop.

Then the motorcycle expedition resumed. After another 8 to 10 kilometers, we reached the bank of the ‘Jadukata River’ near the Indian border. With our motorcycles, we crossed the river on a special type of ferry boat. From there, we ascended ‘Baraker Tila’ in one stretch. At the top, we paused again for about 10 minutes. Near a border pillar, we admired the breathtaking view of the tall Meghalaya mountains across the line, then continued our ride.

Crossing steep hilly slopes, we covered another 4 kilometers and finally stopped in front of Tekerghat’s ‘Niladri Lake’. Once a bustling coal mine, the artificial Niladri Lake—formed from excavated pits—still bears traces of its past: abandoned coal depots, special rail lines, and wagons used for transporting coal. After taking in the scene, we mounted the motorcycles once more.

After a while, we crossed another small river and by the time we reached ‘Sripur



Tangua Haor in Sunamganj with the high hills of Meghalaya in the background

Bazaar', it was almost noon. Bolai Bhai went off to arrange a trawler boat, and in the meantime, we took the opportunity to explore the market. We needed a good, sturdy trawler because, at that time, there were no houseboats, guest houses, or hotels in Tangua. We would have to travel and spend the night on the boat itself. Bolai bhai took quite a while to secure the boat, so we had lunch right there at 'Sripur Bazaar'—haor fish, of course.

Once the trawler was hired, we departed from the 'Sripur Bazaar' ghat. With a loud puttering sound, the boat sped along the 'Baulai River'. We stood on the roof of the boat with cameras in hand. After traveling about 6 kilometers, we entered the 'Ruya Beel' from the eastern side of the river. At the very entrance of the beel, we spotted two flocks of Red-crested Pochards—striking ducks with beautiful red caps. The flock on the left held nearly two hundred, while the one on the right had about one hundred and fifty. We also saw a group of 25–30 Ferruginous Ducks floating on the water. As our trawler approached them, the engine noise prompted the Red-crested Pochards and Ferruginous Ducks to run across the water, airplane-style, before lifting into the blue sky. We managed to capture some brilliant photos.

Since it was already late, we decided to visit two key beels before sunset, observe as many species of ducks as possible, and then anchor the boat near the 'Golabari Ansar Camp' beside the watch tower for the night. So, from 'Ruya Beel' we headed west toward 'Lechuamara Beel' and south toward 'Chotainya Canal'. After spending an hour or two in different parts of these beels and canals, photographing many species of ducks, we wrapped up the first day's expedition. That night, lying on the boat, I browsed through the photos taken earlier in the afternoon. Suddenly, one picture caught my eyes. Although taken from a considerable distance, I could clearly see a Spot-billed Duck flying behind a pair of Red-crested Pochard—a bird I had been searching for in the wild for many years. I had first seen this species in 1996 in the hands of bird sellers at 'Fokirhat Bazaar' in Bagerhat. Seeing one in nature for the first time—even unknowingly—made me eager to spot it again consciously.

After spending the night on the boat, we set out the next morning toward 'Lechuamara Beel'. Just before entering the beel, near the highland edge of 'Rupaboi Beel', we saw a pair of Garganey floating about. After a few quick clicks, we turned the boat around and disembarked on a tiny char covered in Phragmites and tall reeds. Barefoot and dressed in camouflage, I moved forward quietly. From behind the reeds, I observed several ducks drifting across the water. They are clever birds—no matter how well one camouflages, they somehow sense movement and fly off to settle farther away. I saw a flock of 25 to 30 ducks. Hoping for a closer shot, I stepped out of the reeds, and instantly the entire flock took off. Without a moment's hesitation, I kept clicking until they disappeared from my line of sight.

That day, beside the Rupaboi highland, in a grazing flock of Garganey, I spotted two pairs of Mallards, the ancestor of domestic duck. A surge of excitement ran through me. There is a special joy in seeing the wild ancestor and the domesticated form side by side. Farmers around Tangua keep large numbers of domestic ducks, which often wander close and float along with the wild ones. Although I had seen

the Mallard—the handsome wild ancestor of domestic ducks—in Guelph (Canada), Rome (Italy), and Birmingham (UK), I saw it for the first time in Bangladesh on 22 January 2016, right here in Tangua Haor.

Besides these 4 species that day, I also observed Gadwall, Common Pochard, Common Teal, Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Eurasian Wigeon, Tufted Duck, and Garganey in various beels of Tangua. Although during my first visit to Tangua in 2016, I could not find several species and failed to photograph many others properly, the joy I experienced was immense—and it inspired me to continue returning.

In later expeditions in 2018, 2019, 2020, 2022, and 2025, I found Cotton Pygmy Goose, Greylag Goose, African Comb Duck, Baer’s Pochard, Ruddy Shelduck, and Falcated Duck. But to this day, I have not encountered Baikal Teal, Common Shelduck, or a few other species of ducks and geese in Tangua or nearby haors. However, I do see Bar-headed Goose and Common Shelducks every year on the sandy chars of the Padma River in Rajshahi. Even though later expeditions did not yield many new species, I was able to capture much better photographs of several ducks I had seen earlier—and that, to me, is no small reward.



