

‘Dialogues in Coexistence’: A vision for climate-responsive public spaces

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An interdisciplinary exhibition exploring how architecture can foster more inclusive, climate-responsive, and community-oriented public spaces is now underway at Bengal Shilpalay in Dhaka. Titled *Dialogues in Coexistence: Shaping Inclusive Public Spaces in the Bengal Delta*, the exhibition runs from June 27 to July 25, 2026.

Commissioned by the British Council as part of the Women of the World (WOW) Bangladesh 2026 programme, the project brings together architecture, art, and public engagement to explore coexistence across gender, community, and ecology.

The exhibition was inaugurated in the presence of Planning Minister Zonayed Abdur Rahim Saki, MP, and British Deputy High Commissioner and Development Director to Bangladesh James Goldman. Bengal Foundation Director General Luva Nahid Choudhury and British Council Bangladesh Country Director Stephen Forbes presided over the opening ceremony. Led by architects Saiqa Iqbal Meghna and Suvro Sovon Chowdhury, and curated by Luva Nahid Choudhury and Wakilur Rahman, the exhibition presents architecture as more than a process of constructing buildings. Instead, it frames design as an act of care that responds to climate, encourages participation, and strengthens civic life.

The exhibition's central premise is that the Bengal Delta should not merely serve as the backdrop for architecture; rather, it should actively shape how architecture is conceived. In a region where rivers constantly shift course, where landforms are redefined by seasonal flooding, and where permanence is often an illusion, architecture must learn to adapt rather than resist. Spanning 16 years of the architects' practice, this philosophy is explored through a series of interconnected themes.

The first, *The Bengal Delta as Condition*, examines the region's ever-



PHOTOS: ABRAR FAIYAZ NILOY

changing geography and the cultural practice of “*ghor badha*” (making a home amid uncertainty). Rather than viewing instability as a problem to overcome, the architects present it as a condition that demands flexibility, negotiation, and coexistence. The second theme focuses on the practice's design philosophy. Emerging from Dhaka's rapid urbanisation and environmental vulnerabilities, their work rejects architecture as a neutral exercise in construction. Instead, it frames design as an ethical practice informed by feminist values, egalitarianism, and care, with the

goal of creating spaces that encourage dignity, reciprocity, and collective responsibility.

These ideas are translated into a series of immersive installations that form the exhibition's central experience. Constructed using handcrafted clay tiles, bamboo screens, and fabric canopies, the installations create porous, monsoon-responsive spaces that filter light, breeze, humidity, and movement. Rather than functioning as static exhibits, the structures invite visitors to move through and inhabit them, demonstrating how architecture can

become an atmospheric experience shaped by climate and collective craftsmanship.

One installation resembles a woven bamboo cocoon, creating an intimate interior where visitors can sit and experience changing light and texture. Another employs suspended fabric modules that recall clouds or rain canopies, suggesting temporary shelter rather than permanent enclosure. Throughout the exhibition, the emphasis remains on openness rather than monumentality.

The accompanying manifesto reinforces this idea, arguing that resilience in the Bengal Delta lies not in resistance but in coexistence. It envisions public spaces as porous to difference, generous to care, and hospitable to uncertainty, proposing that architecture should become not an object but a conversation.

The exhibition extends this conversation beyond the gallery walls. Its final section introduces temporary public interventions that will relocate some of the structures into the city as nursing pods, resting spaces, and community shelters. By testing these installations in everyday urban settings, the project explores how climate-responsive and gender-inclusive design can contribute to more accessible public spaces.

Born and raised in Dhaka, Saiqa Iqbal Meghna and Suvro Sovon Chowdhury have built an architectural practice centred on three guiding principles: climate, context, and care. Their Zebun Nessa Mosque, recognised for its climate-responsive and socially inclusive design, was named one of TIME's World's Greatest Places in 2025, becoming the first Bangladeshi landmark to receive the distinction.

Through its combination of immersive installations, architectural research, and proposals for public intervention, *Dialogues in Coexistence* invites visitors reconsider how public spaces can be designed not only to withstand environmental uncertainty but also to encourage care, inclusion, and shared civic life in the Bengal Delta.



Coke Studio Bangla unveils monsoon anthem ‘MEGH’

Coke Studio Bangla released its latest Season 4 track, *Megh*, yesterday (June 28) at 7:30 pm, bringing together classical Bengali musical traditions and contemporary sounds as a tribute to the spirit of Ashar.

The song is a collaboration between musician Arnob and classical vocalist and composer Mohammed Shoeb. Rooted in the monsoon Raag *Mian Ki Malhar*, it explores themes of anticipation, resilience, and renewal. Drawing inspiration from Rabindranath Tagore's literary works, the track also incorporates modern spoken word influences.

The track features performances by Masha Islam and Mousumi Dutta alongside Mohammed Shoeb. The production blends classical vocal techniques with contemporary songwriting and modern arrangements.

