



Dhaka goes full throttle this weekend with food, fitness and fandom

RBR

Cosmopolitan Dhakaites have grown a multifarious, globally influenced character that adds sophistication to the city. In whichever length and breadth of the city you venture to, you will always find yourself in some sort of chaotic adventure. Maybe a procession demanding a three-day weekend or a mob doing whatever nonsense they do, or there can be a festival happening right in the middle of the street -- food, crafts, clothes, and a friendly face.

Come winter, Dhaka's parks, alleys, and convention centres are full of fairs, weddings, reunions, picnics, tea parties, or annual events. This weekend is packed with sporty activities and cultural events.



Book launch

The Dhaka launch of the book, 'Shattered Lands: Five Partitions and the Making of Modern Asia' by Sam Dalrymple, sponsored by Securex, will be held on Friday, 7 November, at Shahabuddin Park's Amphitheatre during Dhaka Flow Fest.

The young filmmaker and historian narrates his collection of fascinating



and intimate oral histories, and archival research he gathered for his documentary Project Dastaan.

Every time words like partitions, repatriation, refugee, and displaced community pop up in our conversation, we tend to recall the horrific memories of 1947, with the division of British India. However, the Raj, an imperial banner comprising India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal, Bhutan, Yemen, Oman, the UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, and Kuwait, witnessed five other partitions that tore it apart.

The book is termed as a must-read history book of the year. Dalrymple will be signing his book at BOOKWORM on November 8, from 11:00am.

Movement, meditation, creativity, and connection

Now, let's talk about the Flow Fest, a wellness organisation, where Dhaka

celebrates the most vibrant wellness weekend from November 6 to 8, at Shahabuddin Park, Gulshan, presented by United Commercial Bank Ltd.

Thrive Walkathon, on 7 November, is an event of Thrive Global, a non-profit organisation supporting a child's nutrition and education program. There will also be a five-kilometre fun run on 8 November, powered by Skechers as well. This is unmistakably great for walkathon and marathon enthusiasts.

Besides, unleash your creativity through hands-on workshops in pottery, painting, photography, and mindful crafts, engage with inspiring speakers, live music performances, and panels on modern wellbeing and resilience. Your children will also get to enjoy the outdoors with an energetic playground, with storytelling sessions,

drawing cartoons, making crafts, singing, and activities like yoga and gardening that will keep their energy channelled.

A vibrant atmosphere

The second season of Street Food Festival will treat you to an explosion of intense and varied flavours of our Deshi street snacks. The event aims to create a mood of a Deshi kind of joy through authentic tastes, smells, and the atmosphere of Dhaka streets. The experience will go beyond just the food. I am looking forward to a simply lively social setting with music and cultural performances.

Street Food Festival will be held at Baridhara DOHS Convention Center Field from November 10 to 13 from 11:00am to 10:00pm.

AnimeCon Dhaka Yuki Matsuri 2025 is an anticipated event, taking place on November 14, at the International Convention Center Limited (ICCL), Dhaka. Inspired by Yuki Matsuri, Japan's iconic Snow Festival, this must-visit event will be Dhaka's very own winter wonderland of snow, lights, and culture, so mark your calendar accordingly.

There will be enthralling performances like Japanese dance, cosplay, J-pop, and live music, as well as activities like anime quizzes, art and meme contests, and fun winter games for all ages. Yes, there will also be foods like ramen, Takoyaki, and hot chocolate to sweeten the deal.

So, brace yourself, because Dhaka will give you an unforgettable community fun experience this weekend.

Over \$248m of climate fund lost

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is just 0.7 percent of the required amount.

Between 2003 and 2024, the country received only \$1.2 billion from foreign sources, an "insignificant amount given the scale of climate losses", said Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of TIB, at the report's launch event yesterday.

The climate fund was initially formed with the promise of effective action, but the reality has been "deeply disappointing and embarrassing as a citizen", he said.

"In terms of value for money, the results of climate finance are extremely poor. Even of the limited funds that were allocated, a major portion, worth over Tk 2,100 crore, has been lost to corruption and irregularities. More than half of what was financed never reached the people it was

meant for."

The outcome was "tragic", with the burden falling on the most climate-vulnerable communities.

"Instead of reaching those who are most at risk, the funds were diverted and misused for political purposes. Politically influential local elites captured the funds, while the truly climate-affected communities were left behind."

