



# RUNNING MARATHONS

## Transforming lifestyles, inspiring communities



UCR Half Marathon 2024 (Edition-3)

Bangladesh is now witnessing a new wave of enthusiasm for running. What started as a solo activity has become widespread, reflecting a collective effort to prioritise health and well-being.

A marathon covers 42.2 km; however, many people casually refer to any running event as a "marathon." Ultra-marathons refer to races that go beyond the standard distance; these challenges can cover distances such as 50 km, 100 km, or even a staggering 200 km!

Starting with large-scale events like the Cox's Bazar International Half Marathon

and the Dhaka International Half Marathon, the running culture has grown significantly and now offers much more.

#### THE LANGUAGE OF DISTANCE

AKM Ahsan Ullah, an ultra-runner and a recent finisher of the Chicago Marathon. He explains, "Running is the easiest sport that everyone can participate in. You can run, fast walk, or even just walk — there's no judgment. It's all about being yourself."

He adds, "There are so many more events now compared to 2018 — the year I started. Joining these events with communities feels incredible. It's like a big get-together

that ends with achievement and pride."

The marathon movement in Bangladesh goes beyond personal fitness. It has become a tool for transformation. Marathons and other running events often double as platforms to raise awareness about issues like climate change or saving heritage. The increasing participation of women, children, and the elderly in running events is particularly encouraging, defying traditional norms and promoting positivity.

"It's been 9 years since I started running, and for most of that time, I was

always solo. But now, with the rise of running communities, everything feels different. Joining these vibrant groups has changed my experience entirely," shares fresh Zaker, the noted actor.

"What's even more exciting is how running events have become so frequent and well-organised. It's no longer just a regular occasion — it feels like a festival! The streets come alive with energy, excitement, and determination as runners from all walks of life come together, each targeting their personal best."

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