

HERITAGE

POISHA OVER TIME

FAYEKA ZABEEN SIDDIQUA



How many of you remember the eight scalloped, wavy 10 poisha coin with a symbolic happy family image in the middle? What about the octagonal shaped 50 poisha with a bunch of food items like fish, hen, pineapple and banana on it?

Even though these coins, along with 1, 5 and 25 poisha coins are not circulated anymore, they are the important evidence of our economic and social history.

In 1971, when Bangladesh started its journey as an independent nation, we had Pakistani rupee as our interim currency. The history of Bangladeshi coins experienced a drastic transformation in 1972 when Taka replaced rupee as our new currency.

Within the next three years of having taka as our currency, Bangladesh was introduced with a range of poishas in denominations of 1, 5, 10, 25 poisha and 1 taka coin. These coins used to show variety in terms of size, material, minting technologies and images featured on their reverse side. The 1 poisha coin was struck in aluminum for example, whereas the 25

poisha coin was in steel and 1 taka coin in copper-nickel. With time, we are now left with 1, 2 and 5 taka coins only. For minting coins we mostly use core materials like aluminum and steel. Other than having coins for regular circulation, the government of Bangladesh also started issuing coins to signify various remarkable national events like international Mother Language Day 2000, ICC Cricket World Cup 2011, 150th Birthday of Rabindranath Tagore 2011 and 40th Victory Anniversary of Bangladesh 2011.

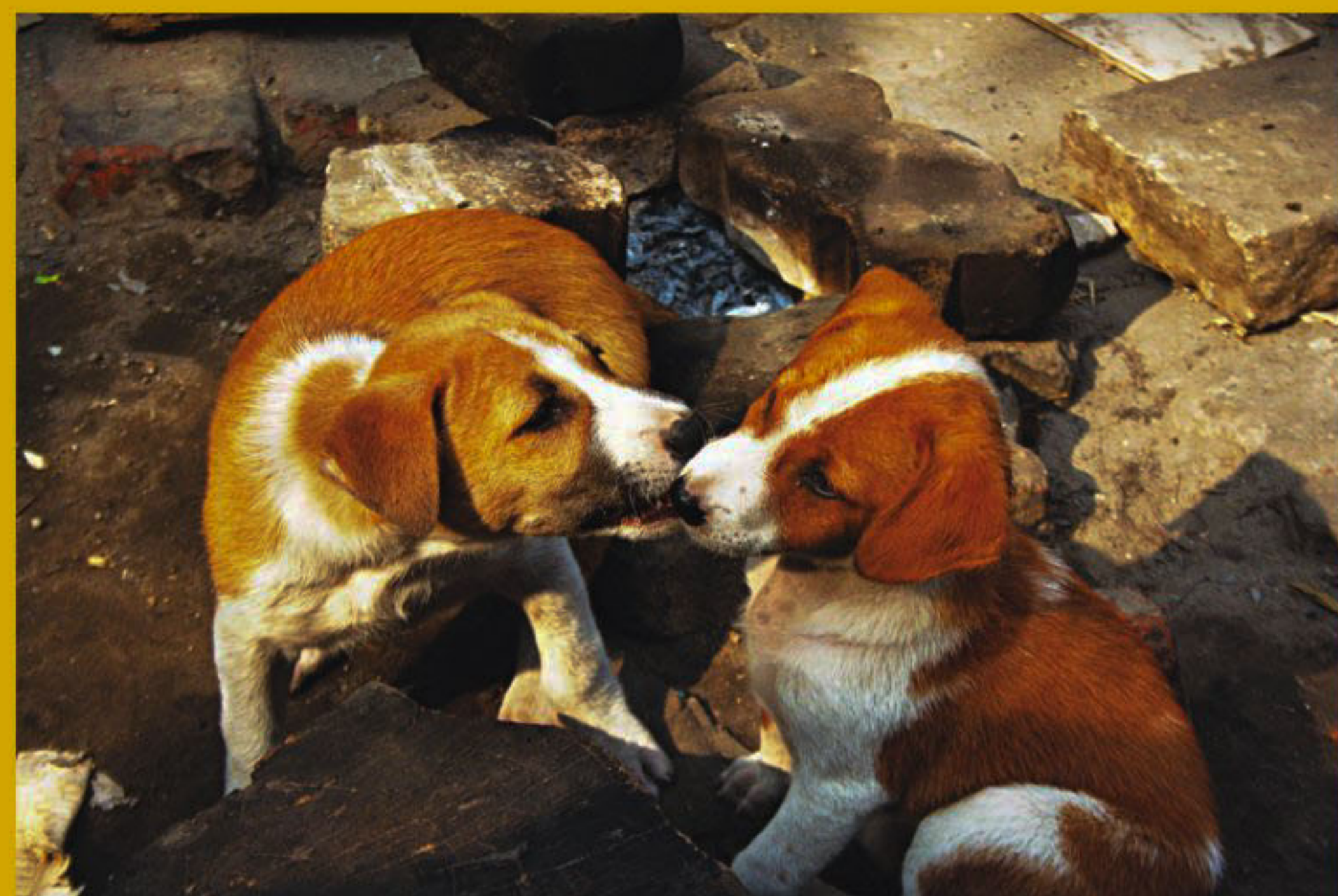
SOURCE: COINS FROM BANGLADESH PUBLISHED BY NYMPHEA PUBLICATION IN COLLABORATION WITH STANDARD CHARTERED BANK, BANGLADESH.

