



# BANGLADESH HERITAGE

Special Edition



## In this Issue

- Messages from the Canadian Government
- The Heritage of Bangladesh
- Pohela Boishakh (Bengali New Year)
- International Mother Language Day
- Current Bangladesh
- Activities in our Community
- Contacts in Edmonton
- And more...



## Edmonton Bichitra

Magazine of the  
Bengali Community

ISSUED BY THE BANGLADESH HERITAGE  
AND ETHNIC SOCIETY OF ALBERTA

# MAHMOODUR RAHMAN

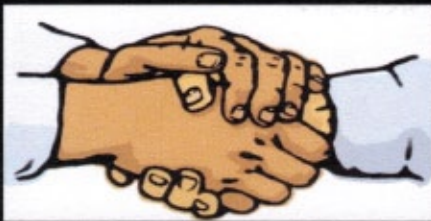
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## Imprint

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### With Gratitude

Syfur Hasan

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# A Greeting *from the Bangladeshi* Community

*by Delwar Jahid,  
President of BHESA*



*Delwar Jahid*

On behalf of the Bangladeshi Community I wish to express my warm welcome to the Heritage Festival, and thank you

for your interest in our community.

"Bangladesh Heritage", a special edition of "Edmonton Bichitra", our magazine for the Bengali community, is dedicated to showcase our inherited traditions, arts, literature, architecture, dance, drama, music, objects, and monuments, which define the rich culture of Bangladesh. Further we seek to explore contemporary activities in a diverse and meaningful mosaic of topics.

Heritage includes preserving, displaying, excavating, and/or restoring the collection of old things, both tangible and intangible, in the sense that ideas and memories - of language, social movements, songs, dances, and recipes, and many other elements of identification - are as important as historical buildings and archaeological sites.



The preservation of our heritage creates an opportunity for people to learn about how Bangladesh people live, what they care about, and what they believe in.

The cultural traditions of our people are deeply rooted in the heritage of our country and reflect a unique blend of variations and diversity which traces back to the rich history connected to the geographic location.

The magazine in your hands shall assist you in discovering our Bangladesh heritage in form of interesting and informative feature articles about our holidays based on festivals and cultural traditions, sports and games in Bangladesh, entertaining success stories in our country and abroad, history, the celebration of places, people, and in depth coverage of current heritage issues, anything that matters to the people of Bangladesh. This edition also introduces and highlights the local people, who help to keep this heritage alive.

It is with dedication that we document our Bangladesh heritage in this magazine, article by article. Preserving heritage is a contemporary activity with far-reaching effects on the community. It can be e.g. the platform for socio-political recognition, a medium for inter-

cultural dialogue, a means of ethical reflection, and the potential basis for economic development.

As the president of the Bangladesh Heritage and Ethnic Society of Alberta (BHESA), I am proud and excited of our community being part as one of the contributors to the 40th annual Heritage Festival here in Edmonton.

I want to express my deepest thanks to everyone in the community for his or her contribution to this magazine, and the organizers of the Heritage Festival to give us such a wonderful platform to showcase our, and to experience so many other cultures and local communities. Further I thank the community, and especially the senior members, for their support and valuable suggestions, and for the stories, art and work you shared.

I hope our visitors and readers will enjoy our approach to present Bangladesh, its and the peoples' heritage, and we all will make many new, exciting experiences and will meet new and interesting people along the way.

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মাছের নির্ভরযোগ্য প্রতিষ্ঠান।



# BANGLA BAZAAR

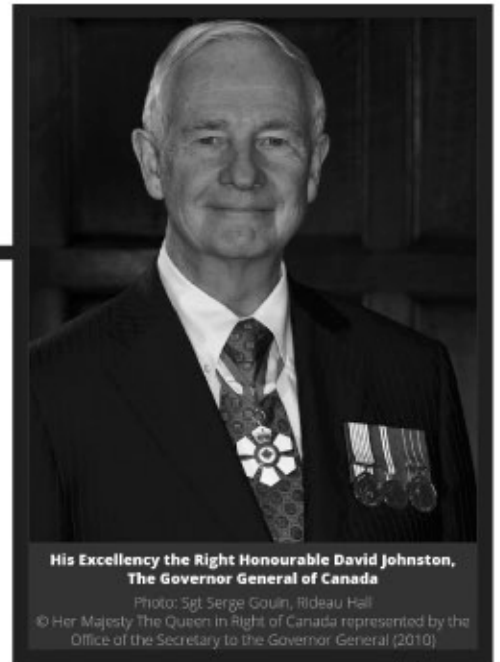
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**His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston,  
The Governor General of Canada**

Photo: Sgt. Serge Gouin, Rideau Hall  
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Office of the Secretary to the Governor General (2010)

Je suis ravi de saluer les membres de la Bangladesh Heritage and Ethnic Society of Alberta ainsi que celles et ceux qui prennent part aux célébrations du 40<sup>e</sup> anniversaire du Servus Heritage Festival d'Edmonton.

Cet important festival réunit en un lieu 85 communautés culturelles de partout dans le monde. Il est le reflet de la mosaïque multiculturelle canadienne, elle-même constituée d'un éventail remarquable de traditions, de coutumes et de langues à la fois riches et distinctes. C'est une fois de plus l'occasion de célébrer fièrement notre diversité florissante et d'apprécier la contribution de différents groupes au sein de nos collectivités. En prenant part aux festivités, chacun contribue à sa manière à édifier la nation toujours plus avertie et bienveillante à laquelle nous aspirons.

Je souhaite à toutes et à tous des rencontres et des échanges inoubliables!

David Johnston

2015





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THE GOVERNOR GENERAL - LE GOUVERNEUR GÉNÉRAL

I am delighted to extend greetings to the members of the Bangladesh Heritage and Ethnic Society of Alberta and to everyone taking part in the celebrations marking the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Edmonton's Servus Heritage Festival.

This important festival brings together over 85 cultural communities from around the world, reflecting Canada's multicultural mosaic with its remarkable variety of rich and distinct traditions, customs and languages. It presents us with yet another opportunity to celebrate our extraordinary diversity and recognize the contributions that various multicultural groups have made within our communities. By taking part in the festivities, we can all help to build the smarter, more caring nation of which we dream.

May you all experience unforgettable encounters and moments of connection!

David Johnston

2015

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PRIME MINISTER · PREMIER MINISTRE



The Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper,  
Prime Minister of Canada

*Je suis heureux de présenter mes salutations les plus chaleureuses à tous les membres de la Société patrimoniale et ethnique bangladaise de l'Alberta (BHESA), ainsi qu'à tous ceux et celles qui prennent part au 40<sup>e</sup> festival annuel du patrimoine Servus.*

*Cette populaire tradition estivale offre aux visiteurs de la région et de l'étranger une magnifique occasion de se familiariser avec les sons, les couleurs et les saveurs des différentes collectivités du pays. Je suis persuadé que les festivaliers apprécieront cette vibrante identité culturelle et seront plus à même de reconnaître les nombreuses contributions des Canadiens de toute origine à notre société.*

*Je félicite toutes les personnes associées à la Société qui contribuent à préserver votre héritage au Canada et à sensibiliser la population aux riches coutumes des populations diversifiées du Canada.*

*Je vous souhaite un festival des plus agréables et mémorables.*

Le très honorable Stephen Harper, c.p., député

OTTAWA  
2015



PRIME MINISTER · PREMIER MINISTRE

*I am pleased to extend my warmest greetings to the members of the Bangladesh Heritage and Ethnic Society of Alberta (BHESA), and to everyone taking part in Edmonton's 40th Annual Servus Heritage Festival.*

*This popular summer tradition offers visitors from near and far a wonderful opportunity to experience the sights, sounds, and tastes of our nation's various communities. I am certain that festival patrons will enjoy this vibrant showcase of culture while gaining a better appreciation of the many contributions that Canadians from all backgrounds bring to our society.*

*I commend everyone associated with the Bangladesh Heritage and Ethnic Society of Alberta for preserving your heritage in Canada and for raising awareness of the rich customs of Canada's diverse citizenry.*

*Please accept my best wishes for an enjoyable and memorable festival.*

*The Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P.*

OTTAWA  
2015



Premier of Alberta

Office of the Premier, 307 Legislature Building, Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2B6 Canada



Hon. Rachel Notley,  
Premier of Alberta

### Message from Honourable Rachel Notley Premier of Alberta

*On behalf of the Government of Alberta, I am delighted to send greetings to the readers of Edmonton Bichitra, the Bangladesh Heritage and Ethnic Society of Alberta's magazine.*

*I am proud that this magazine is dedicated to the promotion and preservation of the Bengali culture and heritage in our province. It celebrates community and supports and encourages the extended cultural family that makes our province strong and diverse.*

*Many thanks to the writers and editors of the Bangladesh Heritage and Ethnic Society of Alberta Magazine for all your efforts and dedication in producing Edmonton Bichitra.*

Rachel Notley

August 2015



Hon. David Eggen,  
Minister of Culture and Tourism in Alberta



**Message from Honourable David Eggen  
Minister of Culture and Tourism**

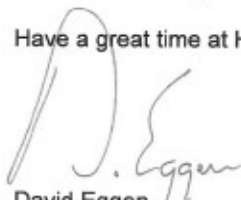
As the Minister of Culture and Tourism, it is my pleasure to offer my best wishes to the readers of the special Bangladesh Heritage Magazine that recognizes the 40th anniversary of the Servus Heritage Festival.

Culture adds vibrancy to our lives and our communities, and events like the Servus Heritage Festival remind us about the rich cultural diversity in our province.

The Bangladesh Heritage and Ethnic Society of Alberta (BHESA) has long been an integral member of this festival and has worked diligently to preserve and celebrate the cultural heritage of Bangladesh. BHESA has also been a strong voice in promoting International Mother Language Day in Alberta, an important initiative that supports cross-cultural understanding in our province and the nation.

My thanks go to all the members, staff and volunteers with BHESA who have come together to create this magazine, and for all of your continued efforts to promote the wonderful diversity of this province.

Have a great time at Heritage Days!



David Eggen  
Minister



### **Message from His Worship Mayor Don Iveson**

On behalf of City Council and the people of Edmonton, Alberta's Capital City, I am pleased to introduce the Bangladesh Heritage Magazine in honour of Edmonton's 40<sup>th</sup> Servus Heritage Festival.

One of Edmonton's greatest strengths is our diversity. We are fortunate to be home to people from all over the world who enrich our city with their customs, language, food, music and art. As host of the Heritage Festival's Bangladesh Pavilion and many other cultural events throughout the year, the Bangladesh Heritage and Ethnic Society of Alberta (BHESA) contributes to the vibrant cultural mosaic that so many Edmontonians treasure.

I thank BHESA for your commitment to preserving the Bangladeshi culture and sharing your traditions with our city. Edmonton's welcoming reputation is a huge part of our success, and that is in no small part due to the work of community organizations like this one.

