



Stuck in traffic? These winter snacks are worth the detour

RBR

Snacking on the streets of this city is nothing short of a culinary treat, and if you add the streets of Old Dhaka to the list, then it is an epicurean ball.

However, let's skip over the bakhkhanis, local cheese, beauty lassi, chicken chaaps, and mutton chops of downtown, where the city was originally founded. I want to introduce the variety of street snacks found in the uptown area, which is the newer part with more residences than businesses.

It is hard to distinguish between uptown and downtown per se, because you are bound to find offices tucked inside the belly of residential areas and houses on top of markets. If I were to describe Dhaka, I would say the city is one big, friendly, open market.

Now that winter is approaching, almost every nook and cranny is occupied with the brisk business of selling warm clothes, socks, mufflers, knit caps, and beanies. So, snacking is a supplementary part of such pop-up street businesses.

Having said so, I wonder how many of you will venture out of your car to



enjoy these by-the-street snacks. I say this because only the other day, I was stuck in traffic for hours at a stretch and after a certain point, I could hear my grumbling tummy, having skipped lunch that day. I was figuring out ways to pacify my stomach; sandwiches from Sausy's, quiche, or croissant from Holey, but these would have required a detour that I was not willing to take. My relief came in the form of a peppery jammy chicken egg, and a cup of steaming milk tea from a tong. I dunked an entire packet of energy plus biscuits in my tea and for dessert, I went for Igloo's Almond Split bar.

That traffic deadlock made me realise that the toiling Dhaka is spoilt

for choices when it comes to the assortment of everyday snacks.

Duck eggs reign supreme on the winter favourite snack list. The vintage-styled wire basket is full of eggs of all kinds of fowl — white, pale grey, and blue duck eggs, tiny free-range chicken eggs, quail eggs, and large farm-fed chicken eggs. Vendors sit in front of bazaars, markets, and pavements with their steaming assortment. The deep orange duck yolks are spiced up with black salt, and chilli flakes, and the jammy yolks, or 'creamy,' as the seller calls it, are served with green chilli and black pepper. Boiled eggs make for a rich, nutritious snack on the go, and trust me, you can never have just one of

these.

Another sought-after winter snack is tripe bhuna — fried at a high temperature until the spices form a paste in oil and bring out the flavours. It is to be had with puffed-up chapati or flatbreads. These are sold in front of offices and marketplaces and are a hot favourite substitute for brunch or late lunch. These carts also offer duck curry too.

Haleem carts are the ones with the most customers, especially on chilly evenings, a bowl of this lentil mix with soft tender meat is a satisfying snack on your way back home after work.

My favourite winter snack is tender roasted corn. The addition of a smoky flavour from the coals, and seasoned with lime and chilli glaze, corns are the best snacks of winter.

I am giving you the option to try these snacks besides our regular banana with biscuits or bread, spicy chanachur makha, jhalmuri, and the street favourite chola, which is a spicy chickpea dish cooked in chaat masala, onions, tomatoes, and herbs. Of course, we cannot forget the daal puris and Mughlai parathas.

Rab admits, apologises

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"As long as I am in charge... we will not engage in crimes like enforced disappearances or murders no matter who gives the orders," said Shahidur, who became the head of Rab three days after the fall of Sheikh Hasina on August 5.

The International Crimes Tribunal has initiated proceedings taking into cognisance the crimes like enforced disappearances, he said.

"We hope a fair and impartial investigation will be conducted into the allegations against us and the trial will be just."

According to Ain O Salish Kendra, from the inception of Rab in April 2004 to June this year, at least 1,200 people got killed in so called crossfires involving it.

Many have alleged over the years that their loved ones never returned after they were picked up by Rab.

On November 5, the inquiry commission on enforced disappearances said it received approximately 1,600 complaints and 172 of those were linked to Rab.

Nur Khan, a member of the commission, told reporters that a detention cell of Rab was measured just 3.5 feet x 4 feet.

"It has no source of light other than a small peephole... People had been confined to such cells for years," he said.

At yesterday's event, a reporter asked Shahidur whether Rab would be disbanded.

He replied, "We will perform our duties with dedication and sincerity. Any decision by the government is final. We will abide by it."

The BNP recently recommended that the force, which was hit with US sanctions for serious human rights violations, be disbanded. The BNP was in power when Rab was formed.

Regarding allegations that Rab used firearms, teargas shells, and threw stun grenades from helicopters on protesters during the mass uprising, Shahidur said facts will come out through investigations. "Measures will be taken as per the findings."

