

# POKÉMON GO in Bangladesh?

MUHAMMAD MUHTASIM JAWAD

While the world is going crazy over it, Bangladesh has not yet been blessed with Pokémon GO. Excited Bangladeshis are still boarding the hype train with activities ranging from creating refurbished Pokémon memes or using fake GPS apps to become "Poke-Masters". But when the game does land, what could happen?

The Clash of Clans gangs will not be "k3wLz" anymore. Pokémon GO will be the new trend. Teenagers and "oldies" alike will be out on the streets with their smartphones, lost in the world of augmented Google Maps peppered with these "Japanese cartoon" creatures called Pokémon. *Genjam* will gain a new definition: Pokémon battles. Sports like pen fight, cricket and football may be in jeopardy too, as classrooms, open fields or *moholla'r goli* will be crawling with self-proclaimed "trainers". Educational institutions will be under pressure from students to arrange more excursions and picnics. Students will volunteer to take detention classes after school.

Do not be surprised when you see your building's walls receiving the graffiti treatment from over-enthusiastic fanboys/girls. "Team Pocket", "Ash Ketchup Squad", "Dhaka Pokémon Gangzta BoyZ.... WE R ROCKZ" and the likes will sprout all over the town. Fashionistas predict that fashion statements will be redefined. Boys and girls with snapbacks and backpacks will be out to hunt Pokémons. Car speakers booming to the sounds of "I Wanna Be the Very Best" and other Pokémon songs in Bangla could be a daily source of entertainment and irritation. Rickshaw-pullers and CNG drivers with expertise on Pokémon locations can count on getting extra tips.

We all remember that urban legend "Never keep your doors open, because one day you might find a PC Chicken store inside your home." Well, add more threats to that horrible scenario now. Home security situations are slated to be at an all-time low. People may come barging in to your home without permission, only to steal invisible animated creatures from your bathroom or kitchen. Scared? What if your home gets marked as a Pokémon Gym by this strange game? Google "How to start a start-up".

Imagine the love life of the humans of Bangladesh. "Jaan, you look like a total Jigglypuff today!" – the lover boy would shout out, while the embarrassed girl would reply, "Jah dushtu, you are such a dashing, cute Pikachu." Feeling nauseated? Try imagining pick-up lines and marriage vows like "My prem for you will last as long as the fire on Charmander's tail." Wedding

photography will enter new dimensions as bride and groom will want their marriages to be blessed by the presence of these pocket monsters. Speaking of weddings, guys might go up to their potential in-laws and announce their worthiness by stating, "Chowdhury Shaheb, I may not have enough money or degree, but I have a heart full of love and a rare Mewtwo."

Feeling lonely and unsocial late at night? Get excited. Your favourite telecom operators will continuously text you all day and all night about their amazing data plans which shall help you play unlimited Pokémon GO. They may throw in some in-game Pokémon goodies too. Pokémon-themed restaurant? Hell yeah. Foodbank will be flooded with posts from people flocking to restaurants that can successfully manage to isolate rare Pokemons inside their establishments. However, a "Free Wi-Fi" sign might not lure in customers only – it can also bring tons of unwanted "trainers" who won't buy anything.

Aunties in the neighbourhood, it's time to move away from Sultan Suleiman and Star Minus on your televisions. Pika Ferdousi will be on all the channels with her "magical" recipes – entire episodes shot at Pokémon gyms. And who would want to miss the juicy gossips on whose offspring is fit to be a Pokémon Master? "You know bhabi, my daughter caught 15 Pokémons last week. She is such a gem!" There will definitely be room for dissatisfaction too. Your peaceful afternoon slumber may be broken by screams like "Worthless boy! You can't even catch a Magikarp! No new smartphone for you till you make your mother proud!" Do expect distant relatives and long lost friends to drop by at your place. No, they wouldn't want food, they would want to explore the area for you-know-what.

Did you hear about a guy from New Zealand who decided to quit his job and set out on a quest to become a Pokémon Master? Bangladesh will be no different. Expect "Works at Student" or "Rich Boy at Dad's Hotel" to be wiped off from Facebook profiles, being replaced by "#1 PokeBoy at Pakamon Centar, Tikatuli". Also, why study for Master's when you can be a Pokémon Master?

Jokes apart, this game has the potential to bring some positive effects in our lives. Take a good hard look at the kids who never get out of their rooms and are glued to their gadgets. Look at the selfie-taking ducks. They will all perhaps try to experience the beautiful nature and wildlife (?) of Dhaka for a change.

Jawad is your next-door superhero who needs you to get him his cape. Your curtains will work too. Shout at him on [fb.com/jawad.muhtasim](https://www.facebook.com/jawad.muhtasim) or [jawad.mmjr@gmail.com](mailto:jawad.mmjr@gmail.com)