Megh is now available across digital platforms and the official Coke Studio Bangla YouTube channel.

WHAT'S THE HAPS?

‘Borshar Onusthan 1433’

Chhayanaut's annual monsoon celebration returns with an evening dedicated to its founding president, Sufia Kamal. Bringing together Rabindra Sangeet, Nazrul Sangeet, folk songs and seasonal compositions, the programme honours Bengal's enduring monsoon traditions while paying tribute to one of the country's foremost cultural figures.

Date: Friday | July 3, 2026

Time: 7 pm - 8:30 pm

Venue: Chhayanaut Sangskriti Bhaban, Dhanmondi



NEWS

UN estimates damage at \$6.7b or 6%

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Aragua, reports AFP.

"Direct physical damage is estimated at \$6.7 billion (range of \$4.7 billion to \$8.7 billion), driven by losses to housing and economic assets," the statement said.

"This does not include infrastructure damage, wider economic disruption and longer-term reconstruction costs," it said, adding that the total economic impact could be between 1.5 and three times the cost of direct damage.

Meanwhile, the death toll from the twin earthquakes rose above 1,400 on Saturday as foreign rescue teams poured into the country and authorities pressed on with the search for survivors in the hardest-hit coastal areas.

The updated toll came as rescuers fanned out across La Guaira and parts of Caracas, where families and volunteers have spent days pulling survivors and bodies from the rubble, often complaining of scant heavy equipment and a limited official presence.

Officials said more than 1,600 foreign rescuers had arrived and that

additional teams were on the way, adding to a growing international response to the twin quakes that unleashed hundreds of aftershocks.

In Caraballeda, one of the worst-hit areas of La Guaira, US helicopters ferried rescue teams into a dusty landing zone, according to Reuters witnesses, dropping off crews before taking off again.

Residents said the response in some areas had been uneven, though heavy machinery was working in parts of Caraballeda and Los Corales by Saturday.

In the small Los Corales area known as Valle del Pino, Beisy Rivas, 60, said five or six homes in her neighbourhood were still standing but had been damaged.

Nearby, Yendri Santana said some homes in her 30-house development had cracks in the walls, though no one there had died. Sitting on a curb with Rivas after collecting food donations from a truck, Santana said her sister had lost her small home but survived.

Authorities continued to restrict access to La Guaira and maintained controls on the main road from

Caracas, saying traffic was slowing emergency vehicles. Civilians not attached to official rescue teams needed credentials to pass checkpoints.

Power throughout the region was gradually returning. Venezuela's power grid, crippled by years of underinvestment and economic sanctions, regularly experiences problems, leading to daily, hours-long blackouts in some regions.

Although the government has said hundreds are missing or trapped, more than 55,000 people are listed as unaccounted for on a website promoted by the country's opposition.

The US Geological Survey estimated more than 10,000 deaths were possible from the magnitude 7.2 and 7.5 quakes, which would place them among Latin America's deadliest of the last century.

The disaster could have political consequences for interim President Delcy Rodriguez, who has portrayed herself as an agent of change even though she served as vice president to Nicolas Maduro, who was ousted and arrested by the US in January.

Iran to control Hormuz

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in the Hormuz and that violating vessels would be dealt with more firmly than before.

The only authorised passage by Tehran passes through a corridor running along Iran's coast. The Guards said they had also carried out retaliatory strikes in Kuwait and Bahrain.

In a statement, they said the strikes "destroyed eight important US military facilities at the Ali al-Salem base in Kuwait and at the Fifth Fleet naval base in Port Salmen in Bahrain". Air raid sirens rang out twice in Bahrain yesterday, according to the Gulf nation's interior ministry.

A memorandum of understanding was reached in mid-June under Pakistan's mediation, aimed at putting a lasting end to the war. The text signed by the United States and Iran said both countries, and their respective allies, were "not to initiate any war or any military operation against each other and to refrain from the threat or use of force against each other".

US President Donald Trump said

yesterday that Iran would "no longer exist" if the United States is "forced" to resume the war.

"United States aircraft just struck Iranian missile and drone storage locations, and coastal radar sites, for violating the Cease Fire Agreement, AGAIN!" Trump wrote on Truth Social. "There may come a point when we are no longer able to be reasonable, and will be forced to militarily complete the job that we very successfully started. If that happens, the Islamic Republic of Iran will no longer exist!" Trump wrote.

Meanwhile, Israel renewed strikes on Lebanon yesterday, Lebanese state media reported, two days after an agreement was signed by the two countries, which a Hezbollah lawmaker warned would lead to "internal conflict".

The strikes come a day after one person was killed in an Israeli strike on the south, according to Lebanon's health ministry, with the Israeli military saying it targeted Hezbollah members near its self-proclaimed "security zone", which is 10 kilometres (6 miles) deep into Lebanon.

