

Long drives around Dhaka

"I felt my lungs inflate with the onrush of scenery—air, mountains, trees, people. I thought, 'This is what it is to be happy.'"

Sylvia, Plath truly nailed what it is like to be happy and time in nature is truly an anecdote to most ailments. Be it to relieve office stress, the road rage we suffer from being stuck in traffic for hours, the assignments and overdue work, that keeps piling up—calling a time out and taking a much

over, namely the Baliati Palace. Located some fifty kilometers away from the capital, this magnificent ancient Greek style palace is one of the most famous archaeological sites near Dhaka. A long drive does not always need to have a particular destination, so enjoy the street-side view, stock up on a lot of munchies and take a lot of breaks—take that street-side photo, grab a cup of hot tea from the 'tong' and blast

have breakfast at one of the roadside stalls that are a common fixture throughout the journey. As you near Mawa-ghat, you will be greeted with the hustle and bustle of the busy riverside coupled with the odd contrast of a quiet house nestled in the countryside. Make a day out of the longdrive; spend some time in one of the sandbars of Padma before heading back to the city.

DHAKA-SRIMANGAL

During the monsoon, the Dhaka-Sylhet highway is picturesque. The trees are lush and green, city gives in to another city, a bustling bazaar gives way to a kitchen market and the landscape always changing is a sight for sore eyes. It will take about 4-5 hours to make your way to Srimangal with all the breaks and stops taken into account. Be sure to make the journey during monsoon, the tea-gardens on the way to the town are the delight after the dull-grey Dhaka city.

KURIL BISHWA ROAD

If you are starved for speed, then this is the best option for you. Take your car out for a quick spin on the Kuril Bishwa road just on the outskirts of the capital. The roads are paved, empty and on both sides is an eerie stillness as the area is being developed for new housing estates. Close to the city, this a short escape for those in need of a quick adventure out of Dhaka.

Given all of this, long drives rarely do need a plan or direction. Take your car and head out of the town, and in a few hours if you find yourself in Cox's Bazar, well then a splash in the sea is always welcome!

By Abida Rahman Chowdhury
Photo: Abida Rahman Chowdhury, Sakib Ahmed, Sayam U Chowdhury



needed break is an essential remedy to beat the city blues. Although the traffic around Dhaka is a menace during weekdays, the streets turn fairly empty during weekends and long-drives are an ideal option to unwind after a long and stressful week.

DHAKA-MANIKGANJ

This route makes for a perfect weekend drive with a wonderful excuse for a stop-



some amazing music.

MAWA-GHAT

Even in the scorching heat, driving to Padma River is a treat. Barely a two hour ride from the city, Mawa has something for everyone. The journey to Mawa is scenic, the anticipation of the mighty Padma River, the thrill of a crisp fried Hilsha or a bathe in the river is what makes the journey. If you start early in the morning, then you can