A large flock of ducks in Lechuamara Beel, Tangua Haor

I will now outline some key characteristics and general information about ducks and geese. Belonging to the order *Anseriformes*, ducks and geese are among the most prominent migratory waterfowls in our country. They are highly skilled swimmers and capable of long, sustained flight. Each year, they travel thousands of kilometers to reach this region, arriving from distant areas such as Europe, Africa, Russia, Siberia, Central Asia, Mongolia, China, Tibet, the Himalayan foothills, and even North America. While many species migrate directly to Bangladesh as their wintering grounds, others use the country as a vital stopover to rest and feed before continuing their southward journey.

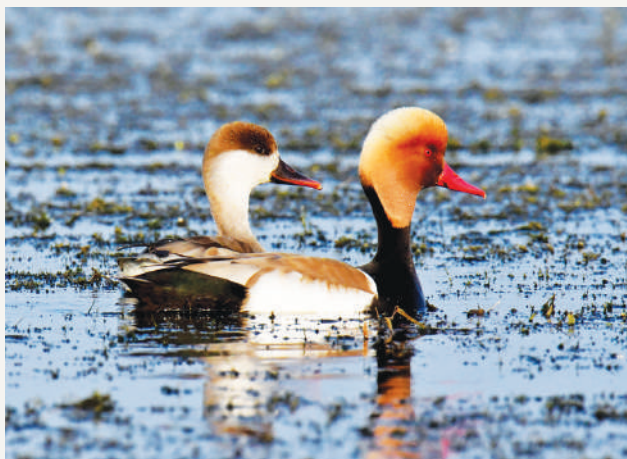
Of the world's 176 species of ducks and geese, roughly 26 migrate to Bangladesh. In addition, the country has four resident species: the Lesser Whistling Duck, Fulvous Whistling Duck, Cotton Pygmy Goose, and Spot-billed Duck. Once, the Bangladesh National Zoo in Mirpur used to be abuzz with the calls of migratory ducks, but since 2011 I have not seen them there. Similarly, apart from the Lesser Whistling Duck, other duck species are no longer common on the Jahangirnagar University campus, although a few rare migrants appeared during the COVID-19 period. However, at the National Botanical Garden in Mirpur, a small number of Lesser Whistling Ducks—and occasionally one or two Cotton Pygmy Goose—can still be seen each year.

Like other migratory birds, ducks and geese reach their wintering grounds in Bangladesh mainly through the East Asian–Australasian Flyway (EAAF). Six of Bangladesh's key wintering sites are already included in the EAAF network—Tangua Haor, Hakaluki Haor, Baikka Beel, Sonadia Island, Nijhum Dwip, and Gangguirar Char. Beyond these, many species are also found across various rivers, haors, baors, beels, jheels, lakes, coastal wetlands, and floodplains. Although it is commonly believed that winter migratory birds arrive in November and leave in March, this is not entirely accurate. Their movement actually begins as early as July. However, most migratory ducks typically arrive between October to November and return to their breeding grounds between February to March; they are seen in the highest numbers during January and February.

Currently, Tangua Haor—the second-largest haor of Bangladesh—hosts the highest diversity and number of ducks and geese. Next comes the country's largest haor, Hakaluki, spanning Sylhet and Moulvibazar districts. As mentioned earlier, enormous Tangua Haor lies at the foothills of Meghalaya and is known as the “haor of nine-score islets and six-score beels” water from at least 30 small and large waterfalls and streams from Meghalaya flows into the haor. Migratory ducks are mainly seen in beels such as Ruya, Baghmara, Lechuamara, Rupaboi, Ververia, Hatirgata, Tekunna, Ballardubi, Ulan, Annar, Kalmar, Mohishergata, and in the highlands (kanda) around these beels, as well as in Chotainya Canal. Many of the same species that winter in Hakaluki Haor also come here.

Large flocks of Bar-headed Goose, Greylag Goose, Eurasian Wigeon, Common Shelduck, Ruddy Shelduck, Northern Shoveler, and Gadwall are commonly seen in the coastal zones and chars of Patuakhali, Bhola (including Damar Char, Dhalchar, and Char Kukri-Mukri), Noakhali (including Hatiya and Nijhum Dwip),

the coastal areas and chars of Chattogram (including Gangguirar Char), and Sonadia Islands in Cox's Bazar. In addition, small flocks of Ruddy Shelduck, Common Shelduck, Bar-headed Goose, Greylag Goose, Eurasian Wigeon, Common Teal, Northern Shoveler, and Gadwall appear in the Padma, Meghna, and Jamuna rivers, their estuaries, and in various rivers, beels, and chars of northern Bangladesh—such as the Padma River chars in Rajshahi and the Charail Beel of Chapainawabganj.