Iftekharuzzaman described the scale of irregularities as a "severe blow to governance and accountability", adding that political interference and institutional inefficiency were evident at every level from fund managers to implementing agencies.

"We have even seen projects designed for four years taking fourteen years to complete. This is a distressing and shameful picture."

"This is an unacceptable situation."

He criticised the authorities for failing to

procedures for receiving and resolving public complaints and internal police grievances.

According to the draft, the commission will investigate citizen complaints against police officers, determine responsibility, and recommend appropriate action to the relevant authorities.

It will ensure the safety and confidentiality of complainants, review such cases quarterly, and issue directives to prevent misuse of power by the police. To ensure fair and timely handling of complaints nationwide, the commission will also establish divisional units to conduct inquiries and resolve cases.

Within three months of the commission's formation, the police must set up an internal system to handle complaints within 90 days. If a citizen still remains dissatisfied, they may appeal within 30 days to a divisional Police Accountability Unit, which will be led by a district judge and include a senior government officer and a human rights expert with at least 10 years of experience. The unit must resolve complaints within 60 days.

A Citizen Complaint Management Board, consisting of three commission members, will hear appeals against decisions made by the accountability units within 30 days. It will have the authority to initiate investigations, summon

safeguard or recover the funds despite the trustee board including ministers, secretaries and the Bangladesh Bank governor.

"The previous government did not act, perhaps because there were vested interests involved," he said.

TIB urged the government to act on its recommendations, identify and hold accountable those responsible for corruption and adopt preventive measures to stop such irregularities in the future.

The Trustee Board of the Climate Change Trust Fund must be restructured and strengthened with qualified, independent, and non-partisan individuals, Iftekharuzzaman said.

"Only by ensuring competence, independence, and integrity can this vital institution regain credibility and serve its original purpose."

witnesses, and publish outcomes.

Similarly, a Police Grievance Redress Board will address complaints from police personnel regarding unfair treatment, transfers, promotions, or disciplinary actions.

The commission and its subordinate bodies will have the power to issue protection orders for complainants, witnesses, and whistleblowers. All authorities must implement the commission's directives within two months or face misconduct charges under service rules. Whistleblowers will be protected under the Public Interest Information Disclosure (Protection) Act, 2011.

AUDIT, ACCOUNTABILITY
The commission will coordinate with the Ombudsman and the National Human Rights Commission to prevent overlapping jurisdictions, according to the draft.

Each year, the commission will prepare an annual report detailing its activities, the state of law and order, and recommendations for reforms. The report will be submitted to the president within three months of the fiscal year's end. It will also be placed before parliament, and published online.

The commission's financial matters will be audited by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General.

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No candidates were announced for any of the three seats in Bagerhat. After the district lost one constituency as per the Election Commission's new delimitation, BNP struggled to decide which candidate to keep and which to drop.

Meanwhile, the BNP last night cancelled the nomination of Kamal Zaman Mollah for Madaripur 1.

FEAR OF INFIGHTING
Of the 63 vacant seats, BNP withheld nominations in 30 due to fears of internal clashes where multiple strong contenders are competing for party tickets.

The Thakurgaon 2, the party could not immediately decide between two heavyweights: BNP

Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam's younger brother Mirza Faisal Amin and former Doctors Association of Bangladesh (DAB) Secretary General Abdus Salam.

Similarly, BNP fears internal clashes to break out following the announcement of candidates, as multiple strong contenders are

looking to get picked in

Dinajpur 5, Nilphamari 3,

Lalmirhat 2, Naogaon 5,

Natore 3, Sirajganj 1,

Pabna 1, Jhenaidah 1,

Khulna 1, Patuakhali 2,

Tangail 5, Mymensingh 10,

Kishoreganj 1, Manikganj 1,

Munshiganj 3, Gazipur 1,

Gazipur 6, Narsingdi 3,

Rajbari 2, Madaripur 2,

Cumilla 2, Mymensingh 4,

Barishal 3, Chattogram 3,

Chattogram 6, Chattogram 9, Chattogram 11 and Cox's Bazar 2.

BOGURA JUBILANT

Excitement swept through Bogura as BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and acting chairman Tarique Rahman were announced as candidates for Bogura 7 and Bogura 6, respectively.