Yours truly,

Don Iveson  
Mayor



# Cultural

*Heritage Celebration in*

# Edmonton

*by Mashod Bhuiyan*

Heritage Day is celebrated in Alberta on the first Monday of August each year. Although it is not a statutory holiday, many Canadians in Alberta use this day as an optional holiday to celebrate the province's heritage.

### **What do people do?**

Canadians use the long weekend to go to the Servus Heritage Festival, which celebrates Canada's multicultural heritage. It is also known as the Edmonton Heritage Festival. It has, in the past, featured about 60 pavilions representing more than 75 cultures. Since its inception, the attendance at the festival has steadily increased with a record of up to 420,000 people in 2014.

Actually, Heritage Day was established in 1973 by the Heritage Canada Foundation, and is celebrated at the 3rd Monday of February to encourage the



*Mashod Bhuiyan*

preservation and promotion of Canada's nationally significant historic, architectural, natural and scenic heritage.

The Department of Canadian Heritage, along with national museums and the National Library and Archives of Canada, work with diverse parties across Canada to ensure that our heritage is not only preserved, but also promoted and



enhanced. All Canadians are invited to celebrate Heritage Day by learning about Canada's immense historical, cultural and natural heritage.

### **Background of Heritage Days**

In 1974 the Alberta Government declared the first Monday of August an annual holiday to recognize and celebrate the varied cultural heritage of Albertans. That year and again in 1975, a multicultural concert was held at Fort Edmonton Park to celebrate Heritage Day. In 1976 11 ethno-cultural communities banded together in Edmonton's Hawrelak Park to display their cultures' traditional cuisine, entertainment, interpretive materials, and crafts. This occasion marked the early days of the Edmonton Heritage Festival, which plays an important role in promoting Alberta's heritage.

Alberta's Heritage Day must not be confused with Family Day, which falls on the third Monday of February in parts of Canada such as Alberta, Ontario, and Saskatchewan. The Yukon also celebrates its Heritage Day. The Heritage Canada Foundation also refers to Family Day as Heritage Day, which it established in 1973. It has long advocated adopting the third Monday of February as a national holiday.

### **Cultural Heritage**

Cultural Heritage is an expression of the ways of living developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation, including customs, practices, places, objects, artistic expressions and values. Cultural Heritage is often expressed as either Intangible or Tangible Cultural Heritage.

### **Cultural Heritage can be distinguished in:**

- Built Environment (Buildings, Townscapes, Archaeological remains)
- Natural Environment (Rural landscapes, Coasts and shorelines, Agricultural heritage)
- Artefacts (Books & Documents, Objects, Pictures)

As part of Cultural Heritage human activity produces tangible representations of the value systems, beliefs, traditions and lifestyles. As an essential part of culture as a whole, Cultural Heritage contains these visible and tangible traces from antiquity to the recent past.

### **World Heritage / World Heritage Day**

World Heritage is the shared wealth of humankind.. Protecting and preserving this valuable asset demands the collective efforts of the international community. One form of such efforts is World





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Heritage Day. This special day offers an opportunity to raise the public's awareness about the diversity of cultural heritage and the efforts that are required to protect and conserve it, as well as draw attention to its vulnerability.

On April 18, 1982 on the occasion of a symposium organised by ICOMOS in Tunisia, the holding of the "International Day for Monuments and Sites" to be celebrated simultaneously throughout the world was suggested. This project was approved by the executive committee who provided practical suggestions to the National Committees on how to organize this day.

The idea was also approved by the UNESCO General Conference who passed a resolution at its 22nd session in November 1983 recommending that member states examine the possibility of declaring 18 April each year "International Monuments and Sites Day". This has been traditionally called the World Heritage Day.

**Engr Mashod Bhuiyan (Bsc & Msc in CSE) was Lecturer at the Dhaka International University, former Vice President of the DIU Students Welfare Association, Dhaka, and is currently General Secretary of BHESA.**



*Beach in Bangladesh  
Courtesy of External Publicity Wing, Ministry of Foreign Affairs*



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# Edmonton's *Heritage Festival* turns 40

The Edmonton Heritage Festival organized by the Edmonton Heritage Festival Association is celebrating its 40th annual edition in 2015. The three day event showcases more than 85 local and national communities presenting their cultural roots in 62 pavillions.

The Bangladesh community congratulates the Edmonton Heritage Festival Association and all the organizers, volunteers and sponsors for their achievement, and is sending out a big thank you for giving communities and its organizations such a great forum to present their culture and heritage and to connect and meet with people coming from different backgrounds.

We think that this festival is a great enrichment to the busy festival summer of Edmontonians, and a contribution to

the multi-cultural society here in Canada.



*President Delwar Jahid and Dr. Hafizur Rahman of BHESA present the plan for the Bangladesh Heritage Magazine to the Board of Directors of the Edmonton Heritage Festival Association including President Pro Venkatraman and Executive Director Jack Little*

## **Contact to the Organizers**

[www.heritage-festival.com](http://www.heritage-festival.com)  
[info@heritage-festival.com](mailto:info@heritage-festival.com)  
(780) 488-3378



Rebel Poet  
**Kazi Nazrul Islam**  
(25 May 1899 – 29 August 1976)

I shall uproot this miserable earth  
effortlessly and with ease.  
Wearied of struggles, I,  
the great rebel, Shall rest in quiet  
only when I find  
The sky and the air free  
of the piteous groans of the oppressed.

কাজী নজরুল ইসলাম



Nobel Laureate  
**Rabindranath Tagore**  
(7 May 1861 – 7 August 1941)

Where the mind is  
without fear, and the head is held high,  
where knowledge  
is free, Where the world  
has not been broken up into fragments  
by narrow  
domestic wars.,

Rabindranath Tagore

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# Bangladesh

*Heritage in*

# Pictures



*Shat Gombuj Moshjid or Sixty Dome Mosque in Bagerhat*



*Ahsan Manzil Residential Palace in Dhaka*



*Lalbagh Kella (Lalbagh Fort) in Dhaka*



*Jatiya Sangshad Bhaban in Dhaka*



BANGLADESH HERITAGE  
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# Cultural *Heritage of* Bangladesh

by Dr. M. Kamrul Hasan,  
Joint Director,  
Rural Education and Social Development,  
BARD



Dr. M. Kamrul Hasan

## Introduction

Bengal is the largest delta in the world. The history of Bangladesh is old. Bangladesh is a young state, but is the home of an old civilization where various races and tribes settled and were assimilated by the local population.

The general majority of the people of Bangladesh are in general simple but artistic. The country is land of folk culture and heritage. The people are known as

Bengali having the most rich and colorful cultural heritage in the world.

In the earliest period Bengal was known to be inhabited by different groups of people, whose names came to be associated with the area inhabited by them. Thus the ancient Janapadas of Vanga, Pundra, Radha, Samatata, Horikel, Gauda and others came to be recognized as inhabited by non-Aryan ethnic groups bearing those names. The pre-Aryan elements in the culture of the people of Bengal got time to become deeply rooted, even under Aryan influence. Persons of Arabian, Persian, and Middle Asian origin had Islamic values and moved to Bengal in the early 11th century A.D.

The vast majority of Bengali people is living in Bangladesh. Moreover, there are several ethnic communities inhabited at

Chittagong Hill Tracts and other parts of Bangladesh, such as Greater Rajshahi, Mymensing, Sylhet and other areas. The total population of tribal ethnic minorities in Bangladesh was estimated to be over 2 million in 2011. The citizens of Bangladesh are known as both, Bengali and Bangladeshi.<sup>1</sup>

In a broad sense, culture is a way of life. Culture refers to the customary patterns of behavior and shared values, beliefs, and assumption found within social groups. Social groups may be differentiated from each other by their livelihood, differing attitudes, beliefs, language, dress, manners, tastes in food, music or interior decoration, and may be host of other features which compromise a way of life.

Culture is overall a way of ornamentation for human living from art-literature to life styles. Culture means living nicely and it has diversity. Culture and identity strongly bond with each other. Culture describes the many ways in which human beings express themselves for the purpose of uniting with others, forming a group, defining an identity, and even for distinguishing themselves as unique. According to sociologist Pritirim Sorokin (1937) culture is the “sum total of everything which is created or modi-

fied by the conscious and unconscious activity of two or more individuals interacting, with one another or conditioning one another behaviors”. Culture, civilization, and patterns of education produce diverse cultural mentalities across the world. Anthropologist E.B. Tylor (1871), defines “Culture.... is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.” The key expression here is “acquired by men as a member of society”.<sup>2</sup>

Bengal is known for its cultural diversity. From the ancient period of time the foundation of culture developed here through agriculture production organizations, agriculture civilization, humanistic folk traditions, trade and commerce, limited urban centers, political organizations, etc. Early settlers, immigrants and invaders conflicted over cultures and political organizations from time immemorial and that eventually synchronized the culture of Bangladesh. However, Bengal or Bangladesh is known as a nearly self sufficient village community in the past in social history.

<sup>1</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indigenous\\_peoples\\_in\\_Bangladesh](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indigenous_peoples_in_Bangladesh)

<sup>2</sup> His famous book is “Primitive Culture”, which was published in 1871.



The spiritual humanism is one of the core folklore of Bangladesh. At the same time, general people have integrated mind. It was reflected in the Bengali literatures particularly of the sixteenth century and onwards. For example poet Abdul Hakim's Nur-nama,

*Allah Khoda Gasain Sakal tar naam,*

*Sarba goone niranjan pravu goonadham*

(Allah Khuda Gasain all bears the same name of the Great Lord who is the repository of all noble virtues).<sup>3</sup>

In ancient, Bengal is known as *Gauda*. The Banga or *Vanga* named as *Shahi-i-Bangala* in Sultani (Pathan era) period of sultans Fakhurddin Mubarak Shah and Shamsuddin Ilyas Shah. In the Mughul period it was called *Bangla Suba*. In 1905 Bengal was divided and Eastern Bengal and Assam province was formed. In 1911 Bengal reunified. A second partition of Bengal took place in 1947. The territory of East Bengal (the then East Pakistan) emerged as the People's Republic of Bangladesh through the liberation war of Bangladesh in 1971. The spirit of liberation is the foundation of Bangladesh. The **Bangladesh War of Independence** or **Liberation War** in Bangladesh marks a great historical moment in the Bangladesh history. The Bangladeshi Declaration of Independence was issued in response to the

crackdown by Pakistani occupational forces. The liberation war lasted for nine months, with the Mukti Bahini successfully managing to restrict Pakistani forces to their barracks at night by November. India joined the war on December 3, 1971, after Pakistan launched air strikes on North India.