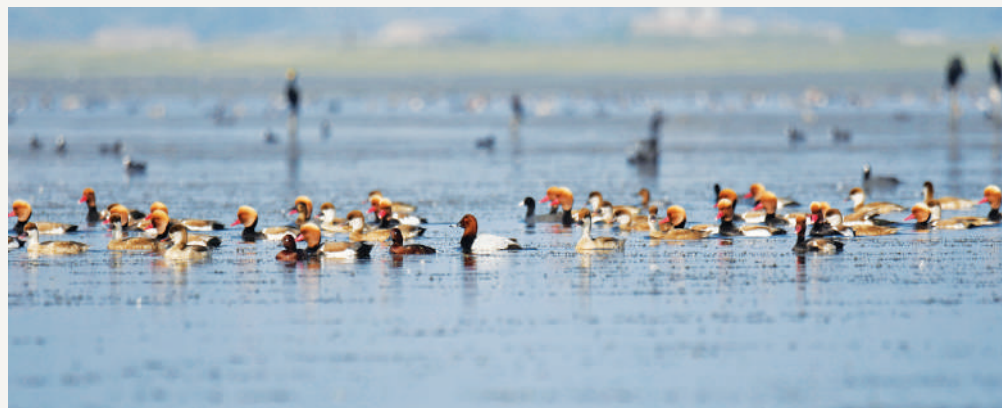


Red-crested Pochard at Ruya Beel: male (right) and female (left)

In addition to the ducks and geese mentioned earlier, on rare occasions or in small flocks, species such as Greater White-fronted Goose, Lesser White-fronted Goose, Common Goldeneye, Smew, Goosander, Mandarin Duck, and Greater Scaup have also been reported from Tangua Haor and several other wetlands across the country.

I will now present brief descriptions of some of the duck species I have observed and photographed in Tangua Haor. In all the species described here, males (drakes) and females (ducks) show distinct differences in appearance.

1. Red-crested Pochard: I first saw this species in the wild in Bangladesh on 22 January 2016 at Ruya Beel of Tangua Haor, at around noon. Both males and females have a prominent tuft on their heads, giving the impression of a small cap; hence, in the greater Sylhet region, they are popularly known by this name. This



Ducks, including Red-crested Pochard, at Ruya Beel, Tangua Haor

is one of the most commonly visible migratory ducks in Bangladesh. Scientific name: *Netta rufina*. Their main range includes Europe, Turkey, China, Mongolia, and several other Asian countries. The Red-crested Pochard is one of Bangladesh's most handsome ducks. Adult body length: 50–65 centimeters (cm); wingspan: 85–90 cm; weight: 830–1,400 grams (g).



A pair of Ferruginous Ducks in Tangua Haor: male on the right, female on the left

2. Ferruginous Duck: The second duck I saw during my first trip to Tangua Haor at Ruya Beel was the Ferruginous Duck. It is a commonly visible migratory



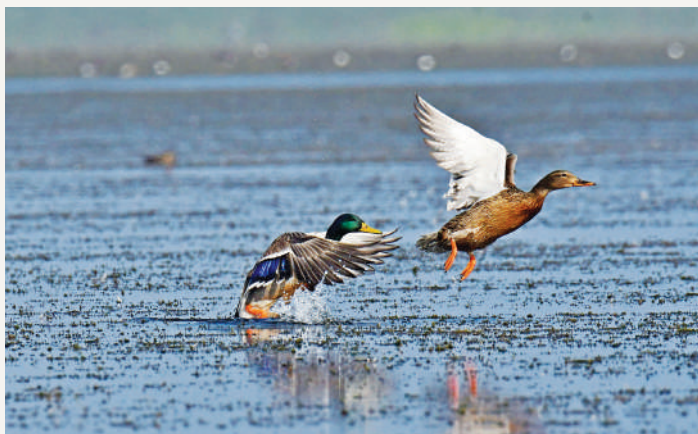
Spot-billed Duck in Chotainya Canal: male (rear) and female (front)

species. Scientific name: *Aythya nyroca*. Its primary range includes Central and Eastern Europe, Southeast Asia, and various countries in Northern Asia. During winter, it migrates to Bangladesh and other parts of Asia and Africa. Adult body length: 38–42 cm; wingspan: 63–67 cm; weight: males 470–730 g, females 464–727 g.

3. Spot-billed Duck: This is a commonly visible resident duck in Bangladesh. Scientific

name: *Anas poecilorhyncha*. It is also found in the Indian subcontinent, Maldives, Myanmar, China, Japan, and Siberia. Adult body length: 58–65 cm; wingspan: 83–95 cm; weight: males 1,200–1,500 g, females 790–1,350 g.

04. Mallard: This handsome species is a rare migratory waterfowl of Bangladesh. As



A pair of Mallards taking off from the water in Lechuamara Beel: female in front, male behind

mentioned earlier, it is the wild ancestor of domestic ducks that survive in the wild. Scientific name: *Anas platyrhynchos*. Although originally resident in various Northern Hemisphere countries, it is also observed in South America and Asia. It migrates to Bangladesh in winter. Body length: 50–65 cm; wingspan: 81–95 cm; weight: males 1,200–1,500 g, females 790–1,350 g.

5. Gadwall: Once, I observed many Gadwalls in the lake at Bangladesh National Zoo in Mirpur along with other duck species, but their numbers have gradually declined. The last time I saw them there was in 2011, with only 18 birds. A commonly visible migratory species, its scientific name is *Mareca strepera*. Its main range includes North America, Europe, Central Asia, and Siberia. Adult body length: 46–56 cm; wingspan: 78–90 cm; weight: males 990 g, females 850 g.



