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she  
**Fights,**  
she  
**FLEXES**

MASTERING THE ART OF THE BLADE  
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PHOTO: SAZZAD IBNE SAYED / COLLECTED  
IN FRAME: HUMAIRA AKHTER ANTARA



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**বোবাস্তা**  
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# Smart and sleek: The appeal of wearable tech

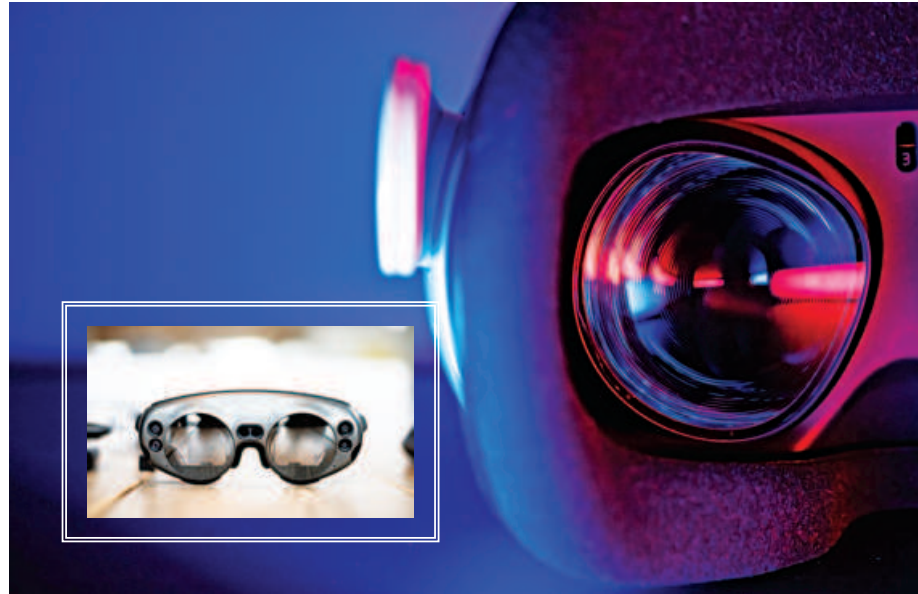
Remember the time when we used to perceive putting machines on our bodies as too cyborg-y or sci-fi? But today, wearable tech combines cutting-edge technology with fashion-forward designs, allowing individuals to stay connected, while making a style statement simultaneously. Wearable tech is redefining the fashion industry — from elegant smart rings that discreetly track heart rate and sleep patterns to innovative smartwatches — these pieces have become staple accessories for trendsetters and fashionistas alike.

Presently, designers are working hand in hand with tech experts to create devices that not only serve specific purposes, but also complement one's personal style. Just watch contemporary fashion shows or global award ceremonies, and you will see futuristic designs integrated with wearable tech being used to captivate audiences.



Take the example of the British Academy Film Awards (BAFTA) 2023, where A-list celebrities like Anya Taylor-Joy and Lily James turned heads with their futuristic designer gowns.

Futuristic designer gowns represent an avant-garde approach to fashion, that combines innovation, fashion, and technology. These gowns embrace minimalism with a twist as clean lines and bold silhouettes are highlighted



through innovative cuts and metallic embellishments, as well as iridescent fabrics enhancing the beauty of these gowns.

As we move towards a future where technology is ever more intertwined with our daily lives, the importance of wearable tech cannot be overlooked.

### Smart Watches

To start, we have fashion-forward smartwatches, which come with customisable watch faces, premium materials, and a host of health and fitness tracking features. Smartwatches are not just smart but also stylish. They perform tasks such as syncing with smartphones and acting as a selfie button, making your life a lot easier if you are a shutterbug.

We are well aware of the uses of fitness trackers such as the Fitbit. But over the years, fitness trackers have undergone a

stunning makeover — going from plain fitness gadgets to sleek, fashion-forward accessories.

### Jewellery with functionality

Since time immemorial, jewellery has always been a symbol of elegance and self-expression. And now, with the integration of technology, it has become even more stunning and functional. Take, for example, smart rings that vibrate for specific notifications, to smart glasses that combine style, comfort, and functionality. Undoubtedly, the world of smart jewellery is blossoming.

From elegant bracelets to fashionable pendants, wearable tech is breaking barriers by elevating our style without compromising performance.

Smart pendants and bracelets are crafted from materials like sterling silver, rose gold

or even leather, which have built-in fitness and wellness tracking capabilities. They can monitor steps taken, calories burned and even sleep patterns. You can match your smartwatches, pendants or bracelets to your outfit, mood or occasion, coordinating the colour of your accessories to the shade of your outfit.

### Another world through Glasses

If there is one thing that can truly blur the line between fashion and technology, it is augmented reality (AR) glasses. These futuristic eyewear pieces emanate digital information into the real world, providing wearers with an immersive experience.

Even though AR glasses are still in their early stages, they hold immense potential for fashion applications, such as virtual try-ons, personalized style recommendations, and interactive fashion shows.

