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Activities for students returning home on vacation



PHOTO: DARSHAN CHAKMA

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For a lot of us, summer brings about two things – a semester break with lots of free time and a return to our beloved motherland from college abroad. Today we take a look at how you can combine these two elements for an enjoyable and productive summer break.

TOUR THE COUNTRY

Bangladesh has lots of tourist spots that deserve at least a single visit in a lifetime, if not many more. Unfortunately, a considerable number of pre-college students never end up visiting even the most significant ones. And for students attending colleges abroad, the chances of visiting them become next to nothing. However, this situation can be remedied by proper utilisation of summer breaks. Trips to mainstream spots like the sea beach of Cox's Bazar, the hill tracts of Bandarban or the tea gardens of Sylhet can be easily conducted within a maximum of seven days. But if you have already crossed these places off your list, you can always choose the less mainstream options such as the swamp forest of Ratargul. Regardless, whether it is with friends or family, these trips can be very refreshing while providing a look at the mostly untainted natural beauty our country harbours in it.

REVISIT THE LOCAL CUISINE

Naturally, Bangladeshis living abroad develop a strong yearning for the country they left behind, and a lot of it is for the local food. They return with a new found love for even the most banal of local food items. Luckily, places serving local food at varying price ranges are available in abundance. You can visit the infamous Star Kabab for kacchi biriyani or naan and sheek kabab, the Royal



Restaurant in Lalbagh for pesta badam shorbot, Chaap Shamlao in either Dhanmondi or Banani for traditional chaap and luchi, among other places. Besides, if you have a palate for street delicacies like fuchka and chotpoti, then hit the streets of your locality to re-experience street food the way it's meant to be experienced – on the streets. And fortunately, local food comes cheap if you know where to look. So you won't have to break the bank for this.

DEVELOP A NEW SKILL

Local high schoolers aspirant of foreign education run on a tight schedule and more often than not miss out on pursuing almost anything outside of studies. This may range from personal hobbies to potentially life-saving survival skills. A return to Bangladesh during summer vacations provides an opportunity in this regard to make up for lost time. Various institutes like Alliance Francaise provide courses on foreign languages and photography that can be accommodated within this short break. Also, the more wary of us can focus on honing survival skills. Driving courses offered by BRTA can be completed within a month, and so can be swimming courses offered by various local organisations. Or you can pursue whatever matches your taste and aptitude. But at the end of the day, you will have added some value to your life and maybe even your career in the process. Last but not least, make sure to relax – read a book, sleep in, spend quality time with friends and family, and in the midst of it all, create memories.

Computers, video games and good food – that's Ahnaf Akeef in a nutshell. You can reach him at ahnafakeef298@gmail.com

When to Use Bangla

Since Bangla is our mother tongue, sometimes it's just easier to express ourselves in Bangla than in English. Don't be afraid to do so over the social media. However, it is suggested that you use full-fledged Bangla fonts rather than transliterating, in order to respect the language, though it's not a necessity. Use Avro, Bijoy or similar software to achieve that. And a small personal anecdote – I've observed that status updates written in Bangla gather more engagements than those transliterated. Want a few extra likes on your post? Download Avro and press F12.



Asking for Directions

It is needless to say that you should ask for directions if you are lost. But what you need to know is whom to ask for directions. Never ever ask any child for direction. Chances are that they'll point you to the opposite direction. The best idea is to ask any of the local shopkeepers. Or better still, ask a rickshawala. They'll know best. Even better, ask multiple people to ensure nobody misled you. The key is not to hesitate. Ask as many people as you need if confused. And don't forget to mutter the magical "thank you" afterwards.