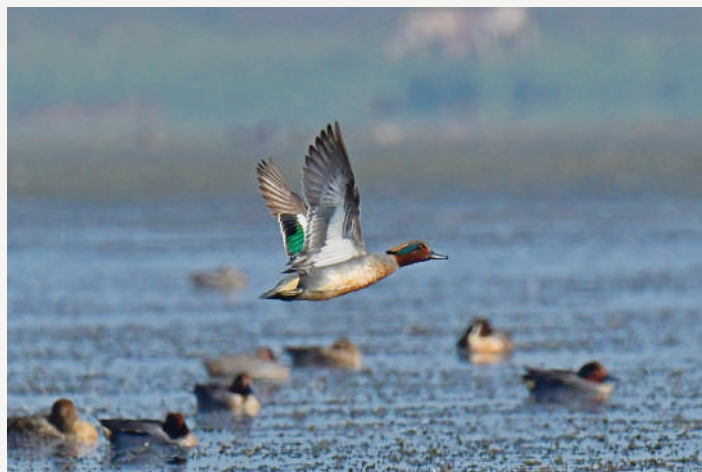
A pair of Gadwalls floating in the beel water



A male Common Pochard in Ruya Beel

6. Common Pochard: I first saw this migratory duck in Canada's Ontario at Courtwright Waterfowl Park, then in Birmingham, UK, on 26 February 2017, and most recently on 8 February 2025 at Tangua Haor. The scientific name of this rare migratory species is *Aythya ferina*. Native to Europe and Northern Asia, it migrates to Bangladesh and other regions of the Indian subcontinent, East and South Asia, and Africa in winter. Adult body length: 42–49 cm; wingspan: 72–82 cm; weight: males 585–1,240 g, females 467–1,090 g.

7. Common Teal: Although a commonly visible migrant, I had never seen it in Bangladesh until 23 December 2015, when I first spotted it in a small pond near a fish enclosure at Baikka Beel in Srimongol, basking in the morning sun. I photographed it in Tangua in January 2016. One of the world's smallest ducks, its scientific name is *Anas crecca*. Resident primarily in the Northern Hemisphere, it visits rivers and haors in Bangladesh during winter. Adult body length: 34–38 cm; wingspan: 53–59 cm; weight: males 250–450 g, females 200–400 g.



A male Common Teal flying over Lechuamara Beel

8. Northern Pintail: First seen in December 1996 in Satshoya village, Fakirhat, Bagerhat, the elegant birds with pin-like tails immediately caught my attention. I could not follow them for several years due to being abroad. I finally saw large flocks in the winter of 2014 at Baikka Beel



A pair of Northern Pintails in Baghmara Beel: female in front, male behind

in Srimangal and Chatlar Beel in Hakaluki Haor. In Tangua, I observed the species in 2016. This is a commonly visible migratory species. Scientific name: *Anas acuta*. Originally from Alaska, Canada, the USA, Siberia, and Mongolia, they are winter visitors to country's rivers, haors, and beels. Adult body length: males 59–76 cm, females 52–64 cm; wingspan: 80–95 cm; weight: males 450–1,360 g, females 454–1,135 g.

9. Northern Shoveler: Recognizable by their spatula-shaped bills, I first saw these ducks in their native range in Canada in 1998. Since then, I observed them several times in Baikka Beel, Tangua Haor, Padma River chars in Rajshahi, and



A pair of Northern Shovelers flying over Ruya Beel: male (rear), female (front)



A male Eurasian Wigeon duck flying over Tikunna Beel

Sonadia Islands in Cox's Bazar. This commonly visible migratory species has the scientific name *Spatula clypeata*. It breeds in Europe, Siberia, Central Asia, and North America and migrates to Bangladesh, South Europe, and Africa. Adult body length: 44–52 cm; wingspan: 73–82 cm; weight: males 470–1,000 g, females 240–585 g.

10. Eurasian Wigeon: I have seen this species for the first time in Nijhum Dwip and Damar Char on 7 January 2016, and two weeks later in Tangua Haor. Scientific name: *Mareca penelope*. Resident in cold regions such as Iceland, the British Isles, Northern Europe, Southern Russia, and Japan, it migrates to Bangladesh in winter. Adult body length: 42–52 cm; wingspan: 71–80 cm; weight: 700–1,073 g.

11. Tufted Duck: I first observed these crested ducks in 1998 at Courtwright Waterfowl Park in Canada, and later in Tangua in January 2016. It is a commonly visible migratory waterfowl of Bangladesh. Its scientific name is *Aythya fuligula*. Native to the UK and northern Eurasia, it migrates to Western and Southern Europe and South Asia, including Bangladesh, in winter. Adult body length: males 42–48 cm, females 39–44 cm; wingspan: 65–72 cm; weight: males 753–1,026 g, females 630–907 g.



Tufted Ducks flying over Hatirgata Beel



A male Garganey in Ververi Beel

12. Garganey: A widely visible migratory dabbling duck of Bangladesh. I first saw this species on 14 January 2014 in Baikka Beel, Srimongol, and in Tangua Haor two years later. Its scientific name is *Spatula querquedula*. The bird is native to Europe and Siberia's tundra regions. Medium-sized; body length: 37–41 cm; wingspan: 58–69 cm; weight: males 260–520 g, females 240–585 g.

13. Cotton Pygmy Goose: The smallest wild duck in Bangladesh, first seen in late December 1996 at Satshoya, Fakirhat, Bagerhat. Scientific name: *Nettapus coromandelianus*. Apart from Bangladesh, naturally found in the Indian subcontinent, China, Indonesia, the Philippines, parts of West and North Asia, and northern Australia. Adult body length: 32–34 cm; wingspan: 57 cm; weight: males 250–300 g, females 180–280 g.