Probe report seeks action

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Nayeem alleged that he had been detained and assaulted by individuals identifying themselves as members of Detective Branch (DB) of police while returning home after playing a Dhaka Premier League match.

The national team player also alleged that Officer-in-Charge Arifur Rahman asked him to remain silent when Bangladesh Cricket Board

President Tamim Iqbal called the OC regarding the incident.

After the news spread and the player's identity came to light, the incident drew widespread criticism across the country.

Senior police officials apologised for the incident and formed a body to investigate it. Meanwhile, Khulshi Police Station OC Arifur was withdrawn from the police station.

Iran eliminated

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off the pitch.

Uncertainty over visas and Iran's conflict with the U.S. meant the team had to commute from their tournament base in co-hosts Mexico for their three group games in the United States.

U.S. authorities required them to enter within 24 hours of a match and leave the same day, though the restrictions were eased slightly for their final game in Seattle, where they were allowed to arrive two days ahead

of the game.

U.S. President Donald Trump had said in March that Iran were welcome to participate in the World Cup but he did not believe it was appropriate for them to be in the United States "for their own life and safety".

After the draw with Egypt, captain Mehdi Taremi described the situation as a logistical "disaster" and questioned whether his team were truly welcome at the tournament.

"Who wants to help us?" Taremi told reporters. "If they want us to be

out - OK, let's be out. But that's not fair."

Key members of the delegation had been unable to join the squad in the U.S., and Iran coach Amir Ghalenoei said his team were being "oppressed". Ultimately, Iran's campaign came down to moments.

Had Taremi scored a first-half penalty against Egypt, or had his header hit the net instead of the crossbar later on, Iran might have been looking forward to a knockout match for the first time.

Major changes in police admin

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been appointed commandant of the 2nd APBN; Sarker Mohammad Kaiser has been transferred to PSTS Betunia; and Mohammad Mohibul Islam Khan to the Bangladesh Police Academy, Sardah.

Additional DIG Md Abdul Warish

has been posted to PTC Rangpur, while Mohammad Rashidul Islam Khan has been attached to the Barisal Range DIG's office.

At the superintendent of police level, Kazi Ehsanul Kabir has been posted to Police Headquarters, Md Zahidur Rahman to the

Police Academy, Salma Syed Poli to Rangpur Range DIG's office, and Md Shahidul Islam and Md Kamruzzaman to Barishal Range DIG's office.

The reshuffle takes effect immediately, according to the ministry's notification.

AFP, Nairobi

Uganda's leading independent media group said it was under "military siege" yesterday after the army chief ordered the shutdown of its newspapers, TV station and radio outlets.

Muhoozi Kainerugaba, the head of Uganda's military and President Yoweri Museveni's son, has asserted growing control in recent months, ordering the arrests of politicians,

activists and now a media shutdown.

"NTV and Monitor (sic) are being shut down from today!" Kainerugaba wrote on X, referring to NTV Uganda and the Daily Monitor, both part of the Nation Media Group.

"In Uganda, I DO NOT believe in a free press! The press should be guided by cadres of the revolution," he added.

The Daily Monitor said on X that it was under "military siege", with armed soldiers on guard outside its offices in the capital Kampala.

Germany's big names

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In the last two matches. Substitute Deniz Undav is Germany's top scorer with three goals so far.

"To reach the very big goals we know the players, who have developed into world-class players in the past couple of years, have to deliver. That's clear. The players know there is room for improvement," Germany team director Rudi Voeller said in a press conference ahead of the match.

"We have to go to the limit."

Asked when the trio was expected to hit top form, Voeller said it would happen soon.

"You have the feeling that this moment is near. Not much is missing for them to spark."

Paraguay, who advanced as one of the eight best third-place finishers at the expanded 48-team tournament, will be a hard nut to crack.

After a 4-1 opening loss to co-hosts United States, they stunned Turkey 1-0 before a goalless draw against Australia booked their spot in the knockout stage.

With a defensive resilience that earned them two consecutive clean sheets and a highly physical game, underdogs Paraguay will look to soak up pressure and hit the Germans on the break.

"Recovering from such a hard result (against the USA team) was really hard for us, and in spite of that, our team has been very solid in the past two games," Paraguay coach Gustavo Alfaro said.

France records

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heat particularly intense in Germany, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, according to AFP estimates.

A total of 381 million people in Europe, excluding Turkey, will see temperatures surpass 30C, according to analysis based on forecasts from the German Meteorological Service and 2025 population projections from the Joint Research Centre collated by Austrian NGO Klimadashboard.

Almost all of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic were expected to see temperatures rise above 35C yesterday, as are 42 million people across much of Germany, particularly in the Berlin area.

Slovakia, Serbia, Croatia, Italy, Austria and western Ukraine will also be affected.