AR glasses represent a revolutionary convergence of fashion and technology, allowing users to interact with the virtual and real world with advanced imaging and sensor technologies. These eyewear pieces can project virtual accessories onto your outfit, enabling you to experiment with various jewellery, hats and even hairstyles before making a decision.

Today, designers are experimenting with textiles that can change colour based on mood or environment, jackets that can regulate body temperature, and even clothes that can monitor health metrics. Such innovations are proving that wearable tech can be as fashionable as it is smart.

Whether it is a chic smartwatch gracing your wrist or a designer smart ring adorning your finger, wearable tech is indisputably winning the fashion game. As wearable tech continues to evolve, it will inspire designers, fashionistas, and tech enthusiasts alike—eventually, paving the way for an exciting era where smart and stylish seamlessly coexist.

By Ayman Anika  
Photo: Collected



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#RELATIONSHIPS & FAMILY



# 5 signs she's just not into you: Dhaka edition

Dhaka! The city where traffic jams have more chemistry than most budding relationships and where you can experience all four seasons in a single day — hot, humid, hottest, and rain. Yes, you might think navigating through Dhaka's labyrinthine alleys and cacophonous markets prepares you for the complexities of love, but mate, you're in for a reality check.

Just as you manoeuvre through the notorious traffic of Bijoy Sharani or debate whether to take a CNG or brave the crowded buses, you often find yourself wrestling with another dilemma — does she like me, or is she just being polite? Dhaka might have taught you many survival skills, but interpreting ambiguous texts and subtle social cues isn't one of them. Well, buckle up, because we're about to navigate through the bumper-to-bumper traffic of romantic ambiguity.

Here are the 5 signs that say, "Bro, she's just not that into you."

scream, "You and your friends are as relevant to me as diet tips from a sumo wrestler," that's one red light you shouldn't run.

**She's a social media ghost, but only to you**

You send her memes, tag her in the comments, and even drop a few friendly DMs. But when it comes to reciprocating, she's as visible as John Cena. She's active, alright — liking, sharing, commenting — but just not with your posts. If you've become the Bermuda Triangle of her social media map, where interactions go to disappear, you're not in her romantic line of sight, my friend.



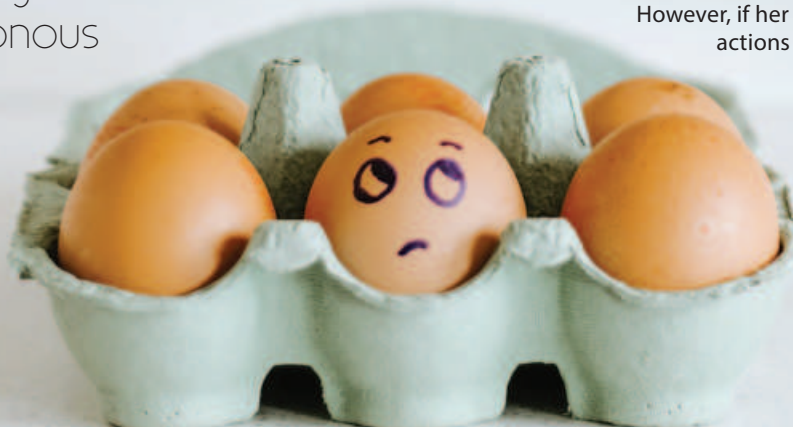
**Her texts are as short as your patience**

Let's face it. If your conversational exchanges could win an award, it would be for "Best Impersonation of a Cricket Chorus." You pour your textual artistry into messages that would make Shakespeare blush, but she replies with the enthusiasm of a sloth on a hot summer afternoon — single-word answers or even just the omnipotent "Seen" tick. Seriously, if you're getting more emotional complexity from autocorrect suggestions, it's a sign.

**She doesn't know your friends, and she doesn't want to**

You've met her friends, memorised their birthdays, and even helped one of them move a couch once. But has she shown any interest in your social circle? If your answer is "What social circle?" you've got bigger problems.

However, if her actions



**Shared passions? More like shared indifference**

Does she forget the name of your favourite anime even after you've ranted about it for hours? Does she call your treasured collection of vintage watches "cute clocks?" Oh, the audacity! It's like ordering biryani and getting plain white rice. If you're not on the same page on the things that light your soul on fire, then the passion might fizzle faster than a Pathao bike running out of fuel.

**All roads lead to "we're just friends"**

Let's get real. If she constantly introduces you as her "good friend" or "buddy," you're not stuck in traffic on the highway to love; you've taken a permanent exit to Platonic Town. And trust me, Platonic Town has zero romantic motels. If she's dropping more "F-words" than an angry chef in a cooking show, and by "F-words," I mean "friend," it's time to reconsider your emotional investment.

In the end, if she's exhibiting all these signs, you may have to admit that your love life has stalled worse than a CNG during a Thursday gridlock. But don't worry, Dhaka's taught you to be a survivor; it's time to take another rickshaw and journey towards the possibility of a better match. Keep your spirits high, and don't forget; your perfect "cha-er dokan" date might just be around the next congested corner.

