

YOUTH IN ACTION

# Where your pets feel at home

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AKHLAKUR RAHMAN

Rakibul Haq Emil, the Founder of PAW Foundation, along with Nuzhat Nabila and Khalid Farhan launched Furryghor, a hotel for pets, in February 2022. Nabila is an architect by profession, while Farhan is a digital marketer.

"Hotels like Furryghor are quite common in developed countries around the world," says Nabila. "Many go through the dilemma of where to keep their pets whenever they have to travel, as ensuring proper care for the animals becomes tough for them. This is where Furryghor comes in. We ensure proper care and housing for pets at affordable prices."

Planning for Furryghor's construction began in December 2021.

"I met Emil through PAW when I was volunteering to nurse sick animals back to



Furryghor ensures proper care and housing for pets.

PHOTOS: SHANTO LAWRENCE COSTA

Furryghor's café, Pat a Pet, welcomes pets and their parents without any restrictions. Cookies, cakes, and other delicious treats are available for pets there. Pastry chef and visual pop artist Saria Saguaro oversees the café, alongside the team members of the hotel.

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"Proper measurements and laws for animal rights and care have yet to be legally determined in Bangladesh," adds Emil. "Many young people provide foster care to cats and dogs at their own homes.

We plan to bring animal services to the mainstream."

One of the biggest challenges in operating Furryghor for the founders is the lack of properly trained animal caregivers. "People don't usually set out to become animal caregivers. We had to train our staff from scratch. As an organisation, we are still in our initial stage. We hope to become self-sustaining as we grow," shares Emil.

Moving forward, the founders plan to turn Furryghor into a resort where pets and their parents will be able to stay together and enjoy vacations.

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Pat a Pet is a café at Furryghor, offering treats for pets.

health," shares Nabila. "He came to me with the proposal to open Furryghor just a floor above PAW's Animal Clinic."

YOUNG ACHIEVER

## Reigning over the hockey field

AZIBOR RAHMAN, from Jhenidah

A girls' hockey team in Jhenidah has made their presence felt at various competitions. This correspondent visited Jhenidah Bir Shrestha Hamidur Rahman Stadium to talk to the players of the team. Seventeen girls were practicing under the guidance of their coach and physical instructor, Suriya Begum, a teacher at Fazar Ali Girls' School and College.

The passionate coach formed the hockey team in 2015. Since then, after school hours, she has been training the girls at Jhenidah Bir Shrestha Hamidur Rahman Stadium. The girls won the Walton Inter-District Competition in 2016, and went on to compete at the Bangabandhu Bangladesh Games in 2021, where they were the runners-up against Narail.

Sharmin Aktar from the team is a second-year HSC student. She started playing hockey in 2015, when she was a sixth grader. She won the title of Best Goalkeeper at the Walton Inter-District Competition 2016.

Sharmin's step-father, Sahjahan Mollah works at the Ansar Battalion, while her mother runs a

tea stall. The young hockey player hopes to get a job in defence in the future.

Shanta Moni, another member of the hockey team, is an eighth grader.

Her father died a few years back. Her

mother, Nasima Khatun, works in an NGO.

Shanta expects to get a job in the police force.

All the girls belong to low-income families. Suriya Begum hopes to stand by them for as long as she can. She is confident that as hockey players, they will make Bangladesh proud.



PHOTO: STAR

EVENT

## BD K-Family celebrates cultures at Dhaka K-Meet 6.0

TINA ZAHAN

Dhaka K-Meet 6.0 was organised by the BD K-Family on May 20, 2022 at Tokyo Square Convention Centre. The BD K-Family community is the first and only South Korean cultural community, which celebrated its 12-year anniversary this year.

The signature event Dhaka K-Meet was graced by First Secretary Youngmin Seo, along with Cultural Officer Yu Haeng Lee, from the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Bangladesh. The event saw almost 4000 participants belonging from all age groups.

The event consisted of K-pop dance and music performances, merchandise stalls, Korean food stalls, Korean tourism landscape display and many more attractions related to the South Korean culture. There were 50 performances, including special K-pop performances by the founders Tashnuva Zahan and Tina Zahan, Shouvik Ahmed with his crew 2N8, singer Mahi Hasin and more.

A member of the community Ahnaf Nuan, from the crew Rakuzan klan, said, "After finally meeting everyone from the community, I feel like I am home. This past 12 years

slowly grew into a huge part of my life which is like a source of dopamine for me."

Saiful Islam, president of the community shared his vision of how this rapidly increasing fanbase would soon create a positive impact among youngsters. Founder Tashnuva Zahan stated, "I honestly feel very proud of each and every member of the community for their underlying love and devotion towards their passion which will surely take them places."

The purpose of the BD K-Family is to create a platform for the people of Bangladesh to train and explore their talents while creating a cultural bond between the two nations. There are similar events in South Korea solely dedicated to Bangladeshi culture, which acts as a bridge in creating a beautiful friendship.

In 2023, Bangladesh and Korea will reach 50 years of diplomatic friendship, which is a big celebration of harmony. The community will promote peace and harmony between both nations. The events of BD K-Family are maintained by volunteers from Smile, a non-profit organisation and an amount from ticket sales will be donated to help people in need.



Participants and guests at the programme. PHOTO: COURTESY OF BD K-FAMILY



Swayong team members and guests at the screening of the documentary film. Photo: Courtesy

NURTURING DREAMS

## Swayong's 'Jonglaphool' focuses on the strength of women

MAISHA ISLAM MONAMEE

Swayong's documentary film "Jonglaphool", produced in collaboration with Manusher Jonno Foundation and UKaid, showcases diverse women of society, who, like wildflowers, know how to survive amid adversities. The storytelling platform has so far shared 121 stories and conducted 18 campaigns since its inception in 2020.

"We believe that women are like wildflowers growing in the forest. They do not need protectors; they are independent and beautiful," asserted Swatil Mahmud, the co-founder.

"Jonglaphool" recognises women's unaccounted and unpaid care work, creating awareness about intersectional feminist activities and promoting women leaders and women-led initiatives that combat gender bias. The film encourages the audience to reflect on the unfairness women encounter and their roles in dismantling the patriarchy.

The segments in the documentary film are "Sarbjaya: Women Empowerment", "Bon Jui: Unpaid and Unaccounted Care Work" and "Mahabhringraj: Women Leading Movements". By covering themes that reflect on several aspects of a woman's life, Swayong wishes to present a relatable story about ordinary women who need more

representation in media.

"Growing up, I did not see women like myself on television. When I got the chance to produce visual content, the first thing that came to my mind was the fact that we need to bring better role models and share everyday stories," Swatil explained.

The first segment talks about the lives of two women, who are similar, yet different in many ways. It focuses

features insights from experts who explain the nature of this problem. The women in this segment are ordinary working people, with the added burden of family responsibilities. It instantly connects with the viewers as they can associate these role models with people they know and thereby form a new idea about their lives.

The last segment showcases the feminist movements conducted by women across different generations. For this one, women from different backgrounds shared their take on conducting movements and how experience coupled with power helps them roar and rise.

Swatil, along with Nujhat Jabin Sumaiya, brainstormed the idea behind this film. She took help from her sister and Swayong's co-founder, Mitul Mahmud to design the story. "Jonglaphool is an ode to all the strong women out there, including the ones who made this documentary possible," she added. Apart from this, the videos were shot and edited by Mir Rabby and Emon Kalyan.

Swatil hopes to conduct private screenings of "Jonglaphool" in the future, to connect with more people.

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A snippet from the documentary film.