

Pohela Falgun – an easy guide for busy ones

To mark the end of mundane 'Magh' and a bleak winter, the much awaited Boshonto will be arriving shortly.

'Boshonto Utshob' which literally means 'Spring Festival', is a joyous occasion for Bengalis, welcoming spring through flamboyant celebrations from daylong cultural shows to colourful rallies.

With your perfect Boshonto themed wardrobe checked off from your pre-Falgun

preps list, all you need is to gather a handful of friends, or family, to hit the most exclusive Pohela Falgun events in town.

Ever since the Bengali year 1401, the grand 'Boshonto Utshob' has been celebrated and organised annually by the Jatiya Boshonto Utshab Udjapan Parishad. The main event will be taking place at Bakultola of the Faculty of Fine Arts of Dhaka University (DU).

The program will start early in the morn-

ing with melodious tunes of classic songs. Thousands of men and women, dressed in their vibrant attires, are expected to gather at the Bakultola to sing along the timeless melodies. Soulful poetry and bedazzling dance performances by some of the most talented performers of this generation will continue throughout the day at the Bakultola.

In addition to these, a festive procession, exclusive cultural performances by tribal performers and children's performances will also follow in between.

In the evening, the festivity will shift to the various other locations - Rabindro Shorobor, Dhanmondi; Bahadur Shah Park, Old Dhaka; and Rabindro Shoroni, Uttara.

Besides the Jatiya Boshonto Utshab Udjapan Parishad, other organisations including the Dhaka University Cultural Society, Jahangirnagar University and Chhayanaut also organise different spectacular cultural events to celebrate Boshonto Utshob.

Veteran actor, writer and renowned television personality, Aly Zaker is currently serving as the President of Jatiya Boshonto Utshab Udjapan Parishad. Kazi Aref is working as the General Secretary.

By Nafisa Faruque



The alternative Pohela Falgun

The arrival of spring brings with it fresh hope and a renewed reason to celebrate life for us Bengalis who await its welcoming ceremony with much anticipation. Breaking the monotony of a dull winter and yet unlike the unbearable summer heat that follows too soon, spring colours the trees with various shades of green, and brings with it flowers of different hues and fragrances.

Dressed in bright yellow saris and flower-crowns, women throng the TSC area. Men clad in panjabis also join in the celebration. The Bokultala at Charukola has traditionally been the spot for all cultural activities of the day.

However, for those of you looking for an alternative- whether it is a quieter place or just somewhere more scenic – there are always a few other places you can check out!

BOTANICAL GARDENS

What better time to visit the botanical garden if not the beginning of spring? Be the first to see the blooming of the scarlet polish flowers and appreciate the white strokes provided by the bokul, and white beli among the other spring blooms. Those of you with time constraints should check out the National Botanical Garden in Mirpur.

RESORTING TO RESORTS

With Gazipur's scenic beauty being an attraction for nature lovers all throughout the year, spring can be a good time to try out one of the resorts in the area. Being quite close to Dhaka, you can easily plan a day trip or stay over for one night thus having the perfect getaway.

With the average rate ranging from Tk2500 to Tk6000 per night, make sure you book early, since all resorts work on reservations.

Whether you want to take a lazy stroll around the shalban-surrounded lake, or play with the little ones in the open fields

surrounding the cottages, Dhaka Resort is a popular choice to enjoy the natural beauty of the forest. In fact, resorts such as the Bhawal Resort and the Seagull Resort also provide a unique escape from reality because of their aesthetic villas full of scenic views and tranquility.

With watch-towers overlooking the forest, Dream Square Resort is quite the luxury for the keen birdwatchers with its planned blend of modern facilities and nature conservation.

FOR THE WHOLE SCENIC EXPERIENCE

An exotic destination for the perfect pohela falgun would be to visit the Bangabandhu



Sheikh Mujib Safari Park in Gazipur. The right blend of flora and fauna, you can celebrate the arrival of spring with the songs of the cuckoo while being immersed in the sweet fragrance of rojonigondha, beli and champa.

On the other hand, Bhawal National Park is the perfect haven for those with a zest for adventure. From boating to hiking to cycling, the park offers something to suit everyone's taste. Alternatively, create a lazy spring vibe by fishing on the lake or just admiring the flower-studded mango trees.

TIME FOR A ROAD TRIP

Right underneath the blue sky, and surrounded by kashphuls, Dia Bari in Uttara



offers a unique attraction for cycle enthusiasts or anyone who enjoys a long ride. From boating facilities to the famous Batash Chachar Dhaba, Dia Bari is sure to give you a breath of fresh air, which you do not find in Dhaka anymore.

Alternatively, the 'Teensho Feet Rasta' remains a popular choice among young Dhakaites, who enjoy the friendly ambience and the sizzling food of Khanas and El Dorado. Besides, for the true adventurers, the route to Mawa Ghat and Arichaghat is also a great option.

Start early so that you can reach the Padma riverside before sunset for a glorious sight. In fact, while you are at it, you can also feast on fresh fish straight from the river! So, this falgun, be sure to blast your favourite boshonto song, and drive out to these breathtaking spots for a change.

WHAT TO TAKE

Cameras! No matter where your little getaway is, the best way to capture the priceless moments is to take your DSLR or digital camera, and take fun photos for your Instagram and possibly find your new Facebook profile picture!

To shade yourself from the spring sun, take sunglasses. If you are planning to go out of the city, a power bank is a must, especially if you use a smartphone. For those opting for a resort visit, take an extra pair of clothes, and even hats for a more holiday vibe!

By Adiba Mahub Proma

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

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Wardrobe: Mumu Maria

Make-up: Farzana Shakil's Makeover Salon