By K Tanzeel Zaman  
Photo: Collected



#SPORTS

# FATEMA MUJIB

## The lioness behind the sabre

In the bustling alleys of Dhaka, where life often oscillates between the hopes of dreamers and the harshness of reality, Fatema Mujib stands as a beacon of what perseverance and raw talent can achieve. Her eyes radiate innocence, and her soft-spoken demeanour could easily lead you to think she's as harmless as a lamb. But place a sabre in her hands, and Fatema transforms into a lioness; fierce and unyielding in the fencing arena.

Fatema wasn't born with a silver spoon, nor did she have the luxury of world-class facilities, or any facilities for that matter, from the start. She comes from a Dhaka that we all know too well — busy streets, long commutes, and the constant hustle just to make ends meet. Her brother Saddam, a fencer himself, used to take her to training sessions on his bicycle, traversing the city's maddening traffic, with horns and rickshaws creating a cacophony around them. The sport that now celebrates her as a gold medallist started for her on these challenging streets. "We couldn't even afford a second fencing uniform. I trained in my brother's uniform," she humbly recalls.

In Dhaka, where societal norms often expect women to prioritise family over personal ambition, Fatema stands tall as an awe-inspiring exception. She is not just a fencer, but also a dedicated mother to her

8-year-old daughter. Fatema's narrative challenges the social constructs of what a woman 'should be able to do.'

Under the guidance of Joseph Maluleke, Bangladesh's National Sabre Coach, Fatema found more than just expert training. She found a mentor who recognised her commitment. "Fatema loves the sport; her

dedication and her ever-joyful nature speak volumes. Even when the training time is up, she yearns to push further," Maluleke observes, highlighting her indefatigable spirit.

The 13th South Asian Games were a turning point, not just for Fatema, but for the countless young women in Bangladesh she inspired. When she secured the first gold medal for Bangladesh in women's sabre individual, the nation collectively came to know for the first time that it has fencers with the calibre of beating opponents with far more advanced equipment. With Fatema's homecoming, Bangladesh acknowledged that a new icon had risen.

In a country where female athletes still grapple with societal prejudices, Fatema has incited a silent revolution. Suddenly, fencing is not just a sport; it's a promise of liberation for young women. For many, she has become the face of what is possible when dedication meets opportunity, especially in a city like Dhaka, where struggle and survival are part of everyday life.

As Fatema gears up for the upcoming Asian Games, she echoes the sentiments of a nation in need of heroes. "We are a nation of gifted people, there are many more like me waiting to prove themselves," she passionately declares.

Fatema Mujib is a living testament to the resilience and dreams that fuel Dhaka's beating heart. Her story is not just about a sportswoman achieving her dreams; it is a narrative of hope, a lesson that, with enough perseverance, the narrow lanes of Dhaka can lead to the world's grandest arenas. Through her struggle and triumph, Fatema doesn't just score points in a match; she scores a victory for every dreamer, telling them that dreams, no matter how big, can come true.

By K Tanzeel Zaman  
Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed  
In Frame: Fatema Mujib







#SPORTS

# HUMAIRA AKHTER ANTARA A Karateka's journey

Humaira Akhter Antara is not a name you'd hear and easily forget — especially if you live and breathe the air of Dhaka, a city that seems to never rest, much like Humaira herself. She has come a long way since her days as a Madrasa student, navigating the intricate social web of a city that has dreams tucked away in every corner.

Today, this gold medallist in Karate from the 2019 South Asian Games is readying herself for the upcoming Asian Games in China. But her story is not just a tale of kicks, strikes, and breaking bricks with her hand like in the movies; it's a story of defying norms, of smashing through glass ceilings, and most importantly — rising against the overwhelming tides that society throws at us.

"Dhaka taught me that nothing comes easy, but it also taught me that nothing is impossible," says Humaira. Raised as a Madrasa student until the seventh grade, she faced significant pressure from her parents, who wished for her to settle into a traditional role. But Humaira wanted 'more out of life,' a sentiment that echoes in the heart of anyone who dares to dream bigger

than one's status, financial capabilities, and the seemingly eternal struggle to stay afloat.

"Don't expect me to be safe just covering myself in a veil," she argued with her parents, as she negotiated her entrance into the world of Karate in 2013. How could a fabric protect her when her spirit was restless, she thought. Her uniform, the Karategi, wasn't just a piece of cloth; it was her armour, her identity, and her defiance, all rolled into one. "It transforms me into a warrior," Humaira insists, with the raw aura of a fighter enveloping her.

"He supports me as my coach and as my family member, whereas many do not even get to work outside after marriage. That is invaluable to me," shares Humaira, echoing a sentiment that can resonate with many women in Dhaka, confined by patriarchal norms. Her husband, disciplined in the art of Karate himself, fuels her ambition rather than extinguishing it — a beacon for what marriage in our society can and should be.

Mohammad Jashim Uddin, the National Karate Coach, with 38 years of experience, saw more than just a student in Humaira. Under his mentorship, the Bangladesh Ansar Karate team has won seven times, and he believes Humaira to be an example for all women, despite their social status or age. "We all need to support each other for a better future. Thanks to Karate, the discipline will prepare you to face the future regardless of age or gender," he asserts.