MAYER DAAK STATEMENT
"We believe seeking pardon is a tactic that can mislead the general public. Until justice is ensured, we will not back down from our demands," reads the statement.

"After our struggle of over a decade, some forces are at least admitting that they were involved in enforced

disappearances and killings.

"We have repeatedly demanded justice... but there has been no visible progress."

"All individuals who have been forcibly disappeared must be unconditionally released from 'Aynagar' and similar detention centres and returned to their families."

The families of victims who have been killed must be informed what had happened to their loved ones, it says.

"Besides police and Rab, the military intelligence agency was involved in these enforced disappearances and killings, but it has yet to acknowledge the truth."

Mayer Daak demands a clear admission from the army.

The secret prisons must be destroyed and museums built in their place to ensure "no enforced disappearance, killing, or crime against humanity occurs" in the future.

"The museums should be dedicated to preserving the memory of the victims of enforced disappearances and oppression."

"What happened to them after they were forcibly disappeared? Where is the detailed account and the paperwork from the state forces?"

Accolade for stellar OTT performers

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The awards were presented by distinguished figures from various industries.

Jon Kabir won the Best Content Creator (podcast) award.

Abanti Sathi and Mahtim Sakib shared the Best Singer Award for their performance in "Pakhi Pakhi Mon", while Sajid Sarker earned the Best Music Composer award for his exceptional work in the same production.

Mosharraf Karim was honoured as the Best Actor (male) in the popular choice category for his role in Mohanagar-2, whereas Azmeri Haque Badhan and Tasnia Farin jointly received the Best Actor (female) award for their performances in Gutti and Nikosh, respectively.

Unish20 won the Best Film/Drama/ Series award in the critics' choice

category.

Shihab Shaheen and Robiul Alam Robi jointly received the Best Scriptwriter (story) award for "Myself Allen Swapan".

Mizanur Rahman Aryan won the Best Director (critics' choice) award for Unish20.

Alfan Nisho's win as Best Antagonist (critic's choice) for Sharey Showlo was an unexpected delight.

He dedicated the award to his mentor, the legendary Humayun Faridee, as he did in case of his many previous awards.

Ashfaq Nipun was awarded Best Director, drama/series (popular choice), for Mohanagar-2, while Raihan Rafi was Best Director, film, for "Friday".

Accepting the award, Nipun expressed his gratitude to the audience and dedicated the award to those who

sacrificed their lives during the July uprising.

Rafi shared his experience, saying, "I tried to experiment with OTT platforms and feel good about working in this space. I always strive to bring out innovative ideas through my work."

Renowned actor Nasir Uddin Khan was named Best Actor Male (critics' choice), while Nazia Haque Orsha won the Best Actor Female.

Nasir dedicated his award to the production team of 'Myself Allen Swapan'.

The ceremony was followed by a performance by Pritom Hasan & Band, which also featured the talents of BeatBaksho.

The night ended on a high with Myself Allen Swapan winning the People's Choice Best Content of the Year (2023).

India does not endorse Hasina's criticism

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According to sources, Misri also said that during his visit to Dhaka on Monday, he informed the interim government that India's relationship with Bangladesh went beyond

"a particular political party" or a particular government and that India prioritised relations with the people of Bangladesh and would engage with the government of the day.

Misri briefed the committee on Wednesday. During the briefing, he also conveyed India's "concerns" about the "regrettable incidents" in Bangladesh.

According to the Hindu report, he described Bangladesh as the largest partner in trade and connectivity in South Asia and said that in recent years, the two sides had built rail and bus links and inland waterways. He, however, informed the committee that passenger rail services between the two countries remained "suspended".

He said India is concerned about the lack of acknowledgment of the alleged incidents of violence against minority communities by Dhaka but welcomed the latest report, which mentions 88 arrests over the violence against minority communities after the fall of the Hasina-led government.

there has been tangible improvement in the relationship after his visit. Both sides explained their concerns.

For India, the Bangladesh authorities' decision to release many of the convicted "terrorists," who are indulging in anti-India rhetoric, remained an issue of deep concern, said Misri.

The Bangladesh authorities, meanwhile, flagged the "disinformation" campaign in the Indian press about the events unfolding in their country.

Many committee members raised the arrest of an ISKCON monk in Bangladesh, but did not respond on the issue, as per the sources.

Misri, however, said that during his visit, he informed the authorities in Dhaka that there had to be an "acknowledgment" of the incidents that involved attacks on temples and the Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre.