Several distinct elements have contributed to the making of the cultural heritage of the people of Bangladesh, namely

- a) Pre Aryan period settlements
- b) Self sufficient village community
- c) Hindu and Buddhism
- d) Sufism and Islamic
- e) Cultural identity of tribal people of the land
- f) Western or European
- g) Synthesis of traditions and modernity under globalization process

The establishment of the Dhaka University in 1921 was significant and *Shikha Goushti* commenced on cultural movement on free thinking. The Bengali middle class took the lead for cultural emancipation. It was the Language movement 1948-52 that sparked our mind to be flourished through our Bengali language and culture. Our language movement has created enormous impact on culture. Political movements,



cultural movements from progressive and left wing forces, education movement, oppression and discrimination in economic and social sectors by the West Pakistani rulers, six points movement, eleven points movements, mass movement, democratic movements, etc., they all lead to a nationalism movement. It has created freedom and new aspirations.

To know Bangladesh culture we must know the folk culture of Bangladesh. The famous Mymensing Gitika or Purba Banga Gitika, the humanistic philosophy of Lalou Fakir and other bards or bards like Jalaluddin Kha, Hason Raja, Radaromon, Shah Abdul Karim and others. These are one of the intellectual traditions of Bangladesh. In art and painting: Jainul Abedin to SM Sultan and other renowned artists of Bangladesh. In literature / fiction: Shah Waliullah to the popular Humayan Ahmed. In poetry: Jashimuddin to Shamsur Rahman to name some of famous contributors. In architecture: Majharl Islam created an architectural vision for the buildings and sites.

### **Fundamental Principles of The Peoples Republic of Bangladesh**

- Nationalism
- Socialism and freedom from exploita-

tion

- Democracy and human rights
- Secularism and freedom of religion

### **Constitutional obligation to our cultural heritage**

#### Article 23: National Culture

The State shall adopt measures to conserve the cultural traditions and heritage of the people, and so to foster and improve the national language, literature and the arts that all sections of the people are afforded the opportunity to contribute towards and to participate of the national culture.

#### Article 23A: The culture of tribes, minor races, ethnic sects and communities

The State take steps to protect and develop the unique local culture and tradition of the tribes, minor races, ethnic sects, and communities.

#### Article 24: National Monuments

The State shall adopt measures for the protection against disfigurement, damage or removal of all monuments, objects or places or special artistic or historic importance or interests.

<sup>3</sup> Ahmed, A F Salahuddin. 2004. Bangladesh History and Culture - An overview. In Bangladesh national culture and heritage, Dhaka: Independent University of Bangladesh.



## Culture

Levels of culture – three levels

- National culture
- International culture
- Subculture, which may be divided into the three spaces Folk, Adibashi - Ethnic (Tribal), and Urban

Folk heritage – Folk heritage is a major part of culture in Bangladesh.

Peasant culture – A culture based on agricultural practices, peasant livelihood. Bangladesh is a country of *cultural diversity*.

Culture and society are interrelated.

Culture has three components (Haldar<sup>4</sup>, 1981):

- a) Material means;
- b) Social structure; and
- c) Mental-ideological.

The people of Bangladesh have multidimensional identity:

Language identity: Bengali language is the main identity of the Bangladesh nation. However, Bangladesh has several ethnolinguistic communities, which indicate the diversification of Bangladesh languages and culture. The other identities are nationstate identity, ethnic identity, religious identity, and people's occupational identity. Therefore the people of Bangladesh have a *multicultural identity*.

## Cultural heritage

The core cultural practices, knowledge, habits, traits etc, of a particular group of people transmitted from generation to generation. Cultural heritage ("national heritage" or just "heritage") is the legacy of physical artifacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations.

A *tradition* is a ritual, belief or object passed down within a society, still maintained in the present, with origins in the past.

Cultural Heritage may be divided into two parts such as Tangible cultural heritage and intangible cultural heritage.

### *Physical or tangible cultural heritage*

includes buildings and historic places, monuments, artifacts, etc., that are considered worthy of preservation for the future. Heritage can also include cultural landscapes. Recently heritage practitioners have moved from classifying heritage as natural.

### *Intangible cultural heritage* is

- Customs, rituals, habits, practice, representations, expressions, knowledge and skill
- Literature (Purbanga gitika, puthi, and



- modern literature)
- Black smith
  - Food cooking and drinks
  - Art tradition
  - Music
  - Folk dances
  - Performing arts
  - Social practices, rituals & festive events
  - Knowledge and practices concerning nature and universe
  - Traditional craftsmanship
  - Traditional sports and game
  - Traditional medicine
  - Handloom & textile fabrics, embroidery
  - World views , and
  - Others

### **Some aspects of cultural heritage of Bangladesh**

- Marriage festivals
- Observing National holidays and national days
- Handicrafts – nakshikatha and other products
- Hand weaving – glorious muslin cloth and other clothes (khadi and others)
- Metal works
- Weaving and dress patterns
- Pottery and terracotta
- Wood works / boat making skill
- Archeological sites
- Places of historical importance
- Monuments, sculpture, painting and architecture

- Religions- various religious practices assimilated with folk life of the people of Bengal.
- Festivals - Nababarsha, Nabanna, Basanta, Baishabi, and other religious like Eid Ul Fitre, Eid Ul Adha, Durga Puja, Budha Purnima, Borodin...

### **Heritage sites and traditions of Bangladesh, declared by UNESCO**

- Paharpur
- Sundarban
- Shaat Gambuj Mosque
- Boul folk songs
- Ramsar heritage of wetland – Hakaluki Houar, Tanguar houar

### **Bangladesh: A Nation State**

Bangladesh is a nation that changed its statehood twice in less than a quarter of a century. It is new nation in continuous old nation and transforming religious nationalism to linguistic nationalism (Khan<sup>5</sup> 1996). Constitutionally Bangladesh is a modern, humanistic secular state.

*Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD), Kotbari, Comilla, Bangladesh.*  
***kamrulhasansocial@gmail.com***

<sup>4</sup> Gopal Haldar, *Sanskritir Rupantar*

<sup>5</sup> Khan, Akbar Ali. 1996. *Discovery of Bangladesh: in Search of a Hidden Nation*. Dhaka:UPL



by Andy Strohkirch

# Bangladesh

*in a few*

# Words

Bangladesh is located in south-central Asia next to India and Myanmar (Burma).

The dense population speaks Bengali. The language movement from 1948 had a large impact on Bangladesh's independence established through the liberation war in 1971. The history greatly influenced Bangladeshi culture, providing topics for cinema, literature, and arts.

Bangla people cherish and celebrate traditions and festivals like Nobonno (festival of new harvest), Pohela Boishakh (Bengali New Year), Eid Reunion and Iftar Party (religious food festivals), Durga Puja (outdoor art festival).

National occasions like Shadhinota Dibosh (Independence Day), Bijoy Dibosh (Victory Day), and the historic Language Martyr's Day (International Mother Language Day) also mark Bangladeshi life.

The ethnic cuisine with dishes like Panta Ilish (fish served on Bengali New Year),

Sweet Chai (tea), Biryani (fried rice dish served on weddings) is an essential part of Bengali culture. Traditional instruments like e.g. the Esraj (Indian harp), the Harmonium, Dhaks and Dhols (percussive drums) are commonly used in folk music. And the people of Bangladesh enjoy sports like e.g. Gilli-danda (ancient form of cricket), Boli Khela (wrestling), and kite fighting.



*A selection of Bangladeshi music instruments: Dhol (Drum), Pepa (Flute), and Taal (Cymbals)*

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*Two Bangladeshi boys playing Gilli-Danda at the flight of steps leading down to the Ganges river*

## Quick Facts

Name People's Republic of  
Bangladesh

Capital City Dhaka

Population ~166 Million

Government Parliamentary democracy

Language Bangla (official), English

Currency Taka (BDT)

Bordering Countries India, Burma (Myanmar)

Land Area 143,998 sq km

Peak Keokradong (4,035 ft)



BANGLADESH HERITAGE  
SPECIAL EDITION

by Andy Strohkirch

# People *of* Bangladesh

This is a random selection of current people with Bangladeshi descent, widely known for achievements in their respective fields. We may continue this section in future editions. Please note that this list is in no way complete, we simply thought to introduce a few people of public interest to a broader community.

## **Afshan Azad**

Afshan Azad was born on February 12, 1988 in Longsight, Manchester, England and is a British actress and model of Bangladeshi descent. She is best known for playing the role of Padma Patil in the Harry Potter film series, starting her career in 2005. She also studied Chemistry, Biology, English and Business at the Xaverian College in Rusholme, Manchester. For more information visit Azad at the International Movie Database at [www.imdb.com/name/nm1715136](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1715136).



*Ayub Bachchu, Courtesy Wikimedia Commons*

## **Ayub Bachchu**

Ayub Bachchu, born on August 16, 1962 in Chittagong, is a legendary Bangladeshi musician, singer, lyricist, and music composer. He is best known as a founding member and the leader of the rock band

LRB, but also has released a substantial number of solo albums. Bachchu originally started out as a rock musician, but eventually branched out to the more mainstream music of Bangladesh. His first instrumental album called "Sound of Silence" was released in 2007. Find Bachchu's official website at [www.ablrb.net](http://www.ablrb.net).

### **Ellis Miah**

Ellis Miah was born in New York City and is an American songwriter, record producer, composer, vocalist and DJ of Bangladeshi and Caribbean descent. Discovered at the age of 12 and with over 17 records found on various Billboard charts, he wrote, produced, and remixed for Miley Cyrus, the Backstreet Boys, Annie Lennox and RuPaul among others. Find Ellis Miah's official website at [www.ellismiahmusic.com](http://www.ellismiahmusic.com).

### **Muhammad Yunus**

Muhammad Yunus, born on June 28, 1940 in Chittagong, is a Bangladeshi social entrepreneur, banker, economist and civil society leader who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for founding the Grameen Bank and pioneering the concepts of microcredit and microfinance. These loans are given to entrepreneurs too poor to qualify for traditional bank loans, and the concept has proven, that

even the poorest of the poor can work to bring about their own development. Yunus also received the United States Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2009 and the Congressional Gold Medal in 2010. Find Muhammad Yunus' official website at [www.muhammadyunus.org](http://www.muhammadyunus.org).



*Muhammad Yunus, Courtesy Wikimedia Commons*

### **Tasmin Lucia-Khan**

Tasmin Lucia-Khan, born on July 18, 1980 in London, is an English journalist and television presenter and of Bangladeshi and British descent. Tasmin Lucia-Khan graduated at the University of Oxford with an Honours degree in Politics, Philosophy and Economics, and has worked as former presenter for BBC Three's 60 Seconds. She also hosted E24 on BBC News and ITV's News Daybreak. She is known for her coverage of big news stories for BBC, including the deaths of Michael Jackson, US actor Heath Ledger, British fashion designer Alexander McQueen, and the Oscars. Find Tasmin Lucia-Khan official website at [www.tasmin.tv](http://www.tasmin.tv).



by Andy Strohkirch

# Historic

## *Background of Bengali*

# Holidays



Andy Strohkirch

Bangladesh is located in the northeast of the Indian subcontinent, and primarily part of the historic region of East Bengal, while West Bengal is part of its neighbor India. In an earliest reference the region was called Vanga, or Banga, and ruled by Buddhists between ~1000 B.C. and 1576, where Bengal then became part of the Mogul Empire and its people converted to Islam.

