

TOUR DE BANGLADESH

4th to 15th February 2022



**MUSLIM
CHARITY**



YOUR BANGLADESH CYCLING ADVENTURE STARTS HERE

Join Team MCcc on our new cycling adventure touring Bangladesh. Cycle on some of the most beautiful routes in the world while you soak in the culture, food and the amazing people.

Start your ride from the historic city of Rajshahi, and along the north bank of the Padma River, near the Bangladesh-India border, through to Bogra and Tangail on to the capital city of Dhaka. Continuing on to Sreemangal riding through the trails inside the tea gardens and finally finishing at Sylhet.

The trip is tailored to show you the beauty of Bangladesh and to highlight the incredible work we are doing with vulnerable communities.

You will be accompanied by experienced staff from the UK as well as Team MC cycling specialists leading the groups. The tour is fully inclusive which means you can relax and pedal to your heart's desire.

To join the tour, we simply ask that you book your own flights and pay £500 towards your hotels, food and transport.

We also humbly ask each participant to raise a minimum of £1,500 excluding any gift aid towards our "Children of the World" campaign.



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE TOUR



Rajshahi

Rajshahi, nicknamed Silk City, is the home of the region's best mangoes and litchis. It is famous for Rajshahi silk, which specialises in clothing material in the Indian subcontinent.

You will cycle down the north bank of the Padma River near the Bangladesh-India border, leaving you breathless from its gentle breeze and breathtaking scenery. We will stop to top up our electrolytes with fresh Bangladeshi litchis and tropical mangoes.

Rajshahi is an important administrative, educational, cultural and business centre in Bangladesh today. It is the historic centre of silk production. Varendra Research Museum, the oldest of its kind in Bangladesh, is located in the city.

The city is located on the Padma River's alluvial plains, which runs through its southern side. It is bounded on the east, north and west by Paba Upazila of the district.



Bogra

Bogra is the oldest city in Bengal. Bogra (also known as Bogura) is famous for its many ancient Buddhist stupas, Hindu temples, and ancient palaces of Buddhist kings and Muslim sultans, dating to the Great Emperor Ashoka's reign ruled India from 268 to 232 BCE.

During the Bangladesh War of Independence, the area witnessed the Battle of Bogra, a fierce conflict between the Bangladesh Forces guerrilla units under Sector 7 and the Pakistan Army.

You will see the ancient palaces and enjoy their hospitality, culture, and fantastic food on this tour.





Tangail

Tangail is the home of the weavers and internationally known for "Tangail Saree" a handloom saree made of both cotton and silk. Madhupur has forests and hilly areas. A lot of pineapples, bananas and jackfruits are planted in Modhupur Gor.

Tangail has been a popular local business center since the early 19th century. In 1860, Tangail became the central area of the Greater Mymensingh region due to its fertile land and high elevation near the Louhajong River.



Dhaka | Street Children

Dhaka is one of the most densely populated cities in the world, filled with history, culture, and fantastic street food.

Dhaka is the ninth-largest and the sixth-most densely populated city in the world. Dhaka is the economic, political, and cultural centre of Bangladesh, and is one of the major cities in South Asia, the largest city in Eastern South Asia. Dhaka is the Financial, commercial and the entertainment capital of Bangladesh, and accounts for up to 35% of Bangladesh's economy.

The city is full of culture and amazing street food also known for its cycle-rickshaws, art festivals and religious diversity. The old city is home to around 2,000 buildings from the Mughal and British periods

You will visit the children home Tikana in Dhaka as part of your cycling challenge tour so you can report back first-hand how your fundraising pounds and pennies are being spent on the ground.





Sreemangal

You will cycle through Sreemangal the home of tea in Bangladesh. You will see beautiful hills covered in shades of green as far as the eye can see. If lucky you will taste the infamous 7 layered tea in the gentle climate and enjoy the soft sounds of the leaves in the wind.

Sreemangal is an Upazila of Moulvibazar district. The name Sreemangal is given after Sri Das and Mangal Das, two brothers who settled on the Hail Haor banks.



Sylhet

Sylhet is one of the most scenic places in all of Bangladesh. It hosts tea estates, crystal clear rivers, and the ancestral home of most British Bangladeshis. We will be cycling through rural villages and bazaars to give you a true experience of Bangladesh.

You will spend time with the outreach workers on the ground and learning more about detached work with street children. We will visit some of the sites where children congregate where you will learn more about their lives as well as their struggles.

We will finish our tour of Dhaka by visiting our transitional shelter a place where we start the healing process for rescued children.

Basic Itinerary

Day	Location	Activity
Tour Day 1 Friday 04 Feb 2022	Dhaka Travel Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrival at Dhaka airport and transfer to hotel • Dinner, briefing and introduction of participants • Overnight stay in Dhaka <p>This day has been left flexible for everyone to arrive and have enough rest before the tour.</p> <p>The rooms will be available from 14:00 where you can check in and rest.</p> <p>We will all meet for dinner at the hotel at 8:30pm where you will get to meet the rest of the participants.</p> <p>Please make sure you take your bike boxes and luggage to your room.</p> <p>Please make sure you share your Dhaka arrival time with us so we can arrange your airport transfer.</p>
Tour Day 2 Saturday 05 Feb 2022	Dhaka Charity Tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 07:00 Breakfast • 08:00 Bike boxes to be transported to Rajshahi via truck • 09:00 Early morning visit to Thikana – Street children transitional shelter • Meet some of the rescued children and lunch • Visit to Komlapur station and other hot spots • 18:00 Free evening • 21:00 Dinner • Overnight stay in Dhaka <p>You will have a chance to shadow the street outreach workers and see the informal School under the Sky at work.</p> <p>You will also visit the transitional shelter where you will have lunch with rescued children.</p>

