

Visiting New York City – the world's premier tourist destination, for the first time felt like a dream come true. After few more visits though, I was no longer enamored by the icons of this city. I wanted to get off the beaten tourist path and my local friends helped me by recommending some surprisingly fun yet alternative activities. Read on!



**Yoga to the people:** If you're looking for an introduction to Yoga while you are in New York – look no further! This unique yoga studio aims to make yoga available for everyone. For a mere \$5, you'll get a solid 90 minutes yoga session along which covers mat/towel rental as well as a bottle of water. Being the first timer, I found it challenging, but also pretty enjoyable!

**Comedy Cellar:** For the fans of stand-up comedy – this will undoubtedly be a fun night out without breaking the bank. Many talented, up and coming stand-up comedians come here to hone their skills as well as entertain a diverse crowd. If you're lucky, you might get to see people like Chris Rock and Louis CK. While it was a little cramped, the quality of performances and choice of food and beverages made me a loyal fan.

**Flea market:** For those who are wondering what a flea market is – it's an outdoor market selling old/used articles and antiques. Touted as the "part of the social fabric of NYC" – The Hell's Kitchen flea market has a generous collection of jewelries, paintings, clothes and all kind of random stuff. You'll also be happy to find a number of food trucks that serve a decent variety of delicacies.

**Trapeze lessons:** "Forget Fear, Worry about the addiction" – that's the motto people live by at the Trapeze School New York. A two hour introductory lesson will set you back \$70 and get you all set for that dream circus job.

# SEEING IN A DIFFERENT WAY

MONZUR MORSHED

PHOTOS: COURTESY



## ENDEAVOUR

you've had. Beside from the obvious thrill of an action sport, you'll get an extra kick from the majestic views. Just like skydiving or hang-gliding, you can choose to get your photos taken by a pro photographer (highly recommended).

**Meet up groups:** Meetup.com is a platform for likeminded people to get together for a common cause. If you're bored or just looking for something new – join one of the groups for fun-filled activities like pick up soccer, salsa, networking for start-ups and many more. You can also go to a Couch Surfing meetup which take place almost every week in the hip restaurants of the town.

NYC never ceases to amaze me after all these trips. The sheer number of things you can do here is truly mind boggling. So if you're done with the well-known tourist spots, you could have some different plans for the next time and make the most out of your NYC trip!

The writer is the Business Development Manager at Noman Group.

## HERITAGE

# DHAKA 100 YEARS AGO

M H HAIDER

Dhaka in mid-1900s was not a great place to be. The glorious Mughal ways of life had by then waned away, replaced through numerous years of colonial British rule. Even half a century ago from that time, one could relish in those traditions and practices.

A tribute to that bygone era was 'Dhaka. Ajshe Panchas Baras Pahle', a show that was aired in 1945 from All India Radio's Dhaka centre. The show was hosted by Hakim Habibur Rahman (1881-1947).

He was a man who wore many hats. Hakim was an Unani physician. He was a politician, a close associate of Nawab Sir Khwaja Salimullah. In fact, if you go to Ahsan Manzil, you would see a portrait of him.

