



# PAHELA BAISHAKH

**SPECIAL**  
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“One thing I can point out is that the pen for Bangla calligraphy is quite different. The paper can vary depending on what instrument you are using to write, and since I use mostly fountain pen, any fountain pen friendly paper works for me,” said Halder.

She elaborated on the different methods and styles she has adopted lately. Devanagari script has similarities with Bangla, and

has a character in the end product,” he elaborated, explaining the stories behind some of his best pieces.

“Instead of just plainly scribbling words,



but more challenging as well.

Thus, in his calligraphies, ‘biral toposhi’ is a cat, which has a saintly look but is a conniving creature at its core.



**“I spend so much time looking at calligraphies of other cultures, comparing different scripts and how Bangla is different from them. How Bangla could be expressed, it’s unbelievable.”**

Calligrapher  
**ARHAM-UL-HUQ  
CHOWDHURY**

Halder draws inspiration from Devanagari script in her search for style.

**The elements and instruments**  
Like any other form of art — there are no rules. One may use whatever one is comfortable with as long as one can express themselves in their art and like painters, calligraphers will tell you the same thing. Shrestha Halder for example, is trying out different types of fountain pens and their impressions on different types of papers.

Arham-ul-Huq Chowdhury on the other hand has used many different types of papers and writing instruments in his journey. In the end, he opted for brush; often used on handmade paper.

“I like putting characters in my art and it’s visible in my calligraphies. Even the paper itself

I have a different approach. Bangla language has so many riddles, idioms and phrases, and more interestingly ‘Khanar bachans’ and such. I try to put them into letters while expressing them in the visuals at the same time,” he explained the innovative way of his calligraphy which is not only conspicuous



‘Bagher Aari’ is a Bengal tiger who is grumpy. ‘Godai loskori’ is a fully-loaded boat which is exactly what the phrase itself originated from.

All of these are fascinating and one can imagine the effort and research that went behind these creations.

## **The untold challenges**

Arham-ul-Huq Chowdhury has made significant contributions to the field of Bangla calligraphy and amateurs are now getting interested. One of the major issues in the field is that it lacks research. There is barely any reference material, if any at all. Both the professionals and the amateurs agree on this.

“I have no reference material to base my work on. So, I have to turn to Devanagari script or try out different methods. Trial and error; that’s how I progress because there is no other way,” says Halder.

Chowdhury said, “I spend so much time looking at calligraphies of other cultures, comparing different scripts and how Bangla is different from them. How Bangla could be expressed, it’s unbelievable. If you are trying to do Bangla calligraphy, you

really have to do everything yourself and from the scratch.”

The Bengali culture has always prided itself on its riches. The pride is understandable but at the same time, over the years, we have lost several elements of our valued culture. Without proper attention and interest, Bangla calligraphy could be one of those lost aspects. Considering the beauty and potential of it, we hope that day never comes.

CALLIGRAPHY:  
**ARHAM-UL-HUQ CHOWDHURY**