



#EVENTS

THE FLOW FEST 2025

Redefining wellness with purpose

The Flow Fest is an event that hopes to create transformative experiences through mindful movement, conscious nutrition, and authentic community connection. It is an attempt to discover the art of living and to nurture the journey towards holistic well-being. The first day of Flow Fest Dhaka 2025 at Shahabuddin Park offered a mix of activities, from group yoga to craft sessions, martial arts to music. But beyond the schedule, what stood out were the individuals and teams who showed up with a clear purpose and honest conversations.

Speaking up about women's health: Akiko's group session

In the Meditation Garden, wellness coach Akiko led a group therapy and sharing session focused on women's health, particularly menopause and related issues like vaginal dryness, low libido, and hormonal changes.

Her journey started with a personal conversation: "Two years ago, a woman told me she couldn't sit or stand comfortably because of dryness. She warned me it could happen to me too. That conversation made me start learning more," Akiko said.

She returned to school to study menopause and body changes in women and has since spoken in Bangkok, Singapore, Japan, and now Dhaka. She sees a pattern across Asia.

"People may be curious, but they don't talk about it because it's taboo. Someone needs to create that space. That's what I try to do," she explains.

Akiko is also the founder of Project



Butterfly, a wellness community she launched in Bangkok to help women feel healthy, informed, and emotionally supported. She hopes to bring a similar space to Bangladesh.

"When people invite me, I'll come," she said. "These issues are real. And in 2025, we need to talk about them – whether we're doctors or not."

Deshi Fencers: Making space for an overlooked sport

The Deshi Fencers team gave a live demonstration of fencing, a sport rarely seen in public events in Bangladesh. The group's President, Ahnaf Niloy, said their goal is simple: make fencing more accessible and better known.

"Fencing gear isn't available in Bangladesh, and it's expensive. Beginners don't know where to find suits or equipment," Niloy explained. "Deshi Fencers was created to help people find clubs near them, based on their location and routine."

According to Niloy, fencing in Bangladesh is still far behind compared to other sports. Talented athletes are struggling to get recognition or sponsorship, and many cannot



participate in international competitions because of a lack of support.

"We want to close that gap. If fencing becomes even a little more visible, we'll see real progress. Bangladesh can compete internationally—we just need the system to support it," he said.

The group's demo was fast-paced and disciplined. For many attendees, it was the first time seeing fencing up close.

The Elite Dog Squad: More than just tricks

The Elite Dog Squad drew a large crowd with their demonstration of trained dogs performing scent work, obedience drills, and interactive activities. While it looked like entertainment, the session was part of a broader goal: to raise awareness of the potential of trained dogs and disaster response.

The crowd responded with strong interest. "This is better than some of the official drills I've seen," one visitor said after a successful scent retrieval demo.

The team is currently working on building more partnerships to expand their programme in Dhaka.

A day of practical wellness

The day continued with a full schedule

– karate and MMA sessions for kids, open mic storytelling, physiotherapy demos, and movement-based wellness classes like Zumba and yoga. But what left a deeper impression were the efforts to address real-life problems like access to sports training, honest talk about health, and alternative forms of therapy. Whether through Akiko's direct approach to taboo topics, Deshi Fencers'



practical vision for sports outreach, these participants used Flow Fest not just to perform, but to inform.

And that might be what wellness in Dhaka needs most – fewer promises of perfection, and more honest, visible work.

By Ayman Anika
Photos: Silvia Mahjabin