

A subdued Sakrain

Last day of Poush arrives in Old Dhaka with fewer kites and fading traditions

RAKIB MADDER

The last day of Poush once meant Old Dhaka's rooftops bursting with laughter, with colourful kites filling the sky and engaging in playful aerial battles. This year, however, the familiar celebrations seem noticeably subdued.

Sakrain is a festival that has long defined winter in Old Dhaka.

Across neighbourhoods like Shakhariabazar, Sutrapur, Gandaria, Narinda, Kagitola and Lakshimbazar, kite shops stood stocked.

"Kite sales are much lower this year for various reasons. Last year, sales were much better," said Jitu Roy, a seller at Shakhariabazar.

His disappointment was echoed by

Santosh of Lakshimbazar, "We thought sales would increase on the final day, but it was disappointing. The Sakrain vibe just isn't there anymore."

The skies told the same story. A handful of kites appeared in the morning, but by afternoon, the air was still. As evening fell, fireworks, lanterns and music drowned out the traditional kite-flying that once defined the festival.

"Our Sakrain then and now are completely different," said Jamir, 42, a resident of Sutrapur. "Previously, the sky would be covered with kites. Now Sakrain mostly means DJ parties and fireworks."

Locals believe the nature of Sakrain has shifted over time, which is reflected

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NY Bangla book fair to be held from May 22 to 25

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 35th edition of the "New York International Bangla Book Fair" will be held from May 22 to 25 at the Jamaica Performing Arts Center in New York, USA.

Launched outside Bangladesh in 1992, the fair dedicated to Bangla-language books is marking its 35-year milestone this year with the slogan "As many books, so many lives."

The information was shared at a press conference yesterday at Jatiya Press Club. The event was organised by the fair's organiser, the Mukta dhara Foundation.

Mukta dhara Foundation President Prof Ziauddin Ahmed said, "The greatest joy of the book fair is that it brings together Bangla book lovers from all over America. Not only Bangla-speaking writers from Bangladesh and West Bengal, but also writers and readers scattered across Europe and other parts of the world join this fair, coming together out of love for the Bangla language in a land far from their roots."

Convener of this year's fair, economist Dr Nazrul Islam, gave the welcome address. Writer Sadat Hossain also spoke.

Cold persists in the north

Tentulia logs lowest temperature for sixth day



OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A mild cold wave has continued to sweep across the northern districts of Panchagarh and Thakurgaon, disrupting daily life.

Tentulia in Panchagarh recorded the country's lowest temperature for the sixth consecutive day, with the mercury dropping to 8 degrees Celsius at 9:00am yesterday. Earlier, Tentulia recorded 7.5 degrees Celsius on Tuesday, 8.4 degrees on Monday, 7.3 degrees on Sunday, 8.3 degrees on Saturday and 6.8 degrees on Friday.

Wind speeds ranged between 8-10 kilometres per hour, while humidity stood at 98 percent, said Jitendranath Ray, acting officer of the Tentulia Weather Observatory.

Elsewhere in the region, temperatures were recorded at 9 degrees Celsius in Thakurgaon, 10.6 degrees in Dimla Nilphamari, 11.5 degrees in Dinajpur, 12.6 degrees in Rangpur, and 10.2 degrees in Rajshahi of Kurigram.

Despite the cold spell, residents have found some relief and engaged in normal outdoor activities with bright sunshine over the past two days. Meteorological officials said icy winds from the Himalayan region, coupled with nearly clear skies, have been intensifying the cold in northern districts. The weather situation is likely to remain unchanged over the next few days.

According to the Bangladesh Meteorological Department, temperatures between 8-10 degrees Celsius are classified as a mild cold wave, 6-8 degrees as a moderate cold wave, and below 6 degrees Celsius as a severe cold wave.

Seventy-two more aspirants now back in race

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Seventy-two more aspirants yesterday regained their candidacy to contest the 13th national polls scheduled for February 12.

The Election Commission heard 100 appeals on the fifth day of reviewing appeals against returning officers' decisions to reject nominations. Of these, 73 were declared valid, EC Senior Secretary Akhtar Ahmed said in a statement from the commission's headquarters in Dhaka.

Ten appeals were kept pending, he said.

In Kurigram-4, Jatiya Party candidate KM Fazlul Mandal filed an appeal against the candidacy of Bangladesh Supreme Party candidate Shefali Begum.

The EC upheld the appeal, noting that Shefali had retired from government service only a year ago, which disqualified her from contesting. Her candidacy was cancelled.

Of the 72 candidates who regained their nominations through yesterday's appeals, 24 belong to Islami Andolan Bangladesh (IAB).

Over the five days of hearings, the EC heard a total of 380 appeals. Of these, it approved 277 and rejected 81.

Akhtar said 23 appeals were kept pending for further hearing due to several reasons. The hearings will continue till January 18.

Asked about allegations that the government is campaigning for the referendum in violation of the Referendum Ordinance, the EC secretary said, "Ask those who are campaigning, why are you asking me?"