Following the announcement, leaders and activists in both constituencies brought out jubilant processions last night.

Halal Uddin, a furniture shopkeeper from Gabtoli's Mohishaban village, said, "Khaleda Zia is going to contest from our area again. We are thrilled. She will win by a landslide and bring development back to

Bogura."

Asma Begum, a grocery shopkeeper from Kadamitali, said, "It's been so long since we voted. We are happy that Khaleda Zia will contest from our area again."

Bogura Gabtoli Upazila BNP General Secretary Enamul Haque Notoona said, "Both leaders and the public are overjoyed. We will ensure Madam Zia's victory with a massive turnout."

Bogura District BNP President Rezaul Karim Badsha added, "Our beloved son Tarique Rahman symbolises youth and hope. People will elect both Khaleda Zia and Tarique Rahman by huge margins."

[Our Bogura correspondent contributed to this report.]

BNP juggles seat-sharing, internal feuds

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under an alliance to use the electoral symbol of their own party, rather than that of a coalition partner.

The development came on Monday amid strong opposition on the issue from the BNP, which met the law adviser and the Election Commission to lodge its protest, while Jamaat-e-Islami, National Citizen Party, and others supported the amendment.

The government on Saturday hinted at reconsidering the amendment but issued the gazette within two days.

During previous polls, smaller partners in alliances led by major parties like the Awami League and the BNP were able to run with the larger party's symbols.

The amended RPO also bars anyone declared a fugitive by a court from contesting elections.

The new law criminalises the creation or spread of

false or misleading content, including AI-generated materials, intended to harm a candidate, influence the election, or undermine electoral integrity. Offenders using bots, fake accounts, or synthetic media will face legal action.

Through the amendments, online submission of nomination papers has been scrapped. Candidates or their proposers or seconds must now submit papers in person to the returning officer.

Postal voting will now require digital registration for expatriates, detained individuals, and public officials on election duty.

Candidates' security deposits have been raised from Tk 20,000 to Tk 50,000.

Parties may now receive donations, grants, or services worth up to Tk 50 lakh per year from individuals or

entities. Any contribution over Tk 50,000 must be made through banking channels and reflected in the donor's tax return.

Parties are also required to maintain transparent accounts and publish income and expenditure statements on their websites.

With the issuance of this RPO amendment ordinance, the process of reforming all election-related laws has been completed.

The EC has already amended the Voter List Act, the Special Provisions Act for Election Officers, and the Election Commission Secretariat Act, as well as updated policies on polling centres, domestic, and foreign observers, and journalists.

Following the RPO amendment, the EC will soon issue the code of conduct for political parties and candidates based on the revised law.

Mamdani on track to win

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He has focused on reducing living costs for ordinary New Yorkers, building support through his informal personal style and social media friendly clips of him walking the streets chatting with voters.

Unashamedly playing the race card, President Trump yesterday smeared Mamdani, who would be New York's first Muslim mayor, as a "Jew hater."

"Any Jewish person that votes for Zohran Mamdani, a proven and self professed JEW HATER, is a stupid person!!" the Republican president posted on his social media platform.

Mamdani was on about 44 percent in latest polls, several points ahead of former state governor Andrew Cuomo

who is running as an independent.

Denise Gibbs, 46, a doctor of physiotherapy, voted at a school in Brooklyn.

"I sure hope it improves the city. I want to see it decrease divisiveness and increase livelihoods of working class households and services for children," she said wearing green scrubs.

Polls close at 9:00pm (0200 GMT Wednesday).

The race has centred on cost of living, crime and how each candidate would handle Trump, who has threatened to withhold federal funds from New York.

Syracuse University political science professor Grant Reher said a Mamdani win would set up a clash with Trump.

"Trump will treat New York City

more aggressively," he said. "There will be some kind of political showdown."

Mamdani's improbable rise highlights the Democratic Party's debate over a centrist or a leftist future.

"I think that this has to be a party that actually allows Americans to see themselves in it," Mamdani said last week.

In New Jersey, Democratic Party candidate Mikie Sherrill, a former Navy helicopter pilot, faces off against Republican Jack Ciattarelli, a businessman backed by Trump.

In Virginia's race for governor, Democratic candidate Abigail Spanberger has been polling ahead of Virginia's Republican Lieutenant Governor Winsome Earle Sears.