In 1757 British India overtook the leadership of Bengal until Britain withdrew in 1947, and Pakistan was founded. Though the people of Pakistan were united by the Islam religion, cultural differences, physical features and the 1,000 miles of Indian territory separated the East from the West, and led about 25 years later, proclaimed on March 26, 1971, to the independence of Bangladesh. The people of Bangladesh are

celebrating March 26 as national holiday called Shadhinota Dibosh (Independence Day).

One of the major reasons for the desire of independence was the fact, that West Pakistan declared Urdu in 1948 as the sole national language, although the majority of the population in East Bengal was speaking Bengali. The action was followed by extensive protests in the population, which led to tough laws against public meetings and rallies, and a deadly conflict between student demonstrators and the police on 21st February 1952. That day, 21st February, is celebrated in Bangladesh as Bhasha Andolon Dibosh (Language Movement Day), also known as Shohid Dibosh (Martyr's Day), and internationally observed as International Mother Language Day, proclaimed in 1999 by



UNESCO.

The language movement is seen as the forerunner of the nationalist movements which led to the independence of Bangladesh.

The proclamation of independence was followed by civil war which took an estimated one million Bengali lives, and

created more than 10 million refugees fleeing to India. The higher populated East Pakistan defeated West Pakistan on Dec. 16, 1971, which held political and economic power. This victory on Dec. 16 is celebrated today as a national holiday in Bangladesh, called Bijoy Dibosh (Victory Day). Years later in Feb. 1974 Pakistan agreed to recognize the independent state of Bangladesh.

## Amar Sonar Bangla

*"My Golden Bengal" — National Anthem of Bangladesh*

My golden Bengal,  
My golden Bengal,  
I love you.

Forever your skies,  
Your air set my heart in tune  
As if it were a flute.

In spring, O mother  
The fragrance from your mango groves  
Makes me wild with joy,  
Ah, what a thrill!

In autumn, O mother  
In the full blossomed paddy fields  
I have seen spread all over sweet smiles.

What beauty, what shades,  
What affection, what tenderness!  
What a quilt have you spread  
At the feet of banyan trees  
And along the banks of rivers!

Oh mother mine, words from your lips  
Are like nectar to my ears.  
Ah, what a thrill!

If sadness, O mother  
Casts a gloom on your face,  
My eyes are filled with tears!

My golden Bengal,  
I love you.





by Syfur Hasan  
and Zulfiquer Ahmed

# A Brief

## *History of the Independence of*

# Bangladesh



*Syfur Hasan (left and Zulfiquer Ahmed (right)*

The nationalistic struggle against the British Colonial Rule in India since the mid-20's of the last century was a milestone for freedom in Bangladesh. Communal tensions of the Hindu-Muslim people spread out in 1947 for a part of India and Pakistan, that eventually was created as separate homeland for Hindus and Muslims. The unnatural and immature separation of the Bengali society on base of religion rooted in a deep political crisis.

The Province of East Pakistan was about thousand miles away and separated from West Pakistan. From the beginning of its creation, the state Pakistan had slim chances to remain in its geographic form of separation. Pakistan was declared as an Islamic Republic in 1956, and the military rule was imposed in 1958. With help of these rulers the elite class tried to subjugate the Bengali population politically, culturally and economically, and lead to an attack of the Bengali language, as Urdu was declared as the sole national language.

The Bengali Language Movement was a political movement in former East Bengal (today Bangladesh) advocating the recognition of the Bengali language as an official language of the then-Dominion of Pakistan in order to allow its use in government affairs, the continuation of its use as a medium of education,

its use in media, currency and stamps, and to maintain its writing in the Bengali script.

The movement catalyzed the assertion of Bengali national identity in East Bengal and later East Pakistan, and became a forerunner to Bengali nationalist movements, sparking extensive protests among the Bengali-speaking majority of East Bengal. Facing rising denominational tensions and mass unhappiness with the law, the government outlawed public meetings and rallies. The students of the University of Dhaka and other political activists defied the law and organized a big protest on 21 February 1952. The movement reached its peak when police killed student demonstrators on that day. The deaths triggered widespread civil unrest. After years of conflict, the central government relented and granted official status to the Bengali language in 1956.

### Some milestones in Bengali history

- February 29, 1956: Bengali becomes one of the state languages of Pakistan
- 1966: Six point Bengali nationalist movement led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman emerges.
- 1968: Agartala Conspiracy Case filed by the government of Pakistan accusing Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and others of

sedition

- December 7, 1970: First general election in Pakistan. Awami League gains majority.
- March 7, 1971: Sheikh Mujibur Rahman makes his historic freedom speech
- April 17, 1971: The government-in-exile takes oath at Mujibnagar
- December 16, 1971: Surrender of the Pakistan army and liberation of Dhaka
- February 9, 1972: The 25-year Indo-Bangladeshi Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Peace is signed in Dhaka
- January 10, 1972: Sheikh Mujibur Rahman returns to Bangladesh
- December 16, 1972: Constitution of Bangladesh becomes effective



*Speech of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Courtesy Wikimedia Commons*

On April 17, 1971 the Provisional Government of Bangladesh was formed in the liberated Meherpur District. This government initiated the liberation of Bangladesh. It was elected by the people of entire Pakistan in 1970.



### The leaders of this government were:

1. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (titular President)
2. Syed Nazrul Islam (Vice President and acting President)
3. Tajuddin Ahmad (Prime Minister)
4. Colonel M A G Osmani (Commander-in-Chief of the Bangladesh Forces)
5. Mansur Ali (Minister of Finance and Planning)
6. Khondaker Mostaq Ahmad (Minister of Foreign Affairs and Law)
7. A. H. M. Qamaruzzaman (Minister of Home Affairs, Relief and Rehabilitation)
8. Abdul Mannan (in charge of Ministry of Information and Radio)

### Sector commanders (left to right, row by row)

Lt. Col. Ziaur Rahman, Major Rafiqul Islam, Lt. Col. Khaled Mosharaf, Major ATM Hyder, Lt. Col. Shafiullah, Major ANM Nuruzzaman, Lt. Col. C.R Dutta, Lt. Col. Mir Showakot Ali, Wing Commander M Khademul Bashar, Major Nazmul Hogue, Lt. Col. Kazi Nuruzzaman, Major Abu Osman Chowdhury, Lt. Col. MA Monjur, Major MA Jalil and Lt. Col. M.A Taher

## মুক্তিযুদ্ধের সেক্টর কমান্ডারগন



লেঃ কর্ণেল জিয়াউর রহমান  
সেক্টর ফোর্স ৬ ১ নম্বর সেক্টর  
কমান্ডার (খন্ডকালীন)



মেজর রফিকুল ইসলাম  
১ নম্বর সেক্টর কমান্ডার



লেঃ কর্ণেল খালেদ মোশাররফ  
'কে' ফোর্স ৬ ২ নম্বর সেক্টর  
কমান্ডার



মেজর এ. সি. এম. হায়দার  
২ নম্বর সেক্টর কমান্ডার  
(খন্ডকালীন)



লেঃ কর্ণেল কে. এম. মন্সুর আলি  
'এস' ফোর্স ৬ ৩ নম্বর সেক্টর  
কমান্ডার



মেজর এ. এম. এম. নূরুজ্জামান  
৩ নম্বর সেক্টর কমান্ডার  
(খন্ডকালীন)



লেঃ কর্ণেল সি. আর. দত্ত  
৪ নম্বর সেক্টর কমান্ডার



লেঃ কর্ণেল মীর শওকত আলী  
৫ নম্বর সেক্টর কমান্ডার ৫  
১ নম্বর সেক্টর কমান্ডার



উইং কমান্ডার এম. কে. বাশার  
৬ নম্বর সেক্টর কমান্ডার



মেজর নাজমুল হুগ  
৭ নম্বর সেক্টর কমান্ডার



লেঃ কর্ণেল কাজী নূরুজ্জামান  
৭ নম্বর সেক্টর কমান্ডার



মেজর আবু ওসমান চৌধুরী  
৮ নম্বর সেক্টর কমান্ডার



লেঃ কর্ণেল এম. এ. মজুমদার  
৮ নম্বর সেক্টর কমান্ডার  
(খন্ডকালীন)



মেজর এম. এ. জলিল  
৯ নম্বর সেক্টর কমান্ডার



লেঃ কর্ণেল এম. এ. তাহের  
১১ নম্বর সেক্টর কমান্ডার

\* বিয়ে পাঠক, উল্লিখিত সেনা অফিসারদের ছবিগুলোই পরিষ্কৃষ্ট ও তখনকার মত যতদূর আছে পাওয়া সম্ভব ছাড়া অন্য কোনো আনুষ্ঠানিক ছবি ব্যবহার করা হয়নি।

Sector Commanders of the Bangladesh Forces in 1971  
Courtesy of Freedom Fighters of Canada, 2011

## Leaders of Bangladesh

**Abul Kasem Fazlul Huq** was the first elected Prime Minister of Bengal under British rule. He was in office from April 1, 1937 to March 29, 1943.



*Abul Kasem Fazlul Huq, Courtesy Wikimedia Commons*

**Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy** was a Bengali politician and statesman in the first half of the 20th-century. He was the 5th Prime Minister of Bengal, in office from July 3, 1946 to August 14, 1947.



*Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, Courtesy Wikimedia Commons*

**Sheikh Mujibur Rahman** was the founding leader of Bangladesh. He was the 1st President of Bangladesh from April 11, 1971 to January 12, 1972 and re-elected 4th President of Bangladesh from January 25, 1975 to August 15, 1975.



*Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Courtesy Wikimedia Commons*

**Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani** was a popular Islamic scholar and political leader in Bangladesh. He was Member of Parliament of Bangladesh from January 10, 1973 to August 15, 1975.



*Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, Courtesy Wikimedia Commons*



by Andy Strohkirch  
and Wikipedia

# Food

## Heritage of

# Bangladesh

Bangladesh has a rich and ancient cuisine, dating back 2,500 years in the geographic area of the Ganges delta. A highly developed agriculture and a diversity of kingdoms influenced the culinary development. The Bangladeshi cuisine also incorporates a large number of cosmopolitan influences, a legacy of the region's historic trade links with Arabia, Persia, Portugal, the United Kingdom and Burma. The British introduced tea to the population, and the Portuguese developed cheese in Dhaka.

