

Bangladesh's well-known haats

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There are various sizes and types of the houses, like "dochala, chouchala," or even "shaat-chala," which are versions of the design based on the number of tin layers used in the roof. These houses have been traditionally used locally for a really long time, but now can be ordered and transported to many parts of Bangladesh.

Bonorupa haat in Rangamati

Sellers of all sorts of items pile their wares on boats and head to the Shomota ghat in Rangmati, to meet their customers at the area's famous Bonorupa haat. The entire place comes alive with activity on haat day, with lots of stalls set on the boats themselves, creating a floating section of the market, but most vendors line the roadside with their colourful and interesting wares.

The most important of the items sold here are the fresh produce, including local



"baash korol" or bamboo shoots, "chukai" or rosella, and snails collected from the hilly streams.

Noukar (boat) haat in Manikganj

Boats have been an essential part of life in the riverine delta lands of Bengal, and so it is no wonder then that artisanship has developed in various regions, and trade of boats is well established and traditional too!

There are many areas where boats are bought and sold, but one of the most well-known and significantly large haats of dinghy boats is in Ghior of Manikganj.

Narrow and flat-ish bottom boat sell for between Tk 3000-12000, depending on the boat's size and the wood used in it, like mango wood, koroi, mahogany, etc.

Manikganj has many of the large and important rivers like the Padma, Jamuna, Dhaleshwari, Ichamoti, and other small ones, passing through the district, and monsoon season often sees large low-lying areas of it submerged quickly. That is when the demand for the boats peaks, for everyday commute becomes difficult without them.

During the harvest season, hundreds of boats of nearly the same dimensions can be seen fully laden, heaped with fresh green guavas, selling to wholesalers and dealers, and of course regular customers too.

Small but locally significant haat can also be found in Raninogor of Naogaon, and Bhangura of Pabna, thanks to the proximity of the Chalan Beel system.

Peyara Bajar in Barishal

There is a fascinating floating market of guavas in Bhimruli, Barishal.

During the harvest season, hundreds of boats of nearly the same dimensions can be seen fully laden, heaped with fresh green guavas, selling to wholesalers and dealers, and of course regular customers too. The produce is actually local as well, as about 26 villages in Barishal, Pirojpur, and Jhalokathi have large orchards of guava, and have to be known for them as a tourist spot too.

The haat happens on the confluence of three canals, in a relatively wider space, and makes for a verdant spectacle for any observer. The peak season for this haat is from July through September.

Jamdani haat in Demra

Since ancient times, the Meghna delta including the Dhaka and Narayanganj regions are well known for producing Muslin, the famed premium cotton cloth of Bengal. The legacy of the Muslin lives on in the modern Jamdani, which is a product of the weavers' deftness and heritage, as well as cultural influences of the Mughals.

Today, one of the largest hubs of Jamdani trade is in Demra, near the capital. The haat takes place every Friday from 5AM to 8AM, and sadly, the duration of the haat has been reduced due to diminishing number of buyers, especially in the post-COVID period. Yet, this remains the place for Jamdani trade, and product prices can vary from Tk 3000 to Tk 20,000 easily. Finer versions are even more expensive, and nylon and other machine-woven versions are of course available for cheaper.

It is just on the outskirts of the capital, and an obvious destination for anyone that loves or even just works with the Jamdani.

There are many other haats, essentially spaces for wholesale trade of particular or locally produced items, that have thrived in various corners of Bangladesh. Some of these have thrived and died over the years and others like Korotia, Ataikula, Sirajganj, Ghior, and Munshiganj have survived, carrying tales of local heritage with pride.

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Photo: Azim Khan Ronnie
Photo: Sikder Ahmed



vegetables and fruits, both farmed as well as gathered, and not to mention organic too. The whole range of unexplored hill produce is on a brilliant display here, with innumerable items unknown to the plainspeople and cuisine, as a lot of these are highly local flora, and can only be found at this bazaar, or specially sourced from the same. Some prime examples are

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