14. African Comb Duck: I first saw a preserved specimen at the Natural History Museum, London, on 28 February 2017, then in February 2020 in India's Jaipur Water Palace (Jol Mahal), Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary, and along the Yamuna River behind the Taj Mahal, Agra. Finally, I saw a female in Tangua Haor on 9 March of the same year. This rare and near-threatened migratory species has the scientific name *Sarkidiornis melanotos*. Its range extends from Sub-Saharan Africa, Madagascar, South and Central America, the Indian subcontinent, to Indochina. Adult body length: 64–79 cm; wingspan: 116–145 cm; weight: males 1.30–2.61 kg, females 1.23–2.33 kg.

Although millions of migratory ducks and geese once visited Bangladesh in winter, their numbers have gradually declined due to habitat and food source destruction, competition for food, overexploitation of wetland resources, wetland encroachment, fish enclosures in sanctuaries, large-scale fishing, poaching, conversion of wetlands to agriculture and settlements, insecurity, and climate change. Therefore, to protect their existence—and also our own—we must preserve these ducks and geese, along with their habitats and food sources. If they survive, nature will survive, and finally we will survive.

The writer and photographer of this article is a Wildlife Biologist, Veterinarian and Professor of Gazipur Agricultural University, Gazipur-1706

Focus from Dailies...

Major National Events

October-December

13 October, 2025

Yunus places six proposals at WFF to end hunger

Chief Adviser Prof Dr Muhammad Yunus on October 13 placed six proposals for a complete transformation of the global food and economic systems to end hunger.

"Hunger is not caused by scarcity. It is caused by the failure of the economic framework that we have designed . . . we must change the system," he said while presenting the keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the annual World Food Forum at the Food and Agriculture Organisation Headquarters in Rome, Italy.

At this time Prof Yunus placed his six proposals, which are: ending wars and ensuring food access in conflict zones, fulfilling SDG finance commitments and supporting climate resilience, establishing regional food banks to stabilise supply chains, empowering local entrepreneurs through finance and partnerships, ending export bans and reforming trade rules to support food security, and expanding access to technology and innovation, especially for rural youth in the Global South. *Source: The Daily Star*



Chief Adviser Professor Dr Muhammad Yunus delivered his speech at WFF in Rome on October 13

14 October, 2025

Polls in Feb, to be a landmark event

Bangladesh's forthcoming elections will be a "real and landmark" event-the first genuinely fair polls in 16 years, Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus reaffirms.

He made the remarks during a high-level meeting with Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in Rome when the two sides also talked avenues of expanding trade and investment, said a spokesperson for the CA Office on October 14.

The meeting was held on the sidelines of the World Food Forum (WFF), organised by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) where both leaders delivered keynote addresses.

During the bilateral talks at the FAO Headquarters, Chief Adviser Yunus formally invited the Brazilian President to visit Bangladesh at a mutually convenient time. President Lula accepted the invitation, hoping to make the trip by February.

He hopes the tour would help deepen bilateral relations and explore new avenues of cooperation between the two nations. *Source: The Financial Express*

17 October, 2025

July Charter signed for 'new Bangladesh'

Head of interim government Prof Muhammad Yunus and major political parties' leaders on October 17 signed on the July National Charter 2025 stipulating institutional reforms for rebuilding Bangladesh in spirit of the uprising that toppled the past 'fascist' regime.



Chief Adviser Dr. Mohammad Yunus holds up the July Charter, flanked by leaders of different political parties, after the signing of the Charter at a grand event on the Parliament premises in the city on October 17

"We're now newborns-it marks the birth of a new Bangladesh," the Chief Adviser of the post-uprising government said at the open-air signing ceremony, with the signatory senior leaders on the podium and select guests in front on the parliament premises in Dhaka.

The ceremonial adoption of the new national document took place at 5:00pm at the National Parliament's south plaza, attended by members of the interim government's Advisory Council, diplomats from several countries, and representatives of the National Consensus Commission.

Professor Ali Riaz, vice-chair of the Commission, and other members also inked the document alongside political leaders. *Source: The Financial Express*

21 October, 2025

ECNEC approves 13 projects work Tk 19.88b

The ECNEC, the highest government authority for approving development projects and policies, endorsed 13 projects including seven revised ones at its meeting with the Chief Advisor Professor Muhammad Yunus in the chair.

Taking the plea of Considering the Forest, Environment and Climate Change Advisor into consideration, it did not approve the "Haor Infrastructure and Livelihood Improvement Project", involving an estimated cost of Tk12.69 billion.

Source: The Financial Express

22 October, 2025

Germany our top trade partner in Europe: Yunus

Describing Germany as Bangladesh's biggest trade partner in Europe, Chief Adviser Professor Dr Muhammad Yunus on October 22 expressed optimism that newly



Newly appointed German Ambassador to Bangladesh Dr. Rudiger Lotz met Chief Adviser Dr Mohammad Yunus at the State Guest House Jamuna on October 22

appointed German Ambassador to Bangladesh Dr Rüdiger Lotz would work to boost trade and investment between the two countries.

The German ambassador paid a courtesy call on the Chief Adviser at the State Guest House Jamuna and discussed issues of mutual interest.

