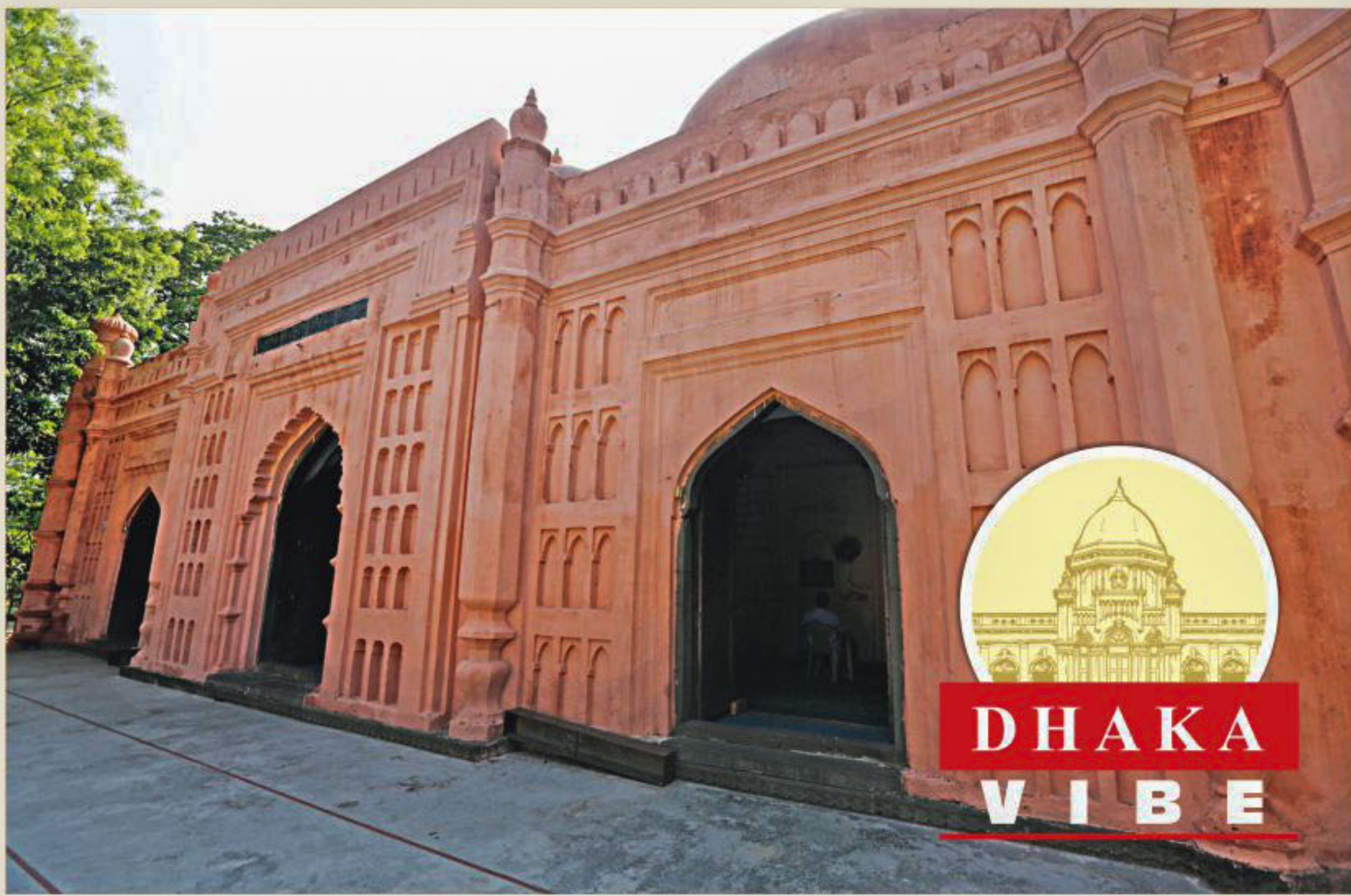




# A peek into Mughal Dhaka

## The mosque and mausoleum of Haji Shahbaz

|| MH HAIDER ||



PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Nestled between Tin Netar Mazar and court buildings, the mosque-and-tomb compound of Haji Khwaja Shahbaz takes one back to the Mughal era, perhaps because there are no high-rises directly overshadowing its premises.

One can appreciate the splendid sight of the mosque, albeit with glimpses of the iconic structure of the mausoleum of the three leaders in the background. Greenery in the surrounding, too, adds to the ambience. The setting seems perfect.

Of course, there are a number of other Mughal mosques in Dhaka. But this mosque, built in 1679, seems particularly special because of the overall setting and surrounding, unlike that of a number of its Mughal contemporaries.

This mosque is a three-domed structure -- a rather quintessential trait of Mughal mosques one sees in Dhaka. In fact, these mosques generally have a number of features in common.