Antara's credentials include an incredible face-off against a Moroccan opponent, where she lost by a margin of just one point. Far from a defeat, this narrow gap gave her wings, making her confident of her ability to bring further glory to Bangladesh. "Dhaka teaches you that every failure is a stepping stone, and that every struggle is your tutor," she observes, mirroring the ethos of our daily hardships.

"No incident comes knocking at your door; you have to be prepared," she asserts, underscoring the need for women and young girls in Bangladesh to take their safety into their own hands. "Karate is a sport of honesty and discipline. We all need these qualities in life," she concludes, giving

a clarion call to all young women who aspire to break the mould.

As Humaira prepares for the grand Asian Games stage, she carries the hopes and dreams of every struggling soul fighting their own battles every day. Each kick, each strike, and each bow will not just be her own but the collective effort of a country that dreams big, despite its challenges.

Humaira Akhter Antara is not just a champion Karate; she is the living embodiment of an indomitable spirit. Her story is a mirror reflecting the triumphs and challenges of life, which is a constant negotiation between tradition and ambition. And so, as she steps onto the grand Asian stage, we recognise that her fight is our fight, her dream is our dream, and her journey from the dusty by-lanes of Dhaka to the world stage, is our journey too. Humaira's life story is an anthem for the everyday fighter and an inspiration to us all — a reminder that no matter where we come from, the horizons are endless, as long as we dare to look beyond.

**By K Tanzeel Zaman**  
**Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed**  
**In Frame: Humaira Akhter Antara**







Women's bodybuilding is on the rise in Bangladesh. Even if we rewind the clock to a few years back, we would hardly find any news that had women and bodybuilding paired together. But despite the lack of opportunities and the alarming number of obstacles they have to overcome, more and more women are entering the field of professional bodybuilding and the number of participants in such events are rapidly increasing with each passing event. We recently had the opportunity to speak with three athletes who are at the pinnacle of the Bangladesh scene to learn more about their journeys and accomplishments as well as get their take on what steps can be taken to create more opportunities in the field.

## FIT AND FEARLESS:

# The rise of women's BODYBUILDING

To start off, let us get introduced to three of the most prominent figures in the game today; Maksud Akter Mou, Nusrat Meem, and Afia Jannatul Anika.

Maksud is currently working as a personal trainer in the UAE. She is certified by ACE (American Council on Exercise) as well as Ereps (level 3 certified). She

works as a floor-in-charge at Ruslan's Studio, one of the best gyms in Dhaka. Her journey started in 2017 when she joined the gym to boost her confidence. She took to bodybuilding like a duck to water and started excelling at it. Soon, she began taking part in various competitions and has been consistently finishing in the top 3 in

has followed up on that success by winning two further competitions and is looking to further build her resume, while also working as a professional trainer.

### OVERCOMING OBSTACLES BOTH ON AND OFF THE GYM

While Anika had her family's support right from the get-go, both Maksud and Meem had to overcome a lot of obstacles. Maksud grew up on action movies and is a lifelong fan of Arnold Schwarzenegger and always wanted to join a gym, but never got the chance to do so since many girls did not pursue bodybuilding back then. "It was while I was studying in India that I found out about the female body building scene and started to pursue my passion", added Maksud. For Meem, she had to follow her passion against her family's wishes. "It is not that they did not want to support me. It was just extremely difficult for me to make them understand the concept. It was just so uncommon back then," Meem stated. Even after their families came around and they got their shots, they have had to, at times, endure unwanted comments and ridicule from society. "Some of my male clients get bullied for being trained by a woman. I never understood that. You don't see people getting ridiculed for being treated by female doctors. Isn't this the same thing," exclaimed Maksud.

Obstacles outside of the sport exist in a dime a dozen, but there are a lot of barriers within it as well. "First of all, body building can be a very expensive game to enter and there are not a lot of sponsors that you can rely upon," explained Anika. Meem added to this by explaining the importance of training throughout the year and how it is really hard to keep up with financially, saying, "You have to train the entire year. You can't just train before a competition and expect to win. You have to spend a lot to keep up your training, and most of the time, you have to bear your own cost." Maksud elaborated on the lack of education and certification, as well as the gap between national and international

competition. "Bodybuilding is somewhat of a neglected sport and does not get enough exposure. We also have very little communication with IFBB, so the competitions here often don't align with international ones. All this can make it really difficult for us to pursue our dreams," she stated.

### MARCHING ON WITH THEIR HEADS HELD HIGH

These strong and bold women have crushed all barriers that were put in front of them and have achieved huge success in their respective careers. They have been consistently expanding the horizon and their stories have inspired more women to enter the sport. "I am a professional athlete before anything else. You must forget about the norms set by society and be prepared for a journey that is yours alone. You must be prepared to fight your battles. Everything is possible," explained Maksud. Meem reveals how bodybuilding is more a way of life than a sport and that you must enter with an open mind and clear head, saying, "People will talk smack. People will criticise everything that you do regardless of how well you do it. It is up to us to keep moving forward and achieving our goals." Anika also concurs with this and has encouraged any aspiring bodybuilder/gym-goers regardless of their gender to just be brave enough to get started with their journey. "My advice to everyone is to just join a gym and start working out, everything else will fall into place," she stated.

