

# A guide to navigating the workplace in Ramadan

MAISHA ISLAM MONAMEE

In Bangladesh, Ramadan reshapes not only personal routines but also institutional rhythms. Office hours adjust, traffic patterns shift, and workplace energy follows a different arc across the day. Yet professional expectations continue. Deadlines remain intact, responsibilities persist, and performance standards hold steady.

However, instead of approaching Ramadan as a period of diminished productivity, it may be more constructive to treat it like a phase of recalibration. Fasting heightens awareness of energy, focus, and emotional regulation. When approached strategically, this heightened awareness can refine work habits rather than disrupt them.

## STRUCTURE WORK AROUND COGNITIVE PEAKS

Fasting alters your patterns of alertness and concentration in ways that are subtle but measurable. You may notice that your thinking feels sharper during mid-morning hours, when your mind is clear, and distractions are limited, while late afternoons require more conscious effort to sustain focus. Rather than following the exact task structure you maintained before Ramadan, you should deliberately align demanding assignments with your strongest cognitive window.

Analytical writing, financial reviews, strategic planning, and sensitive correspondence deserve the hours when your reasoning is precise and your judgment steady. As your energy gradually tapers, shift to structured but less cognitively intensive responsibilities such as documentation, scheduling, routine coordination, and status updates. This sequencing makes sure you are doing the right work at the right time, without exhausting yourself. You could also plan the next day's priorities before you leave the office, to reduce the mental friction of early-morning decision-making.

## PRIORITISE OUTCOME-BASED PERFORMANCE

During Ramadan, maintaining long hours at your desk can feel more demanding than usual, even when your responsibilities remain unchanged. In this context, you should shift your focus from appearing occupied to producing clearly measurable results. At the beginning of each week, define your priority deliverables, confirm deadlines, and align expectations with your supervisor and colleagues.

You may find that shorter, highly concentrated periods of work generate stronger outcomes than extended stretches of unfocused activity. When tasks are clearly scoped, you are less likely to overwork minor assignments or spend unnecessary time refining details that do not materially affect results. As many organisations operate on adjusted schedules during Ramadan, disciplined prioritisation distinguishes you as reliable and self-directed.

## SAFEGUARD SLEEP AND PHYSICAL STABILITY

The altered schedule of sehri, tarweeh,

and evening commitments compresses your rest cycles in ways that are easy to underestimate. If you do not plan intentionally, cumulative fatigue can gradually affect your concentration, professional tone, and quality of judgment. During this period, you should treat sleep as a strategic resource rather than a personal luxury. Your cognitive sharpness the next morning is directly linked to how deliberately you structure the hours after iftar.

Establishing a consistent routine that prioritises hydration, balanced nutrition, and a defined bedtime is key. While occasional late-night obligations may be unavoidable, regularly extending work

and evening commitments compresses your rest cycles in ways that are easy to underestimate. If you do not plan intentionally, cumulative fatigue can gradually affect your concentration, professional tone, and quality of judgment. During this period, you should treat sleep as a strategic resource rather than a personal luxury. Your cognitive sharpness the next morning is directly linked to how deliberately you structure the hours after iftar.

Establishing a consistent routine that prioritises hydration, balanced nutrition, and a defined bedtime is key. While occasional late-night obligations may be unavoidable, regularly extending work

## STREAMLINE MEETINGS AND COLLABORATIVE PROCESSES

With everyone fasting, prolonged

## USE RAMADAN AS A PERIOD OF PROFESSIONAL REFLECTION

Beyond operational adjustments, Ramadan offers you a structured period for deliberate introspection. The slower physical rhythm created by fasting often sharpens mental perspective. You may find that, in the absence of constant stimulation, your assessment of work becomes more precise. This is an appropriate time to evaluate whether your current workload aligns with your strengths, whether your daily responsibilities build transferable skills, and whether your trajectory reflects your long-term ambitions. You should observe which tasks genuinely contribute to



ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ

into the early hours can erode focus over time. Protecting your rest strengthens sustainable performance and physical stability, and also shapes how colleagues perceive you. Slower responses, irritability, or diminished attention often reflect exhaustion rather than capability.

## MAINTAIN DELIBERATE AND MEASURED COMMUNICATION

Fasting can heighten your emotional awareness, making you more sensitive to tone, pacing, and interpersonal dynamics at work. In high-pressure settings, the way you communicate often leaves a stronger impression than the volume of tasks you complete. During Ramadan, you should be especially deliberate about how you frame messages and respond to tension. Draft complex emails when your mind is clearest, and review them before sending to ensure that brevity does not come across as abruptness.