This particular mosque, as the name suggests, was built by one Haji Khwaja Shahbaz. He was an influential businessman: "Malik-ut-tujjar i.e. Merchant-prince and a commercial magnate of Dhaka", Syed Muhammed Taifoor thus introduces him in his book, "Glimpses of Old Dhaka".

"He built the mosque as well as his own tomb during his life-



time," Ahmad Hasan Dani, who was a revered historian, informs us in "Dacca: A Record of its Changing Fortunes".

One easy direction to reach the compound would be to take the road beside Tin Netar Mazar.

The mosque and the tomb indeed make for an arresting view. The domes, arched entrances, corner towers, and slender minarets provide a good first impression of the mosque.

Sayid Aulad Hasan quoted a translation (by Professor Harinath De) of the mosque's inscription in his booklet, "Notes on the Antiquities of Dacca", more than a

century ago:

"Hawji Khwajah Shahbaz this holy building made to rise

The holy building which to God's throne rightly may be said to rise

The Mosque of Hawji Khwajah Shahbaz call this (beautiful?) mosque ye all.

From this the building's date the tongue that knows all things hath led to rise."

The impression will continue to hold when you enter the building -- with an elegant central mihrab and multi-cusped arches, and the domes above. You would also be acutely aware of how small the interior actually is.

The merchant-prince's mausoleum stands opposite to the facade of the mosque.

"On the floor lies the masonry cenotaph of the Haji," Dani further wrote in his book.

The magnificent single-domed monument reinforces the grandeur of the compound and arguably reflects the life of a wealthy and influential man.

He is long gone. Gone too, is Mughal Dhaka.

His legacies -- the mosque and the tomb -- however, live on to whisper vague tales of the past.



## Add women's 'invisible labour' to GDP: MJF

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Elaborating on the importance of including women's unrecognised household work in national GDP, Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) yesterday held a dialogue with senior journalists of various national media outlets.

MJF in their press release said that they believe that violence and discrimination against women will be reduced if they have higher status in family and community. Highlighting women's contribution is one of the ways to raise their status.

MJF has launched a campaign titled "Equality through Dignity" to make the general population aware of women's contribution, and now the time has come to truly realise this goal by giving women the recognition they deserve.

Women's household work is not included in the GDP, and this dialogue was organised to let journalists know how women's contribution can be accounted for.

Journalists spoke on how policymakers can be made more aware on this issue. This work should be recognised legally; it must be considered a national issue, they opined.

Shaheen Anam, executive director of MJF, moderated the programme while Banasree Mitra Neogi, gender adviser of MJF, and Sayema Haque Bidisha, professor of economics at Dhaka University, shared their knowledge on the matter.

Women's work can be termed "invisible labour", as despite working for 16-20 hours on average every day, performing about 45 tasks, their contribution goes completely unnoticed, said speakers.

Journalists from sixteen TV and print media houses attended the dialogue.

# '8 more lives could have been saved'

## Firefighters lament about FR Tower fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least eight more lives could be saved during Banani's FR Tower fire incident, had "over-enthusiastic" people let firefighters do their job, said Brig Gen Md Sazzad Hussain, director general of Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defence (BFSCD) yesterday.

"There were so many people. We could not do our jobs. My earnest request to you all: please let us do our job," he said, adding, "If we could bring down the ladder one more time, the death toll would have been 18 instead of 26. We could have rescued eight more people."

He made the remarks at a programme organised to felicitate valiant firefighters. Brac organised the programme at Institution of Diploma Engineers.

"We rescue people risking our lives; if you [onlookers] do not cooperate, it is impossible for us to do our jobs," he added.

On March 28, when the deadly fire ripped through the FR Tower, thousands of people poured on to the Kemal Ataturk Avenue, giving the firefighters a tough time while running the rescue operation.

Although some people were seen helping firefighters, most of them were mere onlookers. Some of them were standing there for hours taking selfies, capturing videos and streaming live on social media.

Sharing his experience, Maj AKM Shakil Newaz, director (operations) of

fire service, said most high-rise buildings in the capital do not have in-built firefighting capacity.

"The root cause of increased fatalities is there is not in-built firefighting capacity at buildings. There were not enough staircases at FR Tower. On top of that, the existing staircase was not smoke-free. If it were so, can guarantee, there would not be any casualties," he said.

Shakil added that interior decoration of buildings is another major problem for firefighters, as the materials used are highly flammable. He suggested keeping enough fire security measures while decorating interiors.

BFSCD Director (Training) Lt Col SM Zulfikar Rahman suggested people to preserve contact numbers of their nearest fire station for prompt action.

Dhaka North City Corporation Mayor Atiqul Islam asked people to change their attitude and follow rules to prevent fire incident.

At the programme, Brac handed over a Tk 4 lakh cheque to family members of deceased firefighter Soheli Rana. It also donated Tk 3 lakh to the BFSCD Trust.

Ten firefighters were also given letters of appreciation by the survivors of separate fire incidents.