He added that while there was an attempt by the interim government of Bangladesh to describe the reports as exaggeration or media creation, there were "credible" organisations that have documented some of the incidents that required to be addressed.

Misri then pointed out that soon after his conversation on these lines, the press secretary of the chief adviser, Shaiful Alam, held a press conference, informing the number of arrests that had been made to deal with the attacks on minority groups.

He also said some of the justification of the attacks in Bangladesh referred to the fact that the incidents involved attacks on the activists of Awami League, the former ruling party.

Misri explained that such arguments could not "justify" such attacks.

Misri informed the committee that during his visit to Dhaka, he met Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain, Foreign Secretary Mohammad Jashim Uddin, and Prof Yunus and emphasised the need for a "democratic, peaceful, stable, and inclusive" Bangladesh.

He said that last year, 1.6 million visas were issued to visitors from Bangladesh, the largest number of visas that India has issued to any country during that time. He said India did not view the relation with Bangladesh as one based on "reciprocity" but as one that is grounded on "good neighbourly relationship".

Govt mulling new Rohingya policy

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the AA — be it for drug smuggling, human trafficking or Rohingya repatriation."

China and India are also engaging with the AA despite having formal engagement with the Myanmar junta, he said.

Since July, about 60,000 Rohingyas have fled to Bangladesh, taking the total sheltering in the camps to upwards of 1 million, according to government officials. More Rohingyas might follow.

On the other hand, security concerns around the Rohingya camp in Cox's Bazar have grown, but the fund for Rohingya is also declining.

Of the \$852.4 million sought for Rohingyas this year, donors provided only \$455.7 million (53 percent) until September 30, according to the UN Refugee Agency.

As much as 73 percent of Rohingya in the Cox's Bazar camps buy food from outside as the monthly food ration of \$12.5 is inadequate, according to Mohammed Mizanur Rahman, Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner.

Some Rohingya youths are engaged in volunteering but most others have nothing to do.

"This reality pushes the Rohingya to be involved in smuggling of yaba, human trafficking and even arms smuggling. Some members of the local community are also involved here. This is creating a security threat in the entire region," he said.

Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain said he fully supports the education of Rohingya of up to class ten in Myanmar syllabus and skills development.

"We have to try to help improve their skills so that when they return home, they can have a means of livelihood," he said.

Against the backdrop, Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus appointed Khalilur Rahman as High Representative on the Rohingya Problem and Priority Issues Affairs, while at his request, the UN is set to host a UN Conference on Rohingya early next year.

"Khalilur Rahman is working on the matter. We also want to bring the international focus back to the Rohingya crisis," an official of the foreign ministry told The Daily Star.

The interim government is willing to improve services in the Rohingya

camp, especially education and skills.

For that, funding will be an important issue, which will be a key priority in the UN conference early next year, the official added.

Meanwhile, Yunus has proposed the creation of a "safe zone guaranteed by the UN" for the displaced people in Rakhine and finding ways to support them and prevent thousands of new refugees from fleeing to Bangladesh.

The situation in Rakhine is the worst since the 2017 influx, said an official at the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commission.

Up to two million people in Myanmar's Rakhine state face the dire prospect of famine amid a broader economic collapse and worsening humanitarian crisis triggered by the military's 2021 overthrow of the democratically elected government, according to a UNDP report published on November 7.

The safe zone can also be used as the first platform of repatriation before taking them to the Rohingya's original places when the situation permits, Haque said.

"This can be an important aspect of discussion during the UN conference early next year," he said.

Bilateral engagement with Myanmar and then engaging China since 2017 have yielded no result, said foreign ministry officials in New York and Dhaka.

"Not a single Rohingya returned to Myanmar. The current government, therefore, is looking to the broader international community for helping address the Rohingya crisis," an official told the correspondent.

For the first time, the UN is set to hold an all-stakeholder conference either in New York or Dhaka and the next course of actions and policies will be discussed and adapted there. The issue was agreed in a UN resolution in New York on Nov 21.

Also, as Rohingya funding is dropping, a major objective of the UN conference would be mobilising funds, which can improve the situation in the camps, the official said.

"We want to bring back the focus of the international community to the Rohingya crisis," Hossain said.

China and India will see their interests, which is understandable, but Bangladesh needs to see how they can facilitate Rohingya repatriation and regional peace and stability, which can

be hampered if the Rohingya crisis lingers.

Southeast Asian countries including Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and Singapore also need to be kept on board, he added.