By Irfan Aziz  
Photo: Warrior Talks, Ruslan's Studio



began her career in 2019 and within this short time, she became the champion of the 9th Bangladesh Games and is also the first ever female athlete from Bangladesh to compete in international competitions such as Amateur Olympia in Mumbai and the Dubai Muscle Show, finishing within the top 7 in both of these competitions. She aims to create more history by becoming the first woman from Bangladesh to obtain a IFBB Pro Card. Meem is a professional trainer who

various national competitions, including the likes of Bangladesh Games, and plans to take her game to the next level this year by making the transition to international competitions. Jannat is a relative newcomer to the sport, but has already taken it by storm. She started working out in April 2021 and took part in her first competition organised by the Bangladesh Bodybuilding Federation (BABBF) a year later in March 2022, and won first prize. Since then, she







# Cheesy recipes for a delightful time

Cheese is one of the most versatile ingredients to have in the kitchen. From pasta to cheesecake, cheese can be used in a variety of different foods, both sweet and savoury. To satiate your cheese cravings and indulge yourself into a cheesy affair, here are few savoury cheese recipes for you to try out.



## CHICKEN LASAGNE

### Ingredients

400g chicken rasher  
15 lasagne sheets  
200g mozzarella  
For the béchamel sauce –  
50g butter  
1 large onion  
2 cloves garlic  
3 tbsp flour  
750ml milk  
1 cup chopped mushrooms  
1 cup shredded mozzarella  
½ cup deshi cheese  
Salt to taste  
½ tsp pepper  
½ tsp oregano  
1 tsp parsley  
1 tsp chilli flakes

### Method

To make the béchamel sauce, add butter, chopped onions, and garlic in a pan, and cook until fragrant. Then, add in flour and stir until it becomes a thick mixture and the flour is cooked. Pour in milk and continue to stir. Keep on stirring the mixture while you add chopped mushrooms and condiments including salt, pepper, oregano, and parsley.

This will turn into a thick, gloopy mixture. Finally, add in the two types of shredded cheese and finish off with chilli flakes. For the chicken rasher, lightly pat them over a heated pan for five minutes on both sides. Before assembling, preheat your oven to 170°C.

In a large casserole, pour in a generous layer of the béchamel sauce and then add a layer of pasta. Add another layer of sauce and top with chicken rasher. Repeat this sequence until all the sauce is exhausted. At the very top, add a layer of

shredded mozzarella cheese and bake for 40 minutes.

## POTATO DAUPHINOISE

### Ingredients

6 large potatoes  
2 cups cream  
½ tsp nutmeg  
1 tsp salt  
½ tsp black pepper  
1 tbsp butter  
4 garlic cloves  
200g mozzarella cheese

the dish is full and add a generous amount of cheese on the finally layer.

Bake this in a preheated oven at 160°C for an hour before serving piping hot.

## QUICHE LORRAINE

### Ingredients

For the crust –  
1¼ cup flour  
100g butter  
1 egg  
For the filling –  
100g beef bacon  
100g mushrooms



### Method

Peel the potatoes and slice them in wafer-thin layers using a mandolin. To the cream, add salt, pepper, grated nutmeg and mix. Grease the sides of a casserole with butter and start with a layer of cream. Then place the potatoes in a layer and sprinkle over some garlic and cheese. Repeat this until

100g tofu  
2/3 cup cherry tomatoes  
1 tbsp oil  
3 eggs  
A pinch of nutmeg  
½ tsp salt  
½ tsp black pepper  
2 tbsp chives



½ cup cream  
½ cup milk  
½ cup grated mozzarella cheese

### Method

To make the crust, add cold, diced butter into the flour and use your fingertips to combine — this should have grainy consistency. Then, crack in one cold egg and combine to make a dough. Once the dough is formed, wrap it with cling film and refrigerate for 20 minutes. Once done, roll this out flat and place it on a greased tart pan. Pat the edges to smoothen out and bring to shape, then poke the surface with a fork. Bake this in a preheated oven at 160°C for 20 minutes.

To make the filling, heat oil in a pan and add in bacon, sliced mushrooms, and tomatoes. Sprinkle some salt and pepper and cook for 5 minutes. Beat the eggs and add black pepper, salt, nutmeg, chives, cream, and milk while mixing.

Disperse the cooked elements on the case along with little dices of tofu. Then add in grated mozzarella cheese, and finally, pour over the cream mixture. Bake for 30 minutes in the same oven and wait for it to cool down before slicing in.

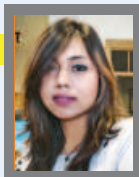
**By Fariha Amber**  
**Food & Photo: Fariha Amber**



## LIFE AS IT IS

## WARA KARIM

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# LETTING YOUR STRESS BE SWEPT AWAY BY OCEAN WAVES

Try to plan one trip to the beach every year. Do some careful financial planning, save up, and set aside three to four days (the more, the better) from your work schedule to spend time at the beach, because an annual beach getaway is absolutely worth it. For those people who live in landlocked regions, going to the beach can be a time-consuming and costly affair, so consider yourself lucky if the nearest beach is not too far from your location.