Hortex Foundation

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E-mail: hortex@hortex.org, hortex@hortex.gov.bd

Memo No: Hortex/MD Recruitment/2026-784

Date: 14/01/2026

JOB OPPORTUNITY

Applications are invited from the qualified & experienced Nationals of Bangladesh for the Post of Managing Director, Hortex Foundation. Interested candidates are requested to apply to the Chairman, Hortex Foundation.

Educational qualification: A Bachelors and Masters degree in Agriculture/Agricultural Economics/Agribusiness Management/Business Administration /Marketing etc. or BBA and MBA degree.

Experiences: Minimum 25 years of working experience as 1st/2nd/3rd grade at work/retired government official or officials from established non-government organizations.

Age: Maximum 61 years.

Salary scale: Tk. 66000-68480-71050-73720-76490-79260 with other benefits.

Last date of Application: 25 January 2026 (during office time).

For details: Please see the website <https://hortex.portal.gov.bd>, www.hortex.org and Hortex Foundation Notice Board. This is the summary of the Recruitment Notice.

Dr. Mohammad Jahangir Alam

Joint Secretary (IC Branch), Ministry of Agriculture and
Managing Director (Addl. Charge)
Hortex Foundation

PRAYER TIMING	
JANUARY 15	
Fazr	Zohr
5:30	12:45
Asr	Maghrib
4:00	5:36
Esha	JAMAAT
6:05	1:15
4:15	5:40
7:30	

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



ProNurse Project in Bangladesh

Cowater International Inc.
House-100 Road-25, Block-A
Banani, Dhaka-1213




INVITATION FOR TENDER

Memo No: PRN/GAC/Cowater Int/742/2026

Date: 15.01.2026

01. Procuring Entity Name	Dr. Lubana Ahmed, Project Director, ProNurse Project in Bangladesh Cowater International				
03. Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (OTM)				
04. Source of Funds	ProNurse Project, Cowater International Inc. (The Government of Canada provides funding for this initiative).				
05. Tender Name	Construction of Kumudini Nursing College, Mirzapur, Tangail				
06. Time for Completion of the Works.	The duration for completion of work (From the date of Commencement of Work as per contract) is described in the table in SL/No 9 below.				
07. Eligibility of Tenderers:	This invitation for Tender is open to all eligible Tenderers as per following criteria:				
(a) PWD, HED, MES and/or LGED enlisted Contractors/Construction firms who have a minimum of 5 (Five) years of general experience in constructionworks under PWD, HED, MES and/or LGED.					
(b) ABC Category of Electrical Supervisory License from Bangladesh Electrical Licensing Board is essential.					
(c) Having experience in successful completion of at least 2(Two) number of construction work with a minimum 10 storied building foundation in a single tender under Government /Semi-Gov./Autonomous Organizations of Bangladesh during the last 3 (three) years mentioned in the table in SL/No 9 below. Work experience with basement and the construction of any training institution is an asset.					
(d) Certificate to be submitted as per attached "Work Completion Certificate". The certifying authority shall be an officer not below the rank of Executive Engineer.					
(e) The tenderers shall have a minimum average annual construction turnover during the last 5 (five) financial years (from FY 2020/21-2024/25) as mentioned in the table in SL/No 9 below.					
(f) The minimum amount of liquid assets or working capital or credit facilities of the tenderer shall be as per the table mentioned in SL/No 9 below. Document submitted along with the tender must be issued within three months from the submission date of the tender.					
(g) Working on construction projects funded by international donors/organization will be considered as an extra qualification.					
Other required eligibility and conditions of the tender are shown in the Tender Data Sheet of tender documents.					
08. Price of Tender Document	Tk. 2,000/- (Taka two thousand) only in cash. The original money receipt must be enclosed with the tender.				
09. Amount of Tender Security	To be submitted in the form of a Bank Draft/Pay Order/Bank Guarantee. The amount is mentioned in the table below.				
Location	Completion time, (Para 6) in Days	Amount single tender, Para 7(c) Tk. In Crore	Average turnover Para 7(e) Tk. In Crore	Liquid asset Para 7(f) Tk. In Crore	Tender Security Tk. In Lac.
The proposed Kumudini Nursing College will be built in the empty plot within Kumudini Welfare Trust, Mirzapur, Tangail.	18 months	10 Crore	15 Crore	3Crore	Tk. 10 Lac
10. Name and address of the a. Office Selling Tender Documents b. Office receiving Tenders c. Office Opening Tenders	Office of the ProNurse Project, House-100Road-25, Block-A Banani, Dhaka-1213.				
11. Tender publication date.	15.01.2026				
12. Tender selling last date and time	28.01.2026 up to 16.30 hours				
13. Tender submission last date and time.	29.01.2026 up to 11.30 hours				
14. Tender opening date and time	The tender will be opened on 29.01.2026 at 12.00 PM in the Office of the ProNurse Project, House-100Road-25, Block-A Banani, Dhaka-1213. Intending Tenderers or their authorized representatives may remain present during the opening of tenders.				
15. Name, Designation, and address of official inviting tender.	Dr. Lubana Ahmed, Project Director, ProNurse Project, Cowater International, House-100Road-25, Block-A, Banani, Dhaka.				
16. Contact detail of official inviting tender	Email: info@cowater-pronurse.com 01819245607				
17. Brief Description of Works	Construction of Kumudini Nursing College, Mirzapur, Tangail				
18. The Procuring Entity reserves the right to reject all the tenders or annul the tender proceedings at any stage of the tendering process.					
19. Special Instruction,	Tenders shall be examined and evaluated only on the basis of the criteria specified in the tender document. At the time of purchasing the Tender Schedule, the following documents must be produced and submit with the Tender document. a) Updated PWD/HED/MES/LGED enlistment certificate. (2024-2025) b) Updated ABC Category Electrical Supervisory License c) Up-to-date income tax clearance certificate. d) Valid VAT registration certificate. e) Up-to-date trade license. (2024-2025) f) Work completion certificate issued from PWD/HED/MES/LGED NOA/Work Order will be offered to the successful tenderer following the standard procurement process.				