### Popular Dishes

- *Bhel Puri* is made out of puffed rice, vegetables and a tangy tamarind sauce
- *Bhoger Khichudi* is a lentil risotto in aromatic spices
- *Biryani* is a spiced rice
- *Kichuri* is a lentil based rice dish
- *Panta Ilish* is a platter of rice with fried Hilsa, dried fish, pickles, lentils, green



*Khichuri Rice Dish, Courtesy Wikimedia Commons*

- chillies and onion
- *Puchka* consists of deep fried dumplings filled with tamarind water and spices
- *Thali* is a variation of various dishes served on a round platter

### Desserts

- *Balushahi* is made from a stiff dough, with all purpose flour, ghee and a pinch of baking soda
- *Bhapa Pitha* is a rice cake
- *Channer Shondesh* is a dessert created

- with milk and sugar
- *Chhana* is a fresh, unripened curd cheese made from water buffalo milk
- *Chhanar Mishti* is a sweet made of chickpea flour with sugar / jaggery / molasses
- *Chomchom* is an oval-shaped sweet with reddish brown colour
- *Goja* is a light sweet snack made of flour and sugar
- *Gurer Shondesh* is a fritter made of rice flour and palm sugar
- *Hawai'i Mishti* is made with sugar
- *Khaja* is a deep fried sweets made with wheat flour and ghee
- *Khir* is cooked with dense milk, sugar / jaggery, and scented rice
- *Mishti Doi* is a sweetened homemade creamy yogurt
- *Mua* is cooked with rice flakes and jaggery
- *Naru* is used as offerings in Hindu rituals
- *Piṭha* is a little milk cake mixed with molasses



*Pitha Milk Cakes, Courtesy Wikimedia Commons*

- *Rasgulla* is a sweet made with posset / curdled milk and sugar syrup
- *Rosh-malai* are small sponge balls in a sweetened milk base
- *Shemai* is vermicelli prepared with ghee or vegetable oil

### **Beverages**

- *Akher gur Shorbot* is a sugarcane juice with jaggery
- *Akher Rosh* is a sugarcane juice
- *Amer shorbot* is mango juice
- *Bel er shorbot* is juice of Bengal quince
- *Borhani* is a spicy drink usually served in gatherings, banquets and weddings
- *Chai* is tea
- *Ghol* is whisked salted milk
- *Jeera pani* is a drink boasting fresh, lively flavors
- *Khejur Rosh* is date palm juice
- *Tormujer shorbot* is watermelon juice



*Preparation of Pua ka Ghol, Courtesy Wikimedia Commons*

by Md Shahnawaz Khan Chandan,  
Journalist at Daily Star

# Dhaka's Caravansary



*Md Shahnawaz Khan Chandan*

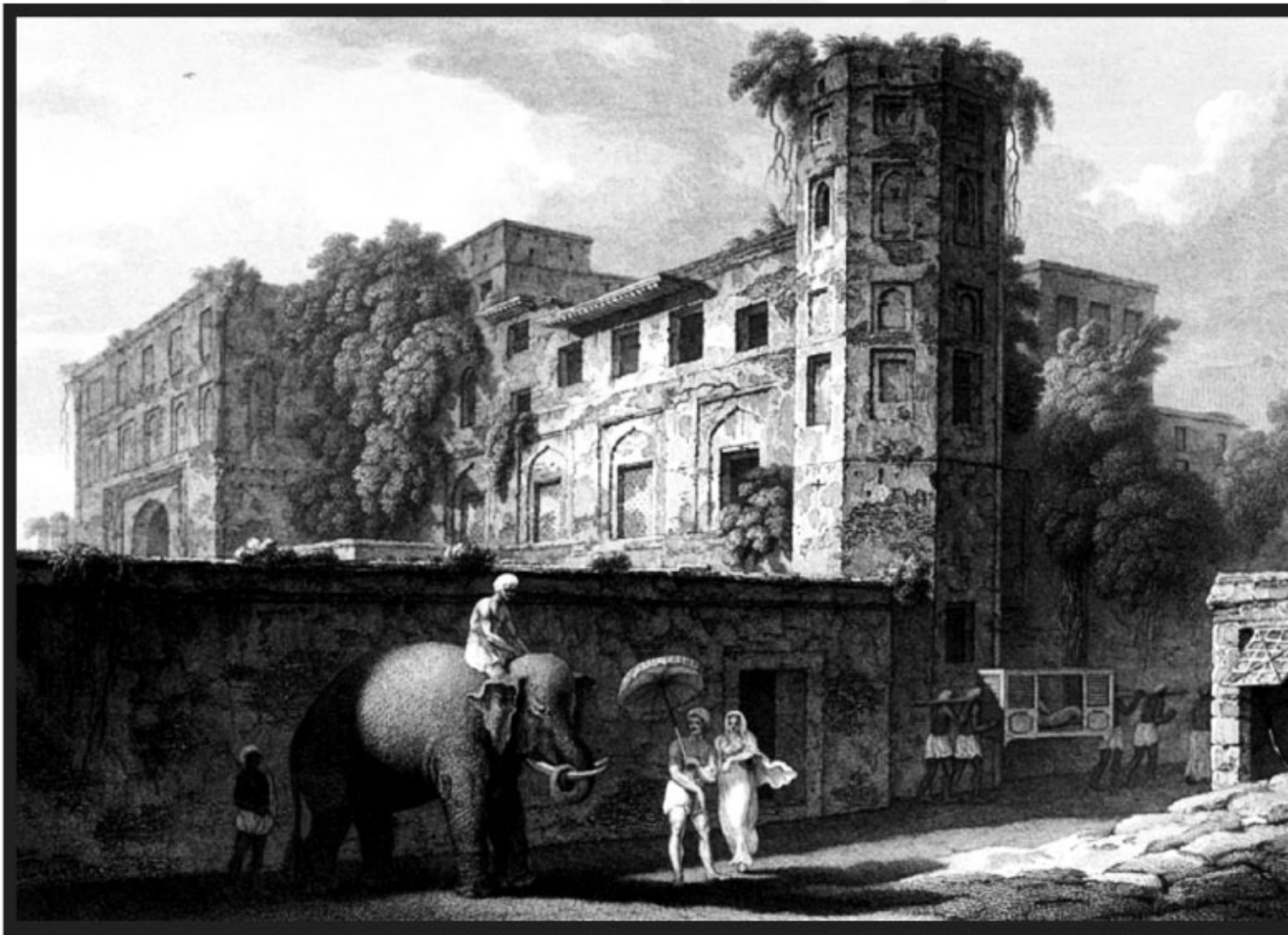
Once upon a time, Buriganga was a river of fresh, crystal clear water, bustling with trading vessels from different parts of the world. Rich merchants used to sail along this river to trade their merchandise in Dhaka, a city of fortune for them. Thousands of immigrants and travellers used to come to this rich city in search of a better living. However, Dhaka, with its many caravansaries, always welcomed these guests with warm hospitality. A symbol of those glory days of Dhaka is

still standing in a grungy part of the city—Bara Katra.

It was designed and built by Abul Qasim being ordered by Mughal Prince Shah Shuja, the then governor of Bengal and the second son of the then Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan. Legend says, one day Prince Shuja decided to build a large caravansary in the city. But he did not like the traditional design of caravansaries which were just like cheap hotels. He called on his chief architect Abul Qasim and told him that he wanted a lavish palace built for him by the river Buriganga.

Abul Qasim spent all his engineering geniuses to build the palace whose southern wing was extended along the river. At that time the river used to flow just beside the Bara Katra. In 1641, when the palace was finally completed, Shah

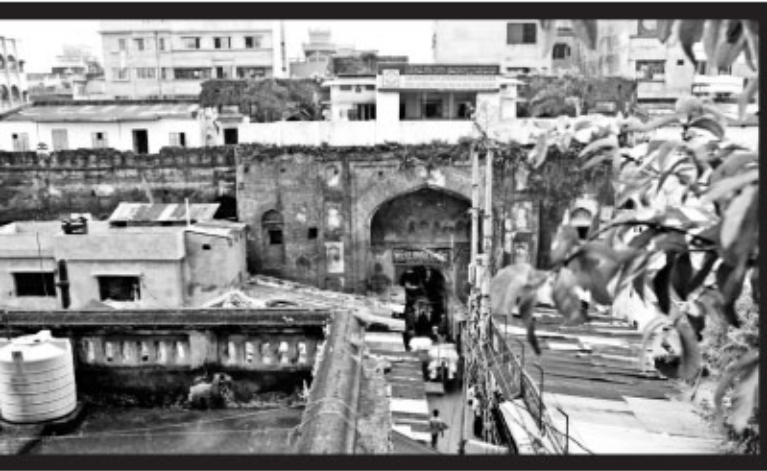




*An etching Bara Katra by Sir Charles D'Oyly in 1823*

Shuja declared that he actually built the palace as a caravansary for the travellers, immigrants and merchants all of whom would get free food and accommodation here. A stone inscription was found on a wall of the palace which says, "Sultan Shah Shuja, spent his life in charity and hospitality. Being ordered by this most benevolent ruler, Abul Qasim Tubba

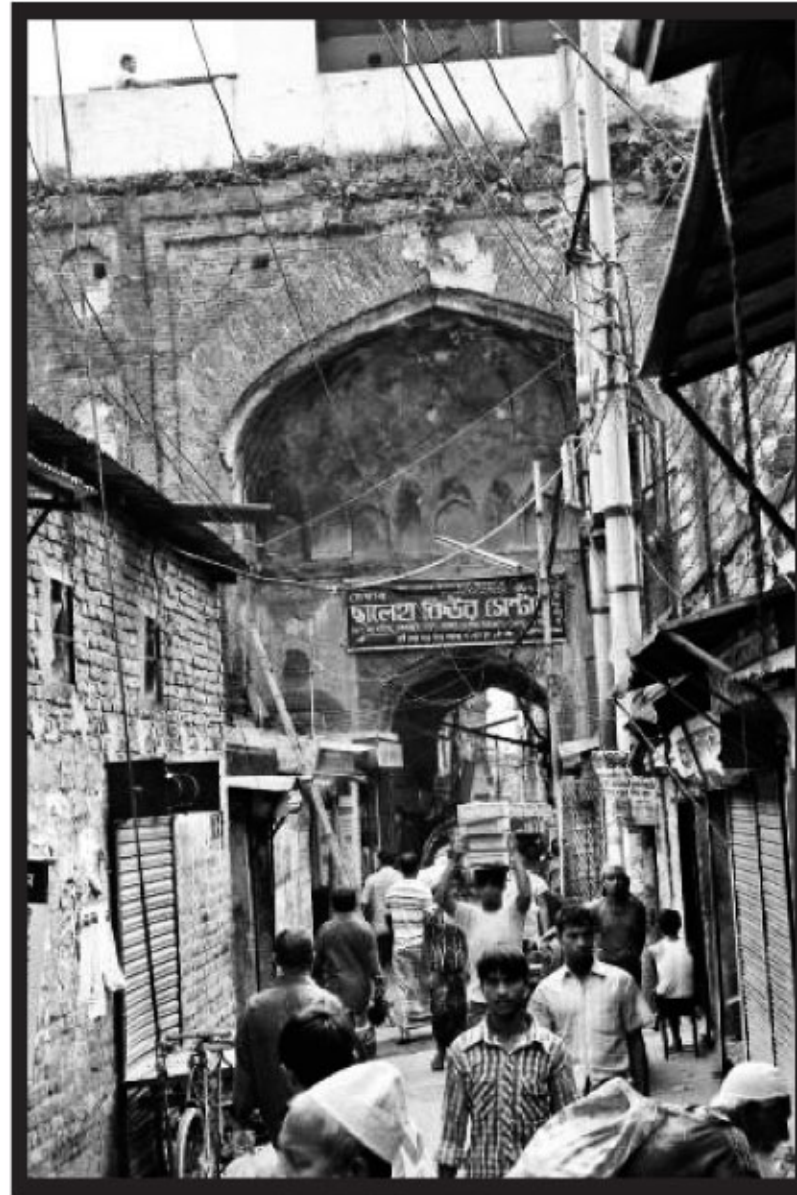
Hossaini erected this auspicious building. Twenty two shops have been attached with this building to bear its maintenance cost. All the travellers residing in this building will be served completely free of cost. If anybody breaks this deed, he should fear the wrath of Allah in the judgment day."



