



All the shops there sell an array of bicycles from BMX bicycles to folding bicycles, mountain bicycles, bicycles for the road. You will even find bicycles, specially made for ladies and children. There are around 42 brands

of bicycles you can choose from, and the prices range from Tk 1000 to Tk 5 lakhs.

The thing about bicycles is that no matter what the price, a well-made bike is meant to last generations. When you purchase a good bicycle, you buy its advantages. And when you want to purchase a bicycle here, you should know that Bangladesh is ranked amongst the top bicycle manufacturers that export to the world.

So, any bicycle you see is a well-made bicycle that complies to international standards.

Masudur Rahman Munna of Pervez Cycles sheds some light on the manufacturing quality, "I make tricycles for children, and not everyone can afford imported bicycles, so what I do is that I will look for the best alternative of materials and put it in the exact same frame, keeping the child's safety as a priority, however in the end, my tricycles are much cheaper. But these tricycles, as any good bicycles, can be passed down generations, and even be sold as a second hand in really good condition."

There is quite a grey area in the discussion of whether the use of bicycles as a part of lifestyle has increased or decreased in Bangladesh. We know that bicycles serve as

a recreational activity for groups such as BDCyclists.

BDCyclists took their passion to the Guinness World Records just a few months ago on 19 January, 2017 where 1186 cyclists joined to beat the record.

And there's more in Bangladesh's bicycle milestone achievement, which dates back to 2004: The Mobile Ladies, later Infoladies, of iSocial. It is a gender defying organisation where ladies deliver various types of information and sell commodities like sanitary napkins to isolated parts of the country, on bicycles!

From this perspective we can see that bicycles, whether or not we see them on the roads as much as we see rickshaws and motor bikes, it plays a significant role on the overall image of Bangladesh.

Dhaka may not be the best place for everyone including women and children to use bicycles for their daily commute as they did in the 50s and 60s, but it is not impossible to see a future Dhaka where people use bicycles regularly to at least reduce their carbon trace.

Hopefully, we will see a greater rise in the use of bicycles when there is a dedicated lane for bicycles in the city, as promised in 2014. Having a separate lane for bicycles could also possibly encourage women to start cycling to work or school. A separate lane also ensures safety, so parents can be at ease knowing their children are cycling to places. And of course, a rise in the users of bicycles with inevitably push organisations to make more safe parking spots.

*Fun fact: There is an age-old village tradition where newly married husbands are given a brand-new bicycle as a wedding gift. It was still common in the 80s till Hondas came in the picture.*

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**Photo credit: Ali Morshed Noton**