ANIMAL WELFARE

LAWS FOR ANIMALS

NAZIBA BASHER

PHOTO: KAZI TAHSIN AGAZ APURBO



Recently, there has been a rise in animal trading, in the country, where many people bring in foreign breeds and sell them. The traders, evidently, do it only for the money, charging above 20,000 takas per animal, without ensuring safety or any kind of medical treatment. Even though there are laws against animal cruelty, we see it persist in our society everyday.

"The main piece of legislation that provides legal protection for animals in our country is the Cruelty to Animals Act 1920, which although is an antiquated piece of legislation in desperate need of modernisation to meet the demands of our times, is nonetheless quite extensive," says Lawyer Nadia Choudhury.

With regards to animal trading, the most pertinent provision comes under section 4 of the said Act which states, "If any person- (a) overdrives, cruelly or unnecessarily beats, or otherwise ill-treats any animal, (b) binds, keeps or carries any animal in such a manner or position as to subject the animal to unnecessary pain or suffering, or (c) offers, exposes or has in his possession for sale any live animal which is suffering pain by reason of mutilation, starvation, thirst, overcrowding or other ill-treatment, or any dead animal which he has reason to believe to have been

killed in an unnecessarily cruel manner, he shall be punished for every such offence with fine which may extend to one hundred Taka, or with imprisonment for a term which may

extend to three months, or with both." "This legislation at its time provided adequate penalty to suffice as deterrence from offending, but fails to counter the gravity of such crimes

today," says Nadia. "Unfortunately, even in the international arena there is still much work left to be done with regards to legal instruments that protect animal rights," she says.

It clear that more preventative measures need to be taken to ensure animals are protected, and one of those measures must include legal protection and strong punitive actions against offenders to prevent them from committing such crimes.

The trade of foreign breeds of cats and dogs and certain birds has become very popular in our country, which is surprisingly being enabled by professed animal lovers. "If we love animals, we have to put an end to animal trading and teach our children to be responsible pet owners, instead of buying a pet on a whim from a pet store, or an individual who is selling," she adds. Most importantly, we have to understand that such cruelty is punishable by law, albeit under an outmoded but fully functional law or under international instruments.

With so many cats and dogs out on the street in our country in need of loving homes, there should be absolutely no place for animal traders of any kind within our society. Nadia's last piece of advice to animal lovers across the nation- "Stop buying. Please adopt!"

SHUTTERSTORIES



CARTOONS AS A MEANS OF PROTEST

PHOTOS: COURTESY

To protest the heinous crime of sexual harassment that had taken place on Pahela Baishakh, groups of cartoonists launched a unique exhibition last month at the TSC, Dhaka University. Their powerful strokes offer a way to criticise our behaviours, attitude and also criticise the government for their quiescent role regarding the incident.



Morshed Mishu



Mehedi Haque



Asif



Prosun Halder