We lived in Minnesota, USA, for five years and during that time, we managed to make just one beach vacation.

Because we lived in America's Midwest, which shares no border with sea or ocean, a trip to the nearest beach meant travelling 2.5 to 3 hours by air. However, after moving to Delaware, a small state with pretty beaches, beach getaways have become an annual thing for us. We now go to the beach on day trips, too.

I cannot stress enough how rejuvenating spending time near the ocean can be. The waves breaking at your feet and the sand slipping beneath them carry away your physical fatigue; and the briny breeze of the sea distracts you from your stress and worries. It is therefore no wonder that standing on the shore and gazing at the enigmatic sea make us feel healed and restored.

If you are a Bangladeshi living in Bangladesh, count your blessings, for our country has sandy expanses waiting for us to relax, explore, and bond with rolling waves. No matter where you reside in this small but beautiful country, the beach is never

too far off. I still remember my first trip to Cox's Bazar in 2008 and the majestic sunset I witnessed there. That evening, the hues of orange, red, and pink streaked across the sky and spoke of love, hopes, and dreams.

In colder climates, summer is synonymous with beach getaways, especially for people who live not far from the ocean. Why? Because a beach getaway is more than just a getaway. Times spent with the sea, salt, and sand have lasting effects on our body, mind, and soul.

### Reconnect with nature

The beach helps us reconnect with nature, especially if you live in the concrete jungle of a metropolis.

If you have not yet watched a sunrise at the beach, then you have missed out on one of the most magnificent phenomena of nature. The sight of the gaseous ball ascending from the edge of the ocean is a sight worth watching over and over.

### Relax

Have you noticed that after a beach trip you always sleep like a baby? Our brains enter a calming state after spending time at the beach. The sound of waves breaking on the shore is incredibly relaxing, which is why many people play the calming 'white noise' of crashing sea waves on their mobile devices to sleep at home.

Also, the cool blue shade of the sea has a soothing effect on our nerves.



### Get physical activities

Walking or jogging along the seashore and swimming in the sea are vigorous physical activities that reenergise our bodies and brains. Playing catch or frisbee at the beach is fun, too, especially if you are accompanied by children.

### Unplug from technology

Sand, water, and gadgets do not mix well. Therefore, for a technology detox, there is no place better than the beach!

If you live in Bangladesh, you do not need to go overseas to enjoy the pleasures and benefits of a beach holiday. Reap all the advantages of living in a country that boasts the planet's longest unbroken natural sea beach — Cox's Bazar. We also have Inani, Parki, Patenga, Kuakata beaches and more.

Nearly one-third of our body is water. One-third of our Earth is water, too. Therefore, it is perhaps not a random thing that we feel at peace near the ocean.

Sometimes, we overlook the advantages of going on a vacation. We should not, because going on an annual vacation is not a luxury in today's fast-paced technology-driven world, but a necessity. Therefore, if you want to boost productivity, improve health, lower stress, lift moods, and strengthen your relationships, plan at least one vacation every year. And when you do, keep "beach getaway" as your number one choice; we assure you that you will not be disheartened.

By Wara Karim

Photo: LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed





**KUNDALINI RISING**

**SHAZIA OMAR**  
Writer, activist and yogini  
[www.shaziaomar.com](http://www.shaziaomar.com)



# Yoga for heart healing

I am in love with yoga, not only because it has helped me stay healthy and strong for the past 20 years, but also because it has helped me cope with loss and heart break. Yoga has helped me process and release grief by addressing both the physical and emotional aspects of this challenging experience. Deep meditation on forgiveness, compassion, and gratitude have had profound healing effects on me. Grief can manifest in the body as tension, tightness, and emotional distress, and yoga poses can provide relief and a holistic approach to healing. Here's how yoga poses can assist in releasing grief:

### Physical Tension Release

Grief often leads to physical tension and tightness, especially in the chest, shoulders, and neck. Gentle stretching and yoga poses can target these areas, helping to release muscular tension and create a sense of physical relief. For me, I store all my emotions in my hips, leading to lower back pain. Yoga also helps reduce this.

### Deep Breathing

Yoga incorporates deep and mindful breathing. Breathing exercises can help us

become more aware of our breath, which can be shallow and constricted during times of grief. Deep, intentional breaths can promote relaxation and reduce anxiety associated with grief.

### Emotional Expression

Some yoga poses, such as heart-opening and hip-opening poses, can allow for the release of stored emotions. Grief can often be accompanied by suppressed emotions, and yoga can provide a safe space to express and process these feelings.

### Mindfulness and Meditation

Yoga encourages mindfulness and self-awareness. Practices like meditation and body scanning can help us explore and acknowledge grief without judgment. This can lead to a deeper understanding of the grief process and facilitate its release.