During the meeting, the ambassador

expressed support for the interim government and enquired about preparations for the national election in February 2026.

He said it was encouraging to see people in Bangladesh becoming more engaged in the democratic process, according to the Chief Adviser's press wing.

They also discussed the Rohingya situation and Germany's continued support in this area. *Source: The Daily Star*

10 November, 2025

ECNEC approves 12 development projects

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) on November 10 approved 12 development projects involving an overall expenditure of Tk 7,150.21 crore.

The entire amount will be financed from the government's own resources.

The approval came at the 5th ECNEC meeting of the current financial year at the NEC conference room on planning commission premises with Chief Adviser and ECNEC Chair Professor Dr Muhammad Yunus in chair.

Among the approved projects, eight are new, two are revised ones, while two projects received time extensions without cost escalation, said a planning ministry press release. *Source: The New Age*

13 November, 2025

CA distributes awards among 'Notun Kuri' 2025 winners

Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus on November 13 distributed awards among the top performers of Bangladesh Television's (BTV) 'Notun Kuri' competition 2025.



Chief Adviser Professor Dr Muhammad Yunus took part in a photo session with the winners of Bangladesh Television's (BTV) 'Notun Kuri' competition 2025 during its prize giving ceremony at the CA's Office in the capital on November 13

Two top performers under ‘Ka’ and ‘Kha’ groups received a crest and a cheque for Tk 300,000 each from the CA at a function at the Shapla Hall of the Chief Adviser’s Office (CAO) in the city.

The champions are - Preyosi Chakrabarty (Ka) of Tangail, and Shuvo Mita Talukder (Kha) of Sunamganj .

The state-run BTV arranged the children’s talent hunt programme ‘Notun Kuri’ 2025, where thousands of participants from across the country contested in 12 categories, including dance, music, recitation, comedy, storytelling, and acting.

Information and Broadcasting Adviser Md Mahfuj Alam spoke at the function as the special guest, with Information and Broadcasting Secretary Mahbuba Farjana in the chair. *Source: The Financial Express*

16 November, 2025

CA Prof Yunus unveils trophy of Women’s Kabaddi World Cup

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus on November 16 unveiled the official trophy of the 2nd Women’s Kabaddi World Cup 2025 and highlighted the significance of hosting the World Cup in Dhaka.



Chief Adviser Professor Dr Muhammad Yunus unveiled the official trophy of the 2nd Women’s Kabaddi World Cup 2025 at the state guest house Jamuna on November 16

He reaffirmed the government’s commitment to ensuring an inclusive, inspiring and world-class tournament and welcomed all visiting teams and appreciated the efforts of organisers, athletes and partners working to make the championship a success.

The Chief Adviser unveiled the trophy at the state guest house Jamuna in the city, in the presence of representatives from all participating nations. *Source: The Financial Express*

17 November, 2025

Ousted PM Hasina sentenced to death

Bangladesh’s ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was sentenced to death on

November 17 for the “crimes against humanity”, committed during the July-August mass uprising last year that toppled her government.

In its verdict telecast live, the International Crimes Tribunal-1 (ICT-1) in Dhaka also handed down capital punishment to former Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal but commuted the penalty to then inspector-general of police (IGP) Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun for “full disclosure” of the offences as a penitent approver.

The court also ordered confiscating all the property of Hasina and Kamal in favour of the state, and to give adequate compensation to the martyr families and July survivors in consideration of their losses.

A three-member bench of the tribunal, headed by its Chairman Justice Md Golam Mortuza Mozumder, delivered the verdict in the prime case of committing crimes against humanity during the uprising. *Source: The Financial Express*



Dutch Vice-Minister for International Cooperation Pascale Grotenhuis met Chief Adviser Dr Mohammad Yunus at the State Guest House Jamuna in Dhaka on November 17

17 November, 2025

Accord soon to increase Dutch investment in Bangladesh

Chief Adviser Prof. Dr Muhammad Yunus on November 17 reaffirmed his government’s commitment to holding next polls early February as a Dutch Vice Minister met him and discussed current situation and investment plans.

The visiting Dutch Vice-Minister for International Cooperation, Pascale Grotenhuis, commended Bangladesh’s newly enacted labour laws and said, they would help attract more Dutch and European investment into the country. *Source: The Financial Express*

18 November, 2025

Morsalin strike ends Bangladesh’s 22-year wait for win over India

Bangladesh have edged India 1-0 in a tense AFC Asian Cup qualifier to claim a



A young fan of the Bangladesh Football Team, Aafnan, expressing his reaction after Bangladesh clinched a win over India on November 18

victory over their neighbours after 22 years, thanks to a deft first-half strike by Sheikh Morsalin.

In the 12th minute, midfielder Rakib whipped the ball into the box, where Morsalin burst through and toe-poked it past Indian goalkeeper Gurpreet Singh Sandhu to put Bangladesh ahead at the National Stadium on 18 November.

The goal sparked wild celebrations inside the stadium.

Lallianzuala took a shot before the open net but Hamza cleared the attempt saving his team from a certain goal at a cost of corner.

Hamza almost doubled Bangladesh's lead just before half-time, unleashing a left-footed volley in the 43rd minute that sailed harmlessly over the bar.