Precision in language prevents unnecessary misunderstandings. In meetings, aim for concise contributions supported by a clear structure. Summarise key points and confirm next steps to not only improve alignment but also conserve collective mental energy.

or loosely structured meetings can become disproportionately draining. During Ramadan, you should be attentive not only to what is discussed, but to how discussions are organised. Concise agendas circulated in advance allow you and your colleagues to prepare mentally rather than process information reactively. When objectives are clearly defined, speaking turns are moderated, and action points are summarised at the conclusion, cognitive strain is significantly reduced. Where scheduling permits, advocate for high engagement or decision-heavy conversations earlier in the day, when collective alertness is stronger.

You should also assess whether certain updates require a meeting at all; in many cases, a structured written brief or shared document may achieve the same outcome with less expenditure of energy. Ramadan often reveals inefficiencies that routine busyness conceals. By encouraging structured collaboration, you demonstrate consideration for shared stamina and operational clarity. Streamlined processes during this month do not reflect diminished ambition; rather, they signal disciplined thinking.

professional growth and which consistently drain energy without proportional return.

Recording these reflections, even briefly, creates a reference point for future conversations about role expansion, skill development, or strategic repositioning. When you articulate your direction with intention, motivation becomes steadier and resilience more sustainable. In this sense, the month becomes not merely a period to maintain output, but an opportunity to refine your professional compass.

In a setting where collective discipline defines the month, your conduct at work becomes part of that discipline. You are not simply managing deadlines while fasting; you are demonstrating judgment, restraint, and structural thinking under altered conditions. These qualities are noticed. Organisations remember professionals who remain steady when routines shift. When Ramadan concludes, the external schedule will normalise.

What should remain, however, is the sharper awareness you cultivated of your capacity, your limits, and your direction. Professional maturity is rarely formed during comfortable periods. It develops when you are required to operate thoughtfully despite constraint.

## JOBS SPOTLIGHT

Plan International Bangladesh



Phase-in-Manager

Deadline: March 7

Eligibility:

● Bachelor's or Master's degree in Social Sciences, Development Studies, Public Administration, International Development, or a related field.

Minimum experience: 7 years

## act:onaid

ActionAid Bangladesh

Associate Officer, Emergency Preparedness & Response (EPR)

Deadline: March 8

Eligibility:

● Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering, Environmental Science, Disaster Management, Social Science, or related disciplines.

Minimum experience: 1-2 years

Labaid Pharmaceuticals Ltd.



Executive/ Sr. Executive (Supply Chain Management, Local Purchase)

Deadline: March 8

Eligibility:

● B.Pharm / M.Pharm, BBA/MBA from any reputed university.

Minimum experience: 1-2 years

Asset Developments & Holdings Ltd.



Project Engineer

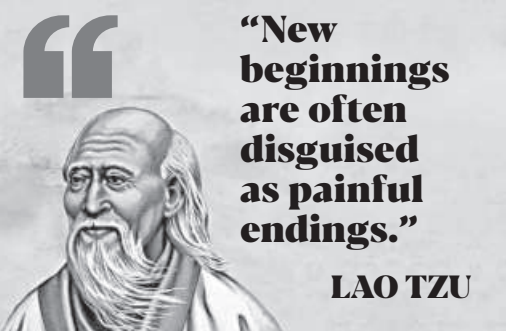
Deadline: March 18

Eligibility:

● BSc in Civil Engineering or Diploma in Civil Engineering.

Minimum experience: 3-7 years (BSc)/ 5-9 years (Diploma)

FOR MORE DETAILS AND THE APPLICATION LINKS, SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW.



## Zomato founder raises \$54 million for new wearables startup

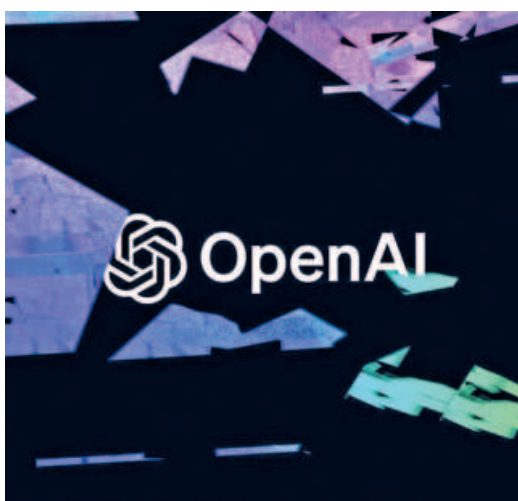
NEXT STEP DESK

Deepinder Goyal, the founder of India-based food delivery company Zomato, has raised \$54 million in an initial funding round for his new wearable technology startup, Temple, at a post-money valuation of approximately \$190 million. Goyal said in a social media post that the funding round was structured as a "friends and family" raise, with capital coming primarily from founder peers and early-stage investors in his network. He also noted that more than 30 Temple employees invested their own money at the same valuation, with no discount.