They are Sohagchandra Karmakar, Bishnupada Mistri, Jakir Hossain, Kazi Sohag, Shahidul Islam, Jewel Mahmud, Mofizul Islam, Alamgir Hossain, Najir Hossain and Moktar Hossain.



Firefighters with survivors of fire incidents at the event yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## DHAKA TODAY

### THEATRE

Mayar Khela

**Organiser:** National Socio Cultural Association

**Venue:** Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

**Time:** 6pm

### RECITATION

Shimantohin Shimanay

**Organiser:** Trilok Bachik Pathshala

**Venue:** Central Public Library

**Time:** 6pm

### ART COMPETITION

Children's Art and Handwriting Competition

**Organiser:** Shishu Protibha Bikash Kendro

**Venue:** Rabindra Sorobor

**Time:** 8am

### DISCUSSION

Amar Cinema, Amar Sahitya

**Organiser:** Batighar

**Venue:** Bishwo Shahitto Kendro

**Time:** 5pm

### CONFERENCE

National Leadership Conference

**Organiser:** World Orphan Centre

**Venue:** KIB Complex

**Time:** 8am

### CONCERT

Mojo Baishakhi Concert

**Venue:** TSC, Dhaka University

**Time:** 10am

### PROTEST

Protest against murder of Nusrat

**Organiser:** Stand Against Rape

**Venue:** Raju Sculpture, DU

**Time:** 4pm

### EXHIBITION

Ghartera edition 0: Junkyard

**Venue:** Dwip Gallery, Lalmatia

**Time:** 5pm



# Tight security for Pahela Baishakh

## Says DMP chief

UNB, Dhaka

Tightened security measures have been taken to ensure smooth celebration of Pahela Baishakh, said Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Commissioner Md Asaduzzaman Mia yesterday.

"Major places will be under security blanket," he added. The DMP commissioner was briefing the media about security preparation at DMP media centre.

He said no one will be allowed to wear mask or use vuvuzela on the day to avert any unpleasant incident. "Law enforcers will escort the Mangal Shobhajatra. Police will keep surveillance from building rooftops," he said.

Law enforcers will put barricades in Nilkhet, Palashi, Shahbagh, Kakrail and Matsya Bhaban areas and vehicles will not be allowed to enter, he added. CCTV cameras will be installed at several places.

To enter celebration venues, people have to go through archways and inspection. DMP banned carrying explosive materials, sharp weapons, bags and metal equipment at the venues.

Events have to end by 6pm while entry to Ramna Park and Suhrawardy Udyan will be closed after 5pm, said the DMP Commissioner.

Replying to a question on the possibility of any security threat, he said, "There is no threat of attack. Law enforcers have taken necessary measures to take action instantly."

Plainclothes police, detectives, intelligence team, SWAT and bomb disposal units will remain standby alongside police, he added.

# কৌতুহের অবিশ্বাস্য অফার

অবিশ্বাস্য মূল্যে স্যামসাং টিভি পাচ্ছেন পুরো বৈশাখ জুড়ে

### Real 4K UHD



**43NU7100**

মূল্য: ~~৳৭৩,৯০০~~

অফার মূল্য: ৳৫৮,৯০০

**50NU7470**

মূল্য: ~~৳১০৫,৯০০~~

অফার মূল্য: ৳৯৫,৯০০

**43NU7470**

মূল্য: ~~৳৭২,৯০০~~

অফার মূল্য: ৳৬৩,৯০০

**55NU7100**

মূল্য: ~~৳১০৫,৯০০~~

অফার মূল্য: ৳৯৫,৯০০

**49NU7100**

মূল্য: ~~৳১২৫,৯০০~~

অফার মূল্য: ৳৮৮,৯০০

**65NU7100**

মূল্য: ~~৳২২৯,৯০০~~

অফার মূল্য: ৳১৯৯,৯০০

### SMART



**32N4300**

মূল্য: ~~৳৩৩,৯০০~~

অফার মূল্য: ৳৩২,৯০০

**43N5300**

মূল্য: ~~৳৫৭,৯০০~~

অফার মূল্য: ৳৫৩,৯০০

**49N5300**

মূল্য: ~~৳৯৯,৯০০~~

অফার মূল্য: ৳৭৫,৯০০

### CONCERT



**32N4100**

মূল্য: ~~৳২৯,৯০০~~

অফার মূল্য: ৳২৬,৯০০

**43N5100**

মূল্য: ~~৳৪৯,৯০০~~

অফার মূল্য: ৳৪৪,৯০০

### LED



**32N4000**

মূল্য: ~~৳২৯,৯০০~~

অফার মূল্য: ৳২৪,৯০০

**40N5000**

মূল্য: ~~৳৩৯,৯০০~~

অফার মূল্য: ৳৩৬,৯০০

এছাড়াও বাডেল অফারে থাকছে ২টি টিভি কিনলে অতিরিক্ত **৫%** এবং ৩টি টিভি কিনলে অতিরিক্ত **৮%** ক্যাশব্যাক

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