### Grounding and Centering

Grief can make us feel emotionally ungrounded and scattered. Yoga poses



that emphasise balance and stability, such as standing poses and grounding postures, can help us regain a sense of centeredness and stability. Furthermore, the rhythm of a regular practice becomes an anchor in turbulent times.

### Self-Compassion and Forgiveness

Yoga philosophy calls for self-compassion and self-acceptance. Engaging in yoga

can help us cultivate a sense of kindness and gentleness toward ourselves during a difficult time like grief.

### Community and Support

Participating in a yoga class or group can provide a sense of community and support. Sharing the practice with others who may be experiencing similar emotions can help us feel less isolated.

It's essential to approach yoga as a complementary practice to support the grief process, not as a replacement for professional grief counselling or therapy when needed. If you are experiencing profound grief, you should talk to friends and seek the guidance of a mental health professional to help you navigate through your emotions and grief journey effectively. Yoga can be a valuable tool in conjunction with other forms of therapy and support.

To learn more about holistic wellbeing, check out [www.dhakaflow.com](http://www.dhakaflow.com)

### By Shazia Omar

The author is a writer and a yogini. You can follow her on Instagram or YouTube @ Shazzy Om.

## #PRESS RELEASES

# Yoga for all: Dhaka Flow's yoga classes at Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed Park

In the bustling city of Dhaka, where life moves at a frenetic pace, finding moments of serenity can be a challenge. However, thanks to Dhaka Flow, residents now have the opportunity to improve their physical and mental well-being through free yoga classes, which are being held from 1 September to 28 October at Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed Park. Through the park sessions — scheduled on Fridays and Saturdays — everyone can experience the benefits of yoga.

Yoga as an age-old practice has the power to transform lives. It not only improves physical flexibility but also boosts mental clarity. These yoga classes — conducted by four certified yoga instructors — cater to beginners and seasoned yogis alike.

"I believe every park in our country should have free yoga classes. Yoga helps us to understand our body, mind, and spirit. I think the more people know about yoga, the more they will want to practise it because yoga has so many benefits," said Shazia Omar, co-founder of Dhaka Flow.

She continued, adding, "We also want to promote a healthy lifestyle, which includes healthy nutrition through this two-month-long program. And so, our sponsor is Olio Orolio as it is a good oil to cook with and use. We want people to know about mental health, self-confidence, and healthy



interpersonal relationships through our park sessions."

The Managing Director of EC Organic Products Ltd (ECOPL) — distributor company of Olio Orolio — Tanveer Chowdhury, remarked, "During COVID-19, we started becoming health conscious and took care of our body and mental health. We focused on how to survive longer and lead healthier lifestyles and I am also into fitness and yoga. This is where the inspiration came from — to collaborate with Dhaka Flow and promote healthy living."

The sessions will go beyond physical flexibility; they will delve into mindfulness and meditation, fostering a deeper

connection between mind and body. The classes focus on holistic well-being — a response to the stress and challenges of modern life.

"I enjoy practising yoga because it helps me with my mental and physical health. It also lets me explore my personality, aiding me in cultivating compassion and understanding of others. I have learned a lot of lessons and I can apply them to other aspects of my life," explained Marc Thiry, a yoga enthusiast who is participating in these sessions.

Whether you're a seasoned yogi or a complete novice, there's a class tailored to your level. From gentle stretches, and relaxation techniques for beginners

to advanced breathing exercises for experienced practitioners, these classes are for a wide spectrum of yoga enthusiasts.

These free yoga classes are more than just an opportunity to stretch and strengthen your body — they are a chance to connect with like-minded individuals.

"People are coming together under one roof and discussing different aspects of yoga through this program. This is a wonderful initiative and I believe it is just the start; we have only scratched the surface and hopefully, it will turn into a wellness movement," remarked Faria Athar Khan, who is one of the yoga instructors and is doing MSc in yoga therapy from Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana (S-VYASA) in India.

Many people may wish to attend regular yoga classes taken by professionals, but find it expensive or not worth the expenditure. For them, it is undoubtedly a must-attend program.

So, mark your calendars and get ready to embark on a journey of self-discovery and wellness by joining free yoga classes by Dhaka Flow at Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed Park, Gulshan-2!

For more information, please visit: <https://www.dhakaflow.com/events/category/classes/>

### By Ayman Anika



#CHECK IT OUT

# STAR LIFESTYLE is looking for new writers

If you love writing on lifestyle topics – travel, food, fashion, health, and more – consider joining us as a contributing writer! Students (undergrads) are especially encouraged to apply.

**Contributors are expected to:**

Research for articles: Covering events, taking interviews, etc.

Write articles in English, with a strong command over the language

Generate ideas for the supplement

Attend monthly contributors' meetings (remote work on all other days)

**To apply:**

Send your CV and two sample write-ups on topics of your choice, related to lifestyle. The articles must be unpublished and original, and approximately 500 words each.

Email us your submission to BOTH [lifestyleds@yahoo.com](mailto:lifestyleds@yahoo.com) and [haider@thedailystar.net](mailto:haider@thedailystar.net). Please mention "Application" in the subject line.