*Old Dhaka, Photo by Prabir Das*

Bara Katra, which means the big, colonnaded building, is a superb mixture of central Asian and Mughal architecture. The building is divided into two storied southern wing and northern wing which enclosed a quadrangular colonnaded central courtyard that housed the 22 shops. Each wing housed 22 living apartments for the guests. Two gateways were built in the northern and southern wing. The southern gateway itself is a three storied structure with a central archway which used to provide direct access to the courtyard from the city. The white plastered walls of the building were decorated with intricate floral patterns.

However, most of this marvellous structure has been destroyed over time. The still existing part of this building has been occupied by unauthorised estab-



*Old Dhaka, Photo by Prabir Das*

lishments. Department of archaeology should take steps to preserve this one of the last symbols of Dhaka's glorious past.

*Courtesy of The Daily Star (.net)  
June 05, 2015*



BHESA  
BANGLADESH HERITAGE  
SPECIAL EDITION



by Riya Karin

# Celebrating *the* *Bangla New Year: Pohela* **Boishakh**



Riya Karin

Pohela Boishakh means the first day of the Bengali calendar, Bengali New Year. Pohela Boishakh occurs every year on 14th of April. It is the celebration in Bangladesh and also West Bengal of India and where the Bengali community at large lives. The traditional greeting for Bengali New Year is "Shubho Noboborsho" with new opening and anticipation. It is a biggest festival for Bengali.

Every year, BHESA celebrates this festival in Alberta with much thrust and elaboration. The Day begins at dawn, and manifests with singing, processions, and fairs in Bangladesh. Conventionally, businesses start this day with a new ledger, evaporating out the old.

A large number of the people are living outside of Bangladesh but they keep and hold their culture and tradition. In

Canada, we have a Bengali community under the umbrella of different organization. They always organize all Bengali events. In 2015, we also have been celebrated our Pohela Boishakh. Like other festivals the day is also marked by visiting friends and neighbors, not going to their home, but to the program where special Bengali foods are prepared to entertain members and guests.



*Pohela Boishakh Celebration in Bangladesh  
Courtesy of External Publicity Wing, Ministry of Foreign Affairs*



by Andy Strohkirch

# Bangladeshi *Organizations in* Edmonton

## **Bangladesh Heritage and Ethnic Society of Alberta (BHESA)**

The Bangladesh Heritage and Ethnic Society of Alberta (BHESA) is a socio-cultural, non-political, non-sectarian, and non-profit organization that serves the local community of Bangladeshi-Canadians comprising of immigrants and descendants, and those people who are interested in the culture, arts, and people of Bangladesh. Operating in Edmonton, Alberta, and vicinity area BHESA preserves, promotes and celebrates Bangladesh culture, heritage and history with a variety of programs, projects, and services.

### **Contact**

- Delwar Jahid at (780) 200-3592
- [www.bhesa.ca](http://www.bhesa.ca)
- [mybhesa@gmail.com](mailto:mybhesa@gmail.com)

## **Bangladesh Canada Association of Edmonton (BCAE)**

The Bangladesh Canada Association of Edmonton (BCAE) is the initiator of the BCAE Edmonton Bangla School, which teaches children of the community the Bengali language free of cost. Further BCAE provides social and cultural interactions for the members of the community in form of various programs and services since 1979.

### **Contact**

- [www.bcae.ca](http://www.bcae.ca)
- [bcae1979@gmail.com](mailto:bcae1979@gmail.com)

## **Bengali Business Association of Edmonton (BBAE)**

### **Contact**

- Moh Laskar at [mohlaskar@gmail.com](mailto:mohlaskar@gmail.com)



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### **Bangladeshi Students Association at University of Alberta (BSAUA)**

The Bangladeshi Students Association at University of Alberta (BSAUA) organizes socio-cultural activities within the community, and is involved in helping newcomers to Edmonton and the university with information and advice. It was founded on November 6, 2001.

#### **Contact**

- [www.ualberta.ca/~bsaua](http://www.ualberta.ca/~bsaua)
- [bsaua@ualberta.ca](mailto:bsaua@ualberta.ca)

### **Edmonton Bengali Association**

The Edmonton Bengali Association promotes and provides quality educational, social, and cultural activities for the Bengali community in Edmonton. Formed in 1979, the organization strives to create awareness of Bengali culture and history, promotes activities related to education and culture, provides services to the community and a platform for social and business networking, promotes the involvement of youth, and collaborates with other community service organizations to create programs and activities.

#### **Contact**

- [www.myeba.org](http://www.myeba.org)
- [info@myeba.org](mailto:info@myeba.org)

### **Bangla Utsab Association**

The Bangla Utsab Association promotes Bengali culture, especially literature, music, choreography, sports and festivals in the province of Alberta and neighboring areas, while using the City of Edmonton as the main venue. The aim is to provide affordable opportunities to enjoy cultural and artistic activities, and to build opportunities for lectures, discussions and public speech on social, education, economic and other subjects.

#### **Contact**

- [www.edmontonbanglautsab.org](http://www.edmontonbanglautsab.org)
- [bijit\\_k@yahoo.com](mailto:bijit_k@yahoo.com)

### **Bangladesh PressClub Centre of Alberta (BPCA)**

BPCA is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to creating a cohesive and effective voice of journalists. Its mission is to help and assist the media community in general, and to provide members with professional, educational, social, cultural and recreational activities. It strives to build a strong community with focus on professional enrichment, peace, progress and prosperity.

#### **Contact**

- Delwar Jahid at (780) 200-3592
- [www.pressclubofalberta.com](http://www.pressclubofalberta.com)
- [pressclubofalberta@gmail.com](mailto:pressclubofalberta@gmail.com)



### **Mahinur Jahid Memorial Foundation (MJMF)**

The Mahinur Jahid Memorial Foundation (MJMF) is a non-profit organization supporting the Bangladeshi and Canadian youth by providing access to a modern technical education, and by connecting them with the community through cultural and sports activities.

#### **Contact**

- Delwar Jahid at (780) 200-3592
- [www.mjmf.org](http://www.mjmf.org)
- [mjmf2014@gmail.com](mailto:mjmf2014@gmail.com)

### **Local Media covering the local Bengali Community**

Find a selection of online magazines in the Internet, which report about news in our community on a regular base.

- *Diverse Edmonton* at [www.diverseedmonton.ca](http://www.diverseedmonton.ca)
- *Samajkantha* (The Voice of Society) at [www.samajkantha.com](http://www.samajkantha.com)
- *Asian News and Views* at [www.asiannewsandviews.com](http://www.asiannewsandviews.com)

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by Andy Strohkirch

# BPCA, a hub *for information about* Mother Language Day

The Bangladesh community in Edmonton and vicinity area is made up of a bunch of colorful and vivid people, pursuing a number of interesting activities. A recently build organization named the Bangladesh PressClub Centre of Alberta (BPCA) has started an interesting initiative and is eager to become a hub of information about International Mother Language Day. In this article we seek to introduce the organization and its initiative "A Celebration of Mother Language".

## Who is BPCA?

The Bangladesh PressClub Centre of Alberta is an Edmonton based, not-for-profit organization which was founded in April 24, 2014 by a group of interested journalists, led by the editor of the online news magazine Samajkantha, the Voice of Society, Delwar Jahid.

The organization describes itself as a

professional forum for journalists and media associates and is dedicated to create a cohesive and effective voice of journalists, and to make a positive difference in the lives of media people and the community.

The mission of BPCA is to help and assist the media community in general, and to provide its members with professional, educational, social, cultural and recreational activities. BPCA strives to build a strong community with focus on professional enrichment, peace, progress and prosperity.



*Inauguration meeting of BPCA at the University of MacEwan on Labour Day, May 1, 2014*



A Celebration of Mother Language  
In the same way that biodiversity is important for the balance of life on our planet, language diversity may be important for the balance of cultures. An imbalance of cultures would result in the loss of some cultures. The fact that each high culture before us has come to an end, could be a warning that the diversity of culture itself is needed for mankind's sole survival.

International Mother Language Day, a date that was proclaimed by UNESCO in 1999, could function as a reminder of how important the appreciation of each one's own culture and origin is, and that honoring and celebrating the heritage and culture of other people is important.

BPCA, the Bangladesh PressClub Centre of Alberta has therefore created an initiative called A Celebration of Mother Language, to support the thought of cultural diversity and its importance. The organization understands itself as a hub of information about International Mother Language Day, and invites people interested in this cause to connect with each other and BPCA.

The declared mission of BPCA is to bring the people of all nations together, to celebrate each and everyone's mother

language in an effort to point to the importance of this heritage. The Bangladesh PressClub Centre of Alberta is further attempting to strengthen the day of celebration, the International Mother Language Day on February 21st, by reaching out to political and philosophical pioneers.



*BPCA's celebration of International Mother Language Day on February 21, 2015*

### **Publications**

BPCA's International Mother Language Magazine is a publication which explores and celebrates the topic of mother language and linguistic diversity. The Bangladesh PressClub Centre of Alberta (BPCA) was able to bring together many different voices on the topic, and has made a number of promising contacts which showed interest to participate in



future editions. The International Mother Language Magazine is published on an annual basis and is distributed every year on International Mother Language Day at February 21st to interested members in the local community here in Edmonton.

### **More Information**

We encourage the interested reader to visit the website for BPCA's initiative A Celebration of Mother Language at [www.motherlanguageday.ca](http://www.motherlanguageday.ca). If you are interested to learn more about the Bangladesh PressClub Centre of Alberta, you may visit their website at [www.pressclubofalberta.com](http://www.pressclubofalberta.com).