Dr. Lubana Ahmed
Project Director
ProNurse Project in Bangladesh
Cowater International

Dr. Mohammad Jahangir Alam
Joint Secretary (IC Branch), Ministry of Agriculture and
Managing Director (Addl. Charge), Hortex Foundation



Hortex Foundation

Strategic Partner of Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), Ministry of Agriculture under Program on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for Nutrition, Entrepreneurship and Resilience in Bangladesh (PARTNER) Sech Bhaban (3rd Floor), 22 Manik Mia Avenue, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh Telephone: +8802-48113239 hortex@hortex.org, hortex@hortex.gov.bd, <https://hortex.portal.gov.bd>, www.hortex.org

Memo No. HORTEX/PARTNER/SP of DAE/REOI/2026-983

Date: 14/01/2026

Request for Expression of Interest (REOI)

The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh has received credit (IDA Credit No. 7299-BD and IFAD Loan No. 200004603) respectively from the International Development Association (IDA) and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) towards the cost of "Program on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for Nutrition, Entrepreneurship, and Resilience in Bangladesh (PARTNER). PARTNER Program is designed to promote diversification, food safety, entrepreneurship and resilience in the agrifood value chains of Bangladesh. PARTNER is being implemented from July 2023 to June 2028 by seven implementing agencies (DAE-Lead agency, DAM, BARC, BADC, BARI, BRRI and BMDA) under the Ministry of Agriculture. In addition, there are another eight agencies (BINA, BIRTAN, BJRI, BVMRI, SRDI, BSRI, CDB and Hortex Foundation) as Strategic Partner of the PCU-DAE. As Strategic Partner of DAE, Hortex Foundation is going to engage one program staff under the PARTNER Program.

(i) **Value Chain Promotional Officer: 01 (One) Position**
Academic Qualifications & Experience

a. Academic:

- At least B.Sc in Agriculture/Agricultural Economics/Agricultural Engineering/Bachelor of Business Administration degree from a recognized University.
- Masters in Agribusiness & Marketing, Food Technology or MBA in Marketing degree and professional certifications on supply chain, value chain development of agro-commodities from any recognized University/Institution will be given preference.

b. Experience:

- At least 02 (two) years of relevant work experience in any Government/Autonomous/Private/International Organization
- Minimum 01 (one) year of work experience in supply chain and value chain development of agro-commodity /Formation of farmers group/Production planning/Postharvest management (PHM)/Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)/Marketing/Export promotion etc.
- Analytical capability in identifying and resolving value chain development issues.
- Strong coordination and communications skills in presenting, discussing and resolving value chain promotional issues.
- Ability to work efficiently and effectively in a stakeholder/farmers organization (FO) among other multidisciplinary team.
- Excellent computer literacy/skills (MS Word, Excel, Power Point, statistical software etc.) are essential.
- Excellent English writing and speaking ability.

2. Now, Managing Director (Addl. Charge), Hortex Foundation invites eligible applicant (s) to indicate their interest in providing the services mentioned above. Interested candidates need to provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the services. Applicants are required to submit their Expressions of Interest (EOI) comprising of a CV (including employment history with duties and responsibilities) [one hard copy submit in sealed envelope and also a soft copy (MS word format) send to HORTEX official email hortex@hortex.org, hortex@hortex.gov.bd], a recent passport size photograph and a forwarding letter describing briefly the reasons that the applicant considers him/her-self best suited to perform the assignment under the Program.

3. Details Terms of Reference (ToR), CV Template and other information will be available upon request from the address provided below either through email or in person. ToR and CV Template are also available in HORTEX Website: <https://hortex.portal.gov.bd>, www.hortex.org

4. The Program Staff will be selected following the Public Procurement Rules and Act.

5. Expression of Interest shall have to be submitted to the address below (in person, by mail or through email) by 29 January, 2026 by 5:00 pm and be clearly marked as "Expressions of Interest for the position of Value Chain Promotional Officer" in the email's subject line or on top of the envelope. Any application submitted later than the specified date and time shall not be entertained.

6. The Hortex Foundation authority/Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EOIs without assigning any reason whatsoever. No TA/DA will be provided for attending interviews.