According to a report by Economic Times, regulatory filings show that investors in the round include Peak XV Partners, Steadview Capital, Dharana Capital, Info Edge Ventures, and more than 80 individual backers. Goyal stepped down as CEO of Eternal, the parent company of Zomato and Blinkit, in February and moved into a vice-chairman role, as per the ET report.

Temple is a wearable technology company that describes itself as focused on performance and precision monitoring. In a recent hiring post on X, Goyal stated that the core product is a performance-tracking wearable aimed at athletes, adding that the company is recruiting engineers across hardware, embedded systems, sensor design, and advanced software roles.

## Amazon, Nvidia, and SoftBank back OpenAI with \$110 bln investment



NEXT STEP DESK

OpenAI is raising \$110 billion in a blockbuster funding round that would value the company at \$840 billion. The round includes a \$50 billion commitment from Amazon, \$30 billion from SoftBank and \$30 billion from Nvidia. The financing comes ahead of a widely anticipated initial public offering (IPO) of OpenAI expected later this year.

Amazon will initially invest \$15 billion, with a further \$35 billion to follow once certain conditions are met. As part of the agreement, OpenAI will use 2 gigawatts of computing capacity powered by Amazon's in-house Trainium chips. Amazon Web Services (AWS) will become the exclusive third-party cloud provider for OpenAI Frontier, the company's enterprise platform designed for building and managing AI agents.

The partnership does not alter OpenAI's existing arrangements with Microsoft. Microsoft's Azure platform will remain the exclusive cloud provider for OpenAI's application programming interfaces, which give developers access to its models.

## AI will replace some jobs but create new ones, Amazon CEO says

NEXT STEP DESK

Amazon CEO Andy Jassy said that AI will reduce the need for human workers in certain roles but will also generate new categories of employment, as he addressed the technology's impact on the workforce during a recent CNBC interview. Speaking on CNBC's 'Squawk Box' following the announcement of Amazon's \$50 billion investment in OpenAI, Jassy was asked about Jack Dorsey's plan to cut 40% of his

staff due to AI productivity gains. He responded that AI represents "the most transformational technology shift that we've seen in our lifetime."

"I do believe that a lot of the jobs that we've thrown human beings at the last 20 or 30 years, you won't need as many human beings doing those same jobs," Jassy told CNBC's Andrew Ross Sorkin. "But I also think there will be other jobs created. And that has always

happened in every technology shift."

In the interview, Jassy pointed to the emergence of cloud computing as a precedent, noting that "15 years ago, there was no such thing as a cloud solutions architect, and today there are tens of thousands, maybe 100,000 plus, of these types of jobs." "So we will have lots of new jobs, and there'll be some sort of transition, and we'll all work through it together," he added.



PHOTO: AMAZON

## AI-powered insurance brokerage startup raises \$46.8 million



Tushar Nair (left) and Dakotah Rice (right), co-founders of Harper. PHOTO: LINKEDIN

NEXT STEP DESK

Harper, an AI-based insurance brokerage startup, has raised \$46.8 million in a combined Series A and seed funding round, the company recently announced. According to a report by TechCrunch on the matter, the round was led by Emergence Capital, with participation from Y Combinator, Lobster Capital, and Peak XV Partners. Harper participated in the YC Winter 2025 batch.

The company was founded by CEO Dakotah Rice and former Poolit CTO Tushar Nair. Rice previously founded investment company Poolit, which closed in 2023, as per TechCrunch. Launched in 2024, Harper describes itself as an AI-native commercial insurance agency. The platform matches small to mid-sized businesses with more than 160 insurance carriers for coverage, including workers' compensation, general liability, and professional liability. According to Rice, the company now serves more than 5,000 customers. The startup aims to automate traditionally manual processes, including submission routing, underwriter follow-ups, document collection, and pipeline management.