**Deadline:**

30 September, 2023



## HOROSCOPE



**ARIES**  
(MAR. 21-APR. 20)

Direct your energy into moneymaking opportunities. Take time to find out everything. A little rest will do wonders. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



**TAURUS**  
(APR. 21-MAY 21)

Your colleague may be emotional. Secret affairs will lead to devastating circumstances. Get involved in physical activities. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



**GEMINI**  
(MAY 22-JUN. 21)

Emotional confusion will lead to wrong decisions. Financial affairs do not look favourable this week. Don't come on too strongly. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



**CANCER**  
(JUN. 22-JUL. 22)

Your groups may not enjoy your company. Deal with in-laws this week. Don't let your partner talk you into doing anything. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



**LEO**  
(JUL. 23-AUG. 22)

Arguments with employers will cause you problems. Avoid dealing with relatives. New romantic connections can be made through group associations. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



**VIRGO**  
(AUG. 23-SEP. 23)

Help those less fortunate. Business trips might prove unproductive. Make favourable changes at home. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



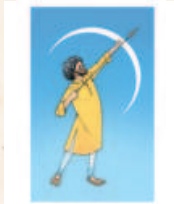
**LIBRA**  
(SEP. 24-OCT. 23)

Work from home if you can. You will gain a lot if you listen. Don't spend more than is necessary on travel. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



**SCORPIO**  
(OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Romantic encounters can develop through colleagues. Things will be hectic at home this week. Don't overspend to impress others. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



**SAGITTARIUS**  
(NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Co-workers might sabotage your attempts to get ahead. Home improvement projects will run smoothly. Take a break with loved ones. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



**CAPRICORN**  
(DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

Control your temper and deal with things rationally. Be cautious who you deal with financially. Make plans to travel abroad. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.




**AQUARIUS**  
(JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

Sudden changes at home are imminent. Take that long overdue vacation now. Be prepared to alienate people if you are stubborn. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



**PISCES**  
(FEB. 20-MAR. 20)


Put your energy into creative outlets. Drastic financial losses may happen if you aren't careful. Get involved in a competitive sport. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



**একই মূল্যে টাঃ ২৫/-বেশি লাভ!**

প্রতিটি একেজি **ফাস্ট ওয়াশ** এর সাথে  
টাঃ ২৫/- মূল্যের ১টি ৫৭০ লব্ধী সোপ বুঝে নিন।

**সাদা আর এক নাম**





#DECOR

# How to make your small living room appear larger

In the pursuit of the ideal living space, we often find ourselves making trade-offs, such as going for a more compact living room in exchange for something like a more desirable kitchen space. Yet, it's of utmost importance to remember that the living room serves as the very heart of our homes, where the majority of our daily lives unfold. It's a sanctuary for relaxation, bonding, and unwinding.

The desire for a larger living room is a common dream, yet in urban homes, the reality often falls short. However, fear not, for there are a number of techniques at your disposal that can conjure an illusion of spaciousness within your living area, and in this guide, we promise to unlock those secrets!

The journey to make your living room appear more spacious begins with choosing a neutral light colour palette for your living room, a subtle manoeuvre that extends our visuals by harnessing the reflection of natural light, thus creating an illusion of spaciousness. While a traditional all-white aesthetic undoubtedly achieves this objective, it need not be the sole route to get it done. Light-toned hues, such as Sage Green or Light Beige, can equally produce this visual trick.

Nevertheless, consistency is key — ensure that your chosen colour envelopes not only the walls but also the ceiling throughout the entire living space.

The next step is liberating more space, a process that does not necessarily demand a strict adherence to minimalism. To keep things easy, make a short list of the activities you plan to do in your living room and keep the items that align with those activities and remove the rest.



However, acquiring the appropriate furniture and placing them strategically in your living room is the best way to make it appear larger. The trick lies in meticulously selecting furnishings that harmonise seamlessly with the dimensions of your living room area. Among these, the sofa plays a pivotal role, making the quest

for an appropriately sized one of great importance.

Hence, take the time to browse through various stores, scouting for that perfect fit. You should also consider purchasing special designer furniture, known for their quality and often designed with compact urban living spaces in mind. Such pieces of

furniture usually come with a steep price tag, but they should be considered as an investment for a better lifestyle.

So, instead of choosing inexpensive, mass-produced alternatives from flea markets, consider the option of premium furniture, even if it entails securing a modest loan – a viable solution, considering the availability of EMI (Equated Monthly Instalment) plans offered by a number of banks.

Furthermore, a subtle yet remarkably effective trick is pulling your furniture away from the walls, even if it's just by a few inches. This simple adjustment creates the illusion of improved air circulation, producing an immediate sense of spaciousness in your room.

Finally, a timeless manoeuvre for increasing the perception of space in any room involves the strategic placement of mirrors. Consider the inclusion of a medium to large sized mirror within your living room, thoughtfully positioned to face a window, thereby harnessing the full potential of natural light to create a spacious and well-lit ambience.

By **Abdullah Al Zobayer**  
 Photo: **Collected**



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