He was also an avid collector of old manuscripts and coins. A testament to this

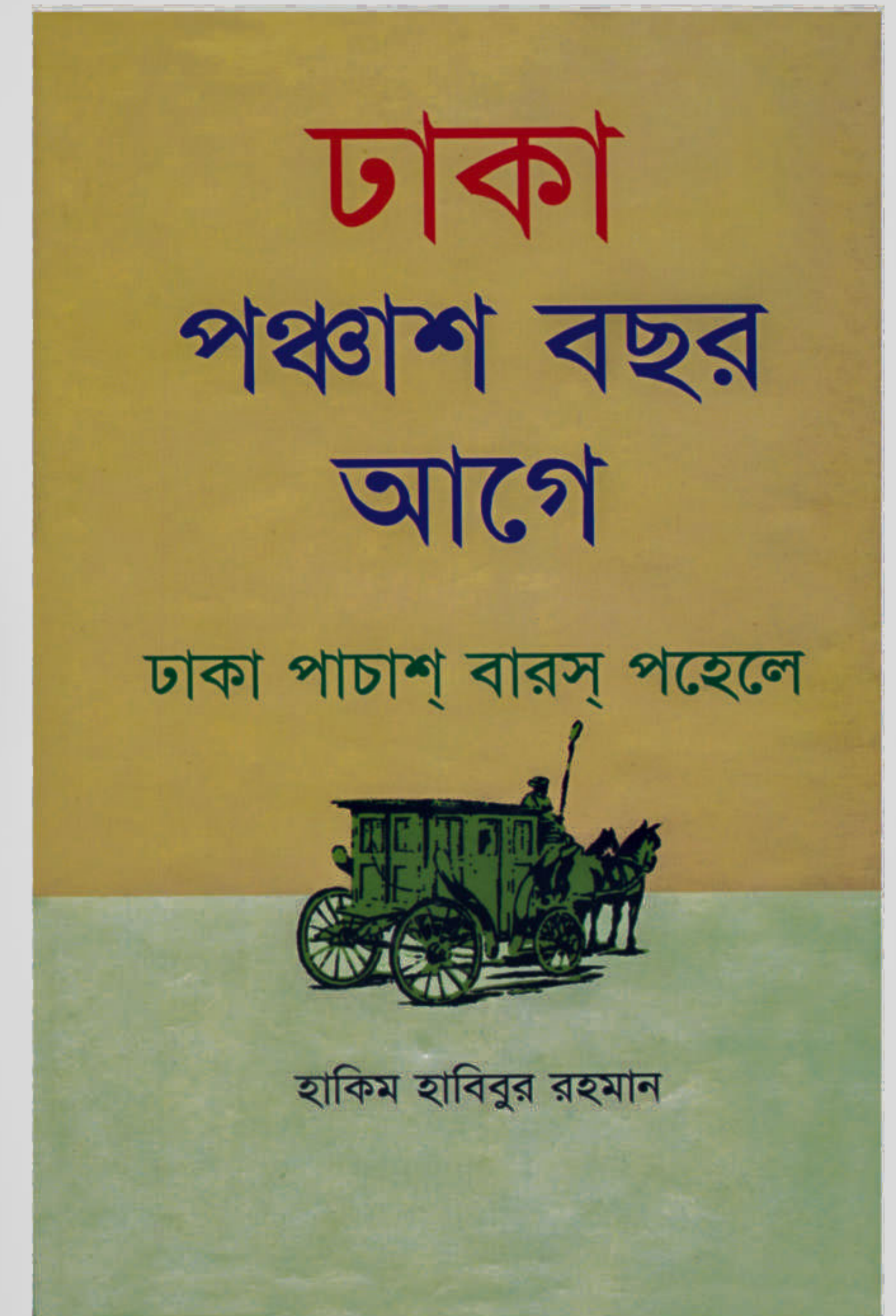


can be found in the introduction of historian and archaeologist Dr Nalini Kanta Bhattasali's catalogue on Hakim Habibur Rahman's coin collection, which he donated to a museum: "... no one is better fitted to compile this catalogue than the donor himself," he wrote. "But as his profession is 'herbs' and mine 'coins' he has wisely and compassionately left the work to be done by the professional, though, I am sure, the man of 'herbs' knows more about old coins than the man of 'coins' himself."

time. Hence, today, when we read the book, it is essentially about Dhaka more than a hundred years ago.

Topics include various foods, cuisines and culinary traditions of Dhaka, the different 'tupis' (caps) people used to wear, recreational activities, etc. This book is very different from more or less all the others about Dhaka from the perspective that it almost solely discusses Dhaka from a lifestyle perspective (food, fashion, etc.).

Hakim Habibur Rahman was also a litterateur. At the young age of 13, when



### TOP 7 PICK OF THE WEEK

<b>#1</b> The Complete Asterix box set the (35 Title) Publisher: Hachette India Price : 34, 930	<b>#2</b> Geologica: Earth's Dynamic Forces By : Robert Coenraads Price : 12,000	<b>#3</b> Surrealism – Desire Unbound By : Nicholas Serota Price : 5, 900	<b>#4</b> Kama Sutra Aphorisms Of Love By : LANCE DANE Price : 5,500
<b>#5</b> Weakened States Seeking Renewal: British Official Reports from South Asia By : Lionel Carter Price : 5,900	<b>#6</b> Meditation Relax Your Body Clear Your Mind Publisher: Parragon Inc Price : 1,950	<b>#7</b> Arunachal : People, Arts and Adornments in India's Eastern Himalayas By : Ham P.V. Price : 4,990	

The radio show was published in book form in the year 1949. The book, named Dhaka Panchas Baras Pahle (Dhaka 50 years ago), has been translated to Bengali by Dr Mohammad Rezaul Karim.

Today, it is an invaluable primary source of information for historians working on Dhaka. The book is a rather thin one, and it is quite an easy read. It is broken down in small chapters – episodes of the radio programme.

One glance at the contents section will tell you that the book deals with lifestyle of Dhaka in late 1800s/early 1900s: in the time of the radio programme, Hakim Habibur Rahman spoke of Dhaka 50 years ago from that

Nawab Ahsanullah passed away, he wrote a poem as a tribute to him. In 1906, under his editorship, the first monthly Urdu periodical in Dhaka, named Al Masriq, was published.

With so many accomplishments, he had left behind many rich legacies. 'Dhaka Panchas Baras Pahle' is one of them – an important one, for that matter.

The book is very rare. Look for it whenever you are in Nil Khet and in Aziz Supermarket. You might get a copy if you're lucky. But if you are impatient and curiosity has taken over, visit the library of Asiatic Society of Bangladesh. You cannot borrow unless you are a member, but the library is open for everyone to come, sit and read.

## PEARLS OF WISDOM



"If you think your religion requires discrimination, you're probably misreading your faith."

— DASHANNE STOKES  
Author, speaker, commentator

"Christian, Jew, Muslim, shaman, Zoroastrian, stone, ground, mountain, river, each has a secret way of being with the mystery, unique and not to be judged."

— RUMI  
Poet, jurist, Islamic scholar, theologian and sufi mystic



"The world has always teemed with a wide variety of spiritual thought and many differing journeys of the heart. But too often the world has used these differences as a weapon. How much agony has been wrought by what should be a thing of beauty – religious passion?"

— STEVE GOODIER  
Author