*by Andy Strohkirch*

# MJMF

*supports Bangladeshi and*

# Canadian Youth

Mahinur Jahid, who died at the age of 27 in a tragic car accident, is the inspiration behind the Mahinur Jahid Memorial Foundation (MJMF) which was created by his family to cherish the memory of a lost son and brother. In our article we want to introduce the foundation and find out about the work and future plans of its founders.

### **Who was Mahinur Jahid?**

The Mahinur Jahid Memorial Foundation

(MJMF) was founded in February 8, 2012 in memory of Mahinur Jahid, who died in a car accident in January 2012 in the city of Lloydminster of Alberta at the age of only 27.

Mahinur Jahid was considered an inspiration for the people in his environment who showed a big heart for his parents and family. He was deeply connected with the community, engaged with sports and culture, and shined bright



through the work as a young trade technician.



*Mahinur Jahid<sup>1</sup>*

As per wish of his family his memory shall live on through the efforts of the organization founded by Delwar Jahid to provide young people with education, cultural and sports activities in the context of communality.

### **About the Foundation**

The Mahinur Jahid Memorial Foundation (MJMF) is a non-political and non-profit organization based right here in Edmonton. The organization strives to support both, Bangladeshi and Canadian youth by providing access to a modern technical education, and by connecting them with the community through cultural and sports activities.

»We love to see our young generation on a path of tolerance, global unity, integrity,

and a sense of responsibility.«, says Delwar Jahid about the aims of the foundation of his family.



*MJMF Cricket Tournament in 2014*

As that MJMF functions as a center for communication, initiator of events, and connector to educational and economical contacts, and the community. Current activities include presentations, seminars, symposiums, sports and multi-cultural events, and more.



*MJMF sponsored soccer match at the BHESA Children Festival in Devon*



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## Publications

UNITE is a magazine published by the Mahinur Jahid Memorial Foundation (MJMF) issued to the Bangladesh community. A first edition was released on June 14, 2014 during the official inauguration event in Edmonton, a cricket match to celebrate team sports in memory of Mahinur Jahid. It is planned to publish the magazine on a yearly basis. The first edition contains information about the organization, a large section about Mahinur Jahid's life, and an article about the seminar Safety and Accident Prevention held by MJMF in Comilla, Bangladesh on April 13, 2012.

## Ekushey Youth Awards

Under assistance of the Bangladesh PressClub Centre of Alberta (BPCA), the Mahinur Jahid Memorial Foundation (MJMF) has introduced the Ekushey Youth Awards in 2015. The award is seen as a means of appreciation for people who have stood out with exceptional contributions to or in the youth community, and who set an example by inspiring a young audience with their work.

The Mahinur Jahid Memorial Foundation (MJMF) is handing out a medal of honor to each awarded contributor on an annual base. The nominees will be announced on International Mother

Language Day on February 21st. Considered is the work in the different fields of education, sports, youth activities, literature and community services here in Alberta. The honor may be awarded multiple times and is open to all Albertans.



*Announcement of the Nominees for MJMF's Ekushey Youth Awards 2015*

## Nominees for the Ekushey Youth Awards 2015

For the Ekushey Youth Awards 2015 the Mahinur Jahid Memorial Foundation (MJMF) has nominated two dedicated people in recognition of their contributions to the fields or significant organizational endeavors.

This years' nominated recipients are:

- Sheikh Jalil (Writer and Journalist)
- Ahsan Ullah Rony (Sports & Community Organizer)



### **Sheikh Jalil**

Awarded for Journalism and Literary Work. Sheikh Jalil graduated at the Mymensing Medical College of Bangladesh in the eighties. He descended from a progressive family, that engaged in education, arts and literature. Since early childhood he developed an interest in the written word, and started writing his own stories, poems, features, and reports. He engaged in part time journalism and is currently Bureau Chief of the Weekly Jogajog in Edmonton. As author of multiple books he published in Bangladesh: Shoyllahbile Shalook Phol-Song (2015), Shopnonil Railgari-Poem (2011), Shoobota Tamao Jatra-Poem (2010), Jagirnama-Novel, and four other publications.

### **Ahsan Ullah Rony**

Awarded for Sports. Ahsan Ullah Rony graduated at York University in Toronto, Canada and is actively involved in sports and socio-cultural activities. Since childhood, Ahsan has been the biggest fan of all kinds of sports, and developed an interest in playing soccer, cricket, and badminton. He is the former general secretary of the Bangladesh Heritage and Ethnic Society of Alberta (BHESA) (2012-2014). With the nomination for the Ekushey Youth Awards Ahsan Ullah Rony is recognized in a special way for consis-

tent dedication and commitment to the Mahinur Jahid Memorial Foundation (MJMF), BHESA and other allied organizations. He has been a successful organizer of soccer events, and the cricket tournament, and achieved a champion trophy and other personal awards. His contribution to our youth community and in general to sports will be gratefully remembered.



*Sheikh Jalil*

*Ahsan Ullah Rony*

### **MJMF's Ekushey Youth Awards Ceremony**

On the occasion of the Bengali New Year Celebrations on Saturday, April 25, 2015 at the Pleasantview Community Hall in Edmonton, Alberta the Mahinur Jahid Memorial Foundation (MJMF) held an award ceremony to honour the recipients of the Ekushey Youth Awards 2015.

The Bengali New Year celebration held each year in mid-April marks the start of the spring season. It was celebrated in



*Recipients of MJMF's Ekushey Youth Awards 2015  
(ltr) Sheikh Jalil, Delwar Jahid, Ahsan Ullah Rony*

form of a festival, which is known as Boishakhi Mela, and which includes a colorful cultural program. Delwar Jahid, president of the Bangladesh Heritage and Ethnic Society of Alberta (BHESA), inaugurated the program with a speech about the importance of such festivals and celebrations, as these are an integral part of the Bangladeshi culture and a great opportunity for the people in the community and especially for a younger audience to experience the cultural heritage of Bangladesh.

Later that evening, Delwar Jahid handed over the Ekushey Youth Awards to the

nominated recipients, who received the honour during a handshake ceremony. The crest and citation was given to Sheikh Jalil, who was awarded for his achievements in journalism and his literary work, and Ahsan Ullah Rony, who received the honour for his skillful organizations of youth sports events in the community.

### **More Information**

If you are interested to learn more about the Mahinur Jahid Memorial Foundation, feel free to visit their website at [www.mjmf.org](http://www.mjmf.org).



by Andy Strohkirch

# BHESA

*celebrates Bangladesh*

# Culture

Bangladeshi-Canadians who live in the Edmonton area are connected through a number of local cultural organizations, one of which is BHESA, the Bangladesh Heritage and Ethnic Society of Alberta. In this article we want to introduce this organization and its people to a broader audience.

## Who is BHESA?

Canada's multicultural society is a great example of how people with different ethnic identity, cultural background, believe, and language foster friendship and understanding while building a diverse and vibrant community.

The Bangladesh Heritage and Ethnic Society of Alberta (BHESA) is a socio-cultural, non-political, non-sectarian, and non-profit organization that serves the local community of Bangladeshi-

Canadians comprising of immigrants and descendants, and those people who are interested in the culture, arts, and people of Bangladesh.

Operating in Edmonton, Alberta, and vicinity area BHESA preserves, promotes and celebrates Bangladesh culture, heritage and history with a variety of programs, projects, and services.



*President Delwar Jahid handing out Certificates of Participation to Community Members, who participated in a Sports Event*



*Members of the Community enjoying Bangladeshi Foods during BHESA's Children Festival*

As an example BHESA is providing social and cultural interaction throughout the year by initiating events like Ekushey (International Mother Language Day), Shadinota Dibosh (Independence Day), Pohela Boishakh (Bengali New Year), Iftar Party (Food Festival), Eid Reunion (Festival), Durga Puja Reunion (Festival), Bijoy Dibosh (Victory Day), Children Festival, and the celebration of important Canadian and international commemoration days. Such celebrations allows BHESA to introduce the Bangladesh culture and heritage to a broader community and their children.

BHESA's magazine Edmonton Bichitra,

the magazine of the Bengali community, is providing an additional voice for its people. Other projects are dedicated to the promotion and preservation of the cultural heritage, be it Bangla language, arts, music, film, dance, buildings, peoples' customs, history, or other important heritage.

### **A little History...**

BHESA was founded and incorporated in April 2009 under the name »Bangladesh Cultural Association of Edmonton« by Siddique Hussain, Muhammad N. Islam, Shafiqur Rahman, Shahid Hassan, and Tajul Ali. Already in 2010 BHESA reached a size of about 150 members.



*BCAA's Bengali New Year Celebration in 2011*

BHESA's objectives beside providing member services and building a social, cultural, sports, and educational program were defined by

- the promotion and preservation of the history, culture and heritage of Bangladesh,
- the promotion of the Bangla language and its heritage to the next generations of Bangladeshi-Canadians,
- the promotion of multiculturalism and by fostering understanding and friendship with other cultural organizations.

On December 5, 2012 the organization changed its name from »Bangladesh Cultural Association of Edmonton« to »Bangladesh Heritage and Ethnic Society of Alberta« (BHESA).

### **Publications**

BHESA is issuing a yearly magazine

called Edmonton Bichitra to its community members. The magazine is introducing the work of the organization, its people, and the culture and heritage of Bangladesh. The edition currently in your hands is a special version of the Edmonton Bichitra.

### **Awards**

In 2014 the Bangladesh Heritage and Ethnic Society of Alberta (BHESA) introduced the Ekushey Heritage Award as a means of appreciation for people who stand out exceptionally with great achievements in helping the local community in Edmonton and vicinity area. Later in 2015 the scope of the awards has been opened to cover the Province of Alberta.



*BHESA's Ekushey Heritage Award*

Once a year BHESA is recognizing the achievements of people and organizations who stand out to be a great help or



asset for the local community by awarding a medal of honor for their contributions. The award may be given out multiple times and considered is the work in the different fields education, social work, and community services here in Alberta.

The awards are open to all Albertans, and the candidates are selected through an executive meeting held at BHESA. Considered are the activities and contri-

butions of the candidates over a time period of the entire year. The names of the nominees are officially announced annually prior to International Mother Language Day on February 21st, and the awards are handed out during the following public program of BHESA.

#### **More Information**

If you are interested to learn more about our organization, we encourage you to visit our website at [www.bhesa.ca](http://www.bhesa.ca).

*by Andy Strohkirch*

# Celebration *of International Mother Language Day*

On February 21, 2015 a number of organizations, professional bodies, and people interested in the celebration of mother language and the topic of linguistic diversity joined together at the monument initiated by the Bangladesh PressClub Centre of Alberta (BPCA) in assistance with the Bangladesh Heritage and Ethnic Society of Alberta (BHESA) to celebrate International Mother Language

Day.

#### **What is Mother Language Day?**

Mother Language Day is meant to be a day to celebrate mother tongues or mother languages. It's meant to be a reminder of the rich existence of linguistic and cultural diversity in our civilization. It's a chance for us to celebrate our own and everyone else's heritage and



*Floral tribute to Bangladesh's language martyrs*

and culture, to bring people of all nations closer together.