The remainder of the match saw Bangladesh fiercely defend their lead against a desperate Indian attack, holding on to claim the narrow win in the second leg of the third round of Asian Cup qualifiers.

Bangladesh's last victory over India came in the 2003 SAFF Championship, when goals from Rokonuzzaman Kanchan and Matiur Rahman Munna sealed a 2–1 victory.

The win also lifted Bangladesh from the frustration of a winless qualifying campaign.

Captain Jamal Bhuiya, though sidelined from playing, witnessed his team break through after a long spell of disappointment and savoured the moment of triumph.

Source: www.bssnews.net and The Financial Express



Chief Adviser Professor Dr Muhammad Yunus, after placing a wreath at the altar of Shikha Anirban (Flame Eternal), stood in solemn silence in Dhaka Cantonment on November 21 to pay homage to the members of the Armed Forces who were martyred in the Liberation War

21 November, 2025

CA pays homage to Armed Forces martyrs at Shikha Anirban

Chief Adviser Professor Dr Muhammad Yunus on November 21 paid glowing tributes to the Armed Forces martyrs, who made supreme sacrifices during the War of Liberation in 1971, on the occasion of the Armed Forces Day.

The Chief Adviser paid the homage by placing a wreath at the altar of Shikha Anirban (flame eternal) at Dhaka Cantonment in the morning.

After placing the wreath, he stood in solemn silence for a while as a mark of profound respect to the memories of the martyrs.

A smartly turned out contingent of the Army, Navy and Air Force presented a salute at that time while the bugle played the last post.

Prof Yunus signed the visitors' book kept there.

Bangladesh observes November 21 as Armed Forces Day every year. *Source: The Financial Express*

22 November, 2025

BD-Bhutan accords on two major fronts signed during Bhutan's PM Tobgay tour

Bangladesh and Bhutan on November 22 took fresh steps to deepen bilateral cooperation as the two countries signed accords on health collaboration and cross-border digital connectivity meant to integrate the eastern Himalayas and the Bay of Bengal.

The two leaders discussed a wide range of issues covering the entire spectrum of



Bhutanese Prime Minister Dasho Tshering Tobgay met Chief Adviser Professor Dr Muhammad Yunus at the latter's office in Tejgaon, Dhaka, on November 22

Bangladesh-Bhutan relations, including trade, energy, education, tourism, internet cooperation, transport, healthcare, environment, water resources, investment, and aviation.

Bangladesh and Bhutan previously concluded a preferential trade agreement in 2020. *Source: The Financial Express*

28 November, 2025

Chinese investors can help turn BD into hub of production, says Chief Adviser

Chief Adviser Prof Dr Muhammad Yunus has welcomed China's interest in Bangladesh's manufacturing sectors, noting that investors from the world's second-largest economy could help transform Bangladesh into a manufacturing hub producing goods for export to developed nations, including China.



Vice-President of the Export-Import Bank of China Yang Dongning called on Chief Adviser Prof Dr Muhammad Yunus at the state guest house Jamuna in the city on November 28

We can go full speed in these areas, Prof Yunus said during a meeting with Vice-President of the Export-Import Bank of China Yang Dongning on November 28, identifying pharmaceuticals and healthcare as additional sectors with strong potential for Chinese investment. *Source: The Financial Express*

1 December, 2025

Govt approves Tk 21.06b projects for 2,364 flats for July victims, families

The government on December 1 approved two separate projects worth Tk 21.06 billion to construct 2,364 residential flats for injured protesters who can no longer work and for the families of those killed during last year's anti-discrimination student movement.



Chief Adviser Prof Dr Muhammad Yunus chaired the ECNEC meeting at the NEC Conference Room in Dhaka on December 1

“The housing projects are among 17 development projects approved at an ECNEC meeting held at the NEC auditorium, chaired by Chief Adviser Dr Muhammad Yunus,” Planning Adviser Dr Wahiduddin Mahmud told reporters at a briefing after the meeting.

The approved projects -- including revisions to five ongoing schemes -- will require fresh investment of Tk 153.84 billion. Of this, Tk 94.52 billion will come from the government, said the planning adviser.

“Another Tk 56.10 billion is expected from external lenders and development partners as loans and grants, while the remaining Tk 3.79 billion will be financed by the implementing agencies,” he added. *Source: The Financial Express*

11 December, 2025

Election, referendum on 12 February 2026

Bangladesh gets in the process of democratic transition from the post-uprising interregnum with the rollout of poll schedule December 11 for general election



Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) AMM Nasir Uddin announced the National Election schedule in a recorded speech, aired by state-run Bangladesh Television and Bangladesh Betar at 6:00 pm, on December 11

and reform referendum to be held on February 12 next.

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) AMM Nasir Uddin announced the schedule in a recorded speech aired by state-run Bangladesh Television and Bangladesh Betar at 6:00pm, following prior consultation with and consent by the head of interim government and the head of state.

“On February 12 of 2026, Thursday, the 13th general elections across 300 constituencies, and

concurrently a referendum on the Implementation Order of the July National Charter on Constitutional Reform 2025 will be held,” the CEC said, dispelling wild speculations. *Source: The Financial Express*

14 December, 2025

Nation pays homage to martyred intellectuals

Bangladesh on December 14 observed the Martyred Intellectuals’ Day paying rich tributes to a galaxy of intellectuals systematically killed by Pakistani occupation forces and their local collaborators just before the end of the Liberation War.