Since 2017, Myanmar created a hype of insecurity in the border areas, according to foreign ministry officials. The Myanmar junta stoked tension by firing, attacking fishermen on the Naf River, illegal border crossing and numerous violations of the Bangladesh airspace.

"Bangladesh, however, avoided the trap of being pulled into an armed conflict," an official said.

Bangladesh needs to have minimum deterrence, not to fight, but to respond if anyone attacks Bangladesh.

"Diplomacy without armament is like music without instruments," he said.

Sufiur Rahman, Bangladesh's former ambassador to Myanmar, also supports this. "There should be a minimum deterrence as a strategy to secure peace with Myanmar."

He also suggested that Bangladesh engage the National Unity Government, the civilian government fighting the Myanmar junta, to secure a clear pathway towards citizenship for the Rohingya.

At the same time, Bangladesh also needs to assure the Myanmar junta of non-involvement in security matters of Rakhine or Myanmar and on matters related to the territorial integrity of Myanmar.

"Bangladesh should seek to establish multilayered, interdependent relations with Myanmar's union government," Rahman said.

He also suggested that Bangladesh continue to pursue international accountability at the International Court of Justice and International Criminal Court for Rohingya rights, for the Rohingya as well as reconciliation among all communities or victims in Rakhine.

"At the same time, Bangladesh needs to support Rohingya leadership both in Bangladesh and abroad for them to reclaim their rights in Myanmar."

Also, Bangladesh needs to develop a national consensus among all the political parties on the Rohingya policy.

"This will be crucial to better handle the Rohingya crisis," Rahman added.

Riyad, Jaker power Tigers to record total

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mahmudullah Riyad and Jaker Ali's brilliant partnership after half-centuries from Soumya Sarkar and captain Mehedi Hasan Miraz powered Bangladesh to 321-5 — their highest ODI total in the Caribbean — in the final ODI against hosts West Indies at Warner Park in St Kitts yesterday.

Riyad top scored with an unbeaten 84 off 63, his fourth straight 50-plus knock, while Jaker made 62 not out 57 balls and together they added 150 runs off 117 balls to power the visitors to a commanding total in the dead rubber game. The Tigers had already conceded the series with losses in the first two games.

At the time of filing this report, Bangladesh had reduced West Indies to 88-4 after 15 overs, with Keacy Carty and Amir Jangoo batting on 27 and one respectively.

Brandon King (15) got run out by Miraz in the second over after which Nasum Ahmed and Hasan Mahmud removed Alick Athanaze (seven) and Shai Hope (three) respectively inside the Powerplay.

Taskin Ahmed then dismissed the dangerous Sherfane Rutherford for 30 off 33 balls in the 15th over.

Earlier, asked to bat, Bangladesh lost Tanzid Tamim and Liton Das for ducks in the space of three balls, both falling victim to pacer Alzarri Joseph and were reduced to 9-2 in 2.4 overs.

Soumya and Miraz batted positively despite the loss of early wickets and their 136-run stand repaired the early damage.

Soumya, who hit a classy run-a-ball 73, got trapped lbw by Gudakesh Motie and Miraz soon got run out after a well-paced 77 off 73 balls as Bangladesh got reduced to 171-5 inside 30.3 overs. Mahmudullah and Jaker then first steadied the innings and then cut loose in the last 10 overs, which yielded 107, to give Bangladesh a commanding total.

activity."

After Gaza, the deadliest places for journalists in 2024 were Pakistan with seven deaths, followed by Bangladesh and Mexico with five each.

In 2023, the number of journalists killed worldwide stood at 45 in the same January-December period.

As of December 1, there were 550 journalists imprisoned worldwide, compared to 513 last year, according to RSF figures.

The three countries with the highest numbers of detained journalists are China (124, including 11 in Hong Kong), Myanmar (61), and Israel (41).

Furthermore, 55 journalists are currently being held hostage, including two abducted in 2024. Nearly half — 25 in total — are in the hands of the Islamic State group.

In addition, 95 journalists are reported missing, including four new cases reported in 2024.

The organization has filed four complaints with the International Criminal Court (ICC) for "war crimes committed against journalists by the Israeli army."

It said that in total "more than 145" journalists had been killed by the Israeli army in Gaza since the start of the war there in October 2023, with 35 of them working at the time of their deaths, RSF said.

In a separate report published Tuesday, the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) reported that 104 journalists were killed worldwide in 2024, with more than half of them in Gaza.

The figures differ between the IFJ and RSF due to two different methodologies used in calculating the toll.

RSF only includes journalists whose deaths have been "proven to be directly related to their professional