International Mother Language Day is celebrated annually on February 21st all over the world. It was proclaimed by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in November 1999. The date (February 21) represents a day in 1952, where students in Dhaka, Bangladesh were demonstrating for the recognition of their language, and were shot and killed by police.

### **The celebration**

The program in 2015 was held at the premises of the Students' Association of the Grant MacEwan University in Edmonton. The program officially started at

12.00 pm with a floral tribute to the language martyrs of Bangladesh, who left their lives for the recognition of their mother language Bangla.

Among others the president of BHESA Delwar Jahid, Tomal Islam, Ahsan Ullah, Masud Bhuiyan, Anamur Rahman, Dollin Islam and Mezbaul Islam paid their respect to the martyrs of the language movement. Language veteran Mohammad Siddique Hussain, as well as Hafizur-Rahman, Dr. Mushfiqur Rahman, Tajul Ali (former president of BHESA), Mohd. Zakaria and others joined in.



*BHESA Children's Drawing Competition*

As principal partner of the program the Bangladesh Heritage and Ethnic Society of Alberta (BHESA) organized a children's drawing competition and a general discussion about the topic. The paintings of Borno, Shukurannya, Shaharin, Rahat,



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Choudhury, Nafisa, and others were honored with a prize. The following discussion was attended by chief guest Mohd. Siddique Hossain and the guests of honor Dr. Nurul Islam, Dr. Hafizur Rahman, Dr. Mushfiqur Rahman, and Mezbaul Islam, presided over by Delwar Jahid. Among others Seaowty Choudhury, Navid Mirza, Roudashi Chowdhury and Nafisa Mirza spoke on the occasion.

publication, the International Mother Language Day Magazine, Edition 2015, which has been distributed during the occasion and to connected communities.



*(ltr) Dr. Hafizur Rahman, Mohd. Siddique Hossain, Dr. Moshfiqur Rahman, Delwar Jahid, Masud Bhuiyan, Anamur Rahman, Sheikh Jalil, Ahsan Ullah, Kausar Khodokar*



*Celebration of International Mother Language Day 2015*

In his speech Mohammad Siddiq Husain recalled the Language Movement of 1952 and his own participation in it. President of BHESA, Delwar Jahid reminded the guardians of all children about the importance to exercise the mother tongue at home, while appreciating the paintings and participation of the children.

BHESA then announced the nominees of its 2015 Ekushey Heritage Awards. Asian News and Views organized foods and light entertainment. BPCA prepared a





by Andy Strohkirch

# BHESA's *Ekushey Heritage* Award 2015

The Bangladesh Heritage and Ethnic Society of Alberta (BHESA) nominated and awarded four dedicated volunteers for the Ekushey Heritage Award 2015. The nominees had officially been announced at the celebration ceremonies of International Mother Language Day on February 21, 2015 in Edmonton, while the award ceremony was held on BHESA's Bengali New Year celebration on April 25, 2015.

This year's nominated recipients are:

- *Kausar Khondokar*  
(MacEwan University)
- *Ali Noor-e-Alam* (Bangla Bazar)
- *Mohd. Zakaria*  
(Former Executive of BHESA)
- *Dr. Moshfiqur Rahman*  
(Former Executive of BHESA)

## **Kausar Khondokar**

Awarded for Community Service. Kausar

Khondokar is currently the Director Of Finance & Operations at Grant MacEwan University (Students' Association). He has a M. Comm. in Accounting and in Finance (University of Chittagong), and an MBA in Finance and Banking (Northern University of Dhaka). He has professional experience in a number of fields, e.g. as Controller (C-Sox Management), Director of Operations (Municipal Land & Housing), Controller (Continental Capital Management Inc.), Accountant (Government, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education). Kausar is actively involved in the community. He has contributed articles for BHESA's Edmonton Bichitra and he took part in cultural and voluntary activities.

## **Ali Noor-e-Alam**

Awarded for Community Service. Ali Noor-e-Alam is a pioneer of Bangladeshi business in Edmonton. He established



*Recipients of the BHESA's Ekushey Heritage Award 2015  
[ltr] Delwar Jahid, Ali Noor-e-Alam, Dr. Moshfiqur Rahman, Kausar Khondokar, Mohd. Zakaria*

Bangla Bazar an ethnic grocery store at the southern part of the city. He assists and supports community initiatives, and he took part in the voluntary efforts of BHESA and other organizations. Many people in the community know him for his generosity and gesture. He also volunteered for the benefit of the Bangladesh Pavilion at the Edmonton Heritage Festival and he has been serving the community for more than 21 years.

### **Mohd. Zakaria**

Awarded for Community Service. Mohd. Zakaria is recognized in a special way for consistent dedication and commitment to our organization, the Bangladesh Heritage and Ethnic Society of Alberta (BHESA). He was elected as an executive several times and has served BHESA

with utmost sincerity. As a dedicated volunteer for the Bangladesh Pavilion at the Edmonton Heritage Festival he has shown highest commitment, and he has been serving the community with active participation.

### **Dr. Moshfiqur Rahman**

Awarded for Community Service. Dr. Moshfiqur Rahman (PhD) is currently a Research Associate with the Department of Chemical & Materials Engineering at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. He was former Prof. of the Department of Chemical Engineering and Polymer Science at the Shahjalal University of Science & Technology in Bangladesh, and has collected research experience in the countries Japan, USA and United Kingdom. He achieved awards and



He achieved awards and honors at the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) Fellowship, ODASS Scholarship in UK, University Scholarship for the Jahangirnagar University in Bangladesh, where he made his M.Sc. in Organic Chemistry, and a Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC) Scholarship. Moshfiqur Rahman is an active volunteer within the community for BHESA and BCAE, has participated every year for the Bangladesh Pavilion at the Edmonton Heritage Festival, and is advisor and volunteer at Alberta's Inter-Science Association.

### **Ekushey Heritage Award 2014**

In 2014 BHESA honored six dedicated volunteers with the Ekushey Heritage Award 2014:

- *R. Mohammad Siddique Hossain* (Language Movement Participant)
- *Prof. Dr. Mohd. Nurul Islam* (Founder of Edmonton Bangla School)
- *Dr. M. Hafizur Rahman* (Former President of BCAE)
- *Tajul Ali* (Former President of BHESA)
- *Shahid Hassan* (Founder of BHESA)
- *Mohammad Ismail* (Former Vice-President of BHESA)



*Group music performance on Bengali New Year*

by Andy Strahkirch

# BHESA's

## *Bengali New Year Celebration*

# in Edmonton

The Bangladesh Heritage and Ethnic Society of Alberta (BHESA) has celebrated the Bengali New Year in Edmonton, Canada on April 25, 2015. The colourful gala was held at the Pleasantview Community Hall, where the Bangladeshi community and anyone interested had the opportunity to enjoy Bengali culture with ethnic foods, music, dance and more.

The Bengali New Year celebration takes place in mid-April and typically marks the start of spring for us here in North America. In Bangladesh and West Bengal the celebration is known as the Pohela Baishakh, whereas throughout the world it is called Boishakhi Mela, originating from the famous celebration in London, England which is organized on a yearly base by the local Bengali community there.

The Bengali community celebrates this day with great enthusiasm, and the New Year Celebration is an important part of the cultural heritage of Bangladesh. The festival is also used as a hub for new and professional artists to showcase their music and dance performances.

BHESA's Boishakhi Mela program was inaugurated by eminent journalist and freedom fighter Delwar Jahid, president of BHESA. Delwar Jahid underlined the importance of the festival and celebrations as an integral part of Bangladeshi culture and as a landmark event for the Bengali community. The day of the Bengali New Year with its celebration of traditions and culture is the occurring beginning of a new chapter in life, and is bringing a new vision for the future on the canvas of a historic background.



Guest of Honor Hon. Sohail Quadri, the MLA for Edmonton-Mill Woods, greeted the community and praised its role as an inspiring example for the Bengali communities in Alberta. Candidate of the PC Party for Edmonton-Ellerslie Harman Singh Kandola also spoke on the occasion and greeted the community "Shuvo Noboborsho", a Happy New Year.

Ahnaf Rahman, Bengali folk music by Bikash Talukder's band with Nirjur on vocals and harmonium, and Bangladeshi songs performed by local artist Chameli and famous singer Jania Naz. The excellent sound of the evening was provided by Muntasir and Adil from Sound Waves Event of Edmonton.

Yummy traditional food was provided by Md. Ismail (former Vice President), Dr. Hafezur Rahman (Advisor of BHESA),



*Bengali folk music by Bikash Talukder & Friends*

The colourful cultural program included a poetry reading by Sheikh Jalil, multiple group dance performances by Saam Center of Edmonton, dance performances by local artist Anoshka, Comedian Muhammad Ismail, a group music performance with Chameli Lashkar, Seoti Chowdhury, Rodhasi Chowdhury, Nafisa Mirza, Mirza Nabid, Iltiphat Naheyen, Ilatija Naheyen, Alfya Sahahreena, and



*Bengali folk music by Bikash Talukder & Friends*



Tazul Ali (former President), Bikash Talukder, Masud Bhuiyan (General Secretary), Syfur Hasan (Joint Editor for Edmonton Bichitra), Nurul Huda (Treasurer), Moorsheda Begum Ismail (former Member of Cultural Affairs), Lutfunnessa Jahid, Ishrat Jahan (former Member of Communication Affairs) and Golsan Jabin, Tomal Islam (former Vice President), Dollin Islam (Member of Cultural Affairs), and Shafiqul Islam.

BPCA (Bangladesh PressClub Centre of Alberta) and MJMF (Mahinur Jahid Memorial Foundation) distributed gifts to all

the children present at the event.

The decorations and stage management was organized by the anchor of the program, Anamur Rahman (Joint General Secretary), and Basir Mirza. The Bangla Bazaar of Edmonton held a raffle draw at the event, where five lucky winners received a gift certificate.

The event was well received, and many visitors wore traditional clothes like colorful sharees for women and punjabis for men.



*"Pulling the Boat", Painting from 1955 by Bangladeshi artist Zainul Abedin*



# Executive Committee

'15



**Delwar Jahid**  
*President*



**Zulfiqur Ahmed**  
*Vice President*



**Mashod Bhuiyan**  
*General Secretary*



**M. Anamur Rahman Mia**  
*Joint General Secretary*



**Nurul Huda**  
*Treasurer*



**Anwarul Islam**  
*Ex-Officio /  
Honorary Member*



**Dollin Islam**  
*Member of  
Cultural Affairs*



**Riya Karin**  
*Member of  
Communication Affairs*



**Mohammed Mobasser**  
*Member of  
Social Affairs*



**Ali Akash**  
*Member of  
Sports Affairs*



**Mahsum Chowdhury**  
*Member of  
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