Chief Adviser Professor Dr Muhammad Yunus placed a wreath at the Martyred Intellectuals Memorial in Mirpur, Dhaka, on December 14, marking Martyred Intellectuals Day

Marking the day, President Mohammed Shahabuddin paid homage to the nation's intellectuals at the Martyred Intellectuals Memorial in Mirpur at 7am.

Later, he stood there silently for a while.

Followed by the President, Chief Adviser Professor Dr Muhammad Yunus also paid tribute to the nation's finest intellectuals and observed a silence for a while there.

Family members of the martyred, freedom fighters and people from all walks of life paid tributes to the martyred intellectuals by placing wreaths at the memorial in Mirpur and Rayerbazar Killing Ground in Mohammadpur.

The government, socio-cultural, political organisations and different public universities observed the day with elaborate programmes. *Source: The Financial Express*

16 December, 2025

Nation celebrates Victory Day in post-uprising ambiance

Clad in red-green attire, symbolizing their national ensign, umpteen people paid tributes to war martyrs at the national memorial and joined commemorative functions on December 16 as Bangladesh celebrated the 55th Victory Day in new spirits.



The National Memorial in Savar came alive as people from all walks of life gather to pay their heartfelt tribute to the Liberation War martyrs on December 16, marking the Victory Day

On this glorious day of 16th December in 1971, Bangladesh emerged as an independent nation after the then Pakistani occupation forces surrendered in Dhaka, bringing to an end a bloody nine-month war and commencing the birth of Bangladesh as an independent country.

The government has drawn up extensive programmes to celebrate the glorious occasion which were heralded with a 31-gun salute at sunrise in Dhaka.

People from all walks of life thronged the National Martyrs' Memorial at Savar to pay homage to the valiant sons of the nation, the heroic freedom fighters and the martyrs.

In a nationwide address marking the Victory Day on December 16 Professor Dr Muhammad Yunus painted a picture of a country standing at a decisive crossroads, balancing the legacy of the 1971 liberation with the unfinished struggle to dismantle authoritarian rule.

Chief Adviser, Prof Yunus, said, Through immense sacrifice and the bloodshed of countless martyrs, we secured our independent national identity and our red-and-green flag. *Source: The Financial Express*

17 December, 2025

CA for broker- and fraudulence-free overseas migration

Citing that Bangladesh is facing a deep and complex crisis in overseas employment due to entrenched broker syndicates, document forgery and systemic failures,



Chief Adviser Prof Dr Mohammad Yunus spoke at a function at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the capital on December 17 marking the International Migrants Day and National Expatriates Day 2025

Chief Adviser Professor Dr Muhammad Yunus On December 17 put emphasis on building a broker and fraudulence free system in sending workers abroad.

Overseas migration has become dangerously entwined with brokers and fraud. Until we are free from this, there is no reason to believe that meaningful progress has been made, he said.

Prof Yunus made the remarks while addressing a function at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium marking the International Migrants Day and National Expatriates Day-2025. The day is observed on December 18 every year. *Source: The Financial Express*

24 December, 2025

CA stresses self-reliance, quality education in budget formulation

Chief Adviser Professor Dr Muhammad Yunus on December 24 put strong emphasis



Chief Adviser Professor Dr Muhammad Yunus presided over the advisory council meeting at his Tejgaon office, Dhaka on December 24

on formulating budget in a self-reliance manner focusing quality education, rural development, youth-women empowerment, local production and health.

The Chief Adviser laid the emphasis while reviewing the revised budget, which will come into effect from February 1, during the weekly meeting of the Council of Advisers.

Prof Yunus chaired the meeting held at his office in the city's Tejgaon area.

“Providing guidance on the revised budget, the Chief Adviser stressed the need to move away from unnecessary foreign borrowing and to undertake more projects through domestic financing to make Bangladesh more self-reliant,” said Chief Adviser’s. *Source: The Financial Express*



Chief Adviser Professor Dr Mohammad Yunus addressed the nation at the demise of the Ex-Premier Begum Khaleda Zia on December 30

30 December, 2025

Nation bereft of a great guardian when most needed: CA

The head of interim government, Prof Dr Muhammad Yunus, expressed profound sorrow at the death of Ex-Prime Minister and BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia on December 30. Begum Zia, a three-time former Prime Minister and symbol of democratic movement, stood beside the nation when her guardianship was most needed, the CA Added.

He urges everyone to stay “vigilant so no one can attempt instability or sabotage” during this period of mourning over the death of the “great guardian”.

A 3-day state mourning has been declared by the government on the demise of the Ex-Premier. The government declared public holiday on December 31.

“Her funerals and burial will all be done in full state honours,” the CA’s press secretary said after a government meeting.

In a condolence message, the Chief Adviser of the post-uprising government said on the day that with the passing of Begum Khaleda Zia, the nation has lost a great guardian. “I am deeply saddened and grief-stricken by her death.”

Professor Dr Muhammad Yunus stated that Begum Khaleda Zia was not merely the leader of a political party--she represented an important chapter in the history of Bangladesh.

Report Compilation: Mazharul Hoque, Mamun Hossain



Winter arrives : date juice collection during winter



Department of Films and Publications

Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
Bangladesh