Tour Day 3 Sunday 06 Feb 2022	Dhaka to Rajshahi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel Rajshahi via train (Bonolota Express (792) Sunday 13.30 PM 18:15) • 19:00 Check into hotel • 20:00 Dinner • 21:00 Assemble bikes for the next day • Overnight stay in Rajshahi • Please make sure your bike is prepped and ready for the next day.
Tour Day 4 Monday 07 Feb 2022	Ride Day 1 Rajshahi to Bogra Approx 124Km	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 07:00 Breakfast • 08:00 Start cycle ride • Breaks and Lunch on route • 18:00 Ride ends • 20:00 Dinner • Overnight stay in Bogra <p>Bike boxes to be sent to Sylhet.</p>
Tour Day 5 Tuesday 08 Feb 2022	Exploring Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 08:00 Breakfast • 09:00 Explore local attractions and historic sites on our bicycles • Lunch at local restaurant • 18:00 Visit the local bazar • 20:00 Dinner • Overnight stay in Bogra <p>We will explore local attraction and bazaar. As well as visiting Mughal made Moque one of the earliest Mughal mosques 1582 AD that were built in Bengal, it was built at a time when Sultani era was at its end and Mughal era had just set in.</p> <p>Mahasthangarh Historic Sites, Ancient Ruins, Historic Walking Areas.</p> <p>Behula Lakshindar Basor Ghor Historic Site</p>

Day	Location	Activity
Tour Day 6 Wednesday 09 Feb 2022	Ride Day 2 Bogra to Tangail Approx 111km	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 07:00 Breakfast • 08:00 Start Cycle Ride • Breaks and Lunch on route • 18:00 Ride Ends • 20:00 Dinner • Overnight stay in Tangail <p>Please make sure your bike is prepped and ready for the next day.</p>
Tour Day 7 Thursday 10 Feb 2022	Ride Day 3 Tangail to Bhairab via Gazipur (Dhaka) Approx 100km	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 07:00 Breakfast • 08:00 Start Cycle Ride • Breaks and Lunch on route • 18:00 Ride Ends • 20:00 Dinner • Overnight stay in Bhairab <p>Please make sure your bike is prepped and ready for the next day.</p>
Tour Day 8 Friday 11 Feb 2022	Ride Day 4 Bharab to Sreemangal Approx 95km	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 07:00 Breakfast • 08:00 Start Cycle Ride • Breaks and Lunch on route • 18:00 Ride Ends • 20:00 Dinner • Overnight stay in Sreemangal <p>Please make sure your bike is prepped and ready for the next day.</p>

Tour Day 9 Saturday 12 Feb 2022		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 08:00 Breakfast • 09:00 Explore local attractions and historic sites on our bicycles • 14:00 Lunch at local restaurant • 18:00 Visit Local Bazar • 20:00 Dinner • Overnight stay in Sreemangal <p>Visit the Baikka Beel Wetland Sanctuary then we visit the Lawachara National Park cycle-ride (approx. 20km!) to Madhabpur Lake in the afternoon and then a hike to Ham Ham Waterfall.</p>
Tour Day 10 Sunday 13 Feb 2022	Ride Day 5 Sreemangal to Sylhet via Fenchuganj Approx 82km	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 07:00 Breakfast • 08:00 Start Cycle Ride • Breaks and Lunch on route • 18:00 Ride Ends • 20:00 Dinner • Overnight stay in Sylhet <p>Cycling to Sylhet by taking in the rural villages.</p> <p>We will be cycling through - Sreemangal, Moulvibazar, Goala Bazaar and Bishwanath.</p> <p>Please make sure bike is ready and prepped for next day</p>
Tour Day 11 Monday 14 Feb 2022	Ride Day 6 Leisurely ride with Sylhet Cycling Club (SCC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 08:00 Breakfast • 09:00 Cycle Ride with SCC • 13:00 Lunch • 15:00 Visit Muslim Charity school projects • 20:00 Celebratory Dinner, Medals and Farewell • Pack up bikes and luggages <p>This is where we bid everyone farewell and depart to stay extra or to make ways to Dhaka for onward travel home.</p> <p>Please make sure you arrange travel and transport for your onward travels.</p> <p>End of Tour.</p>
Tour Day 12 Tuesday 15 Feb 2022	Sylhet to Dhaka to UK	TeamMC travel back to UK

REGISTRATION

Tour Fee: £500
Fundraising: £1,500
(excluding international flight)

The tour fee can be paid in 2 instalments but must be paid fully 4 weeks before travel.

Please check your dates and availability carefully as we cannot offer any refunds on the fees.

What's Not Included

International Flights

The fee does not include:

- UK to Bangladesh flights - International Flights.
- Sylhet to Dhaka flight - Internal flights at the end of the tour.
- Visa Fees.
- COVID-19 testings.

Muslim Charity staff are on hand should you need any advice on booking your flight.

We ask that all participants arrive by **Friday 4th February 2022** and rested and available for the evening introduction meeting at 20:30 at the hotel. Once we know your arrival time a representative will be waiting at the airport to pick you up.

Visa

As foreign nationals you will need to apply for a visa from the Bangladesh consulate. The Bangladesh visa services are available in London and Manchester.

Please apply for a tourist visa:
www.bhclondon.org.uk/tourist-visa

If you have Bangladeshi heritage you can apply for a 'No Visa required' Visa stamp. This entitles you to visit without obtaining a visa each time.

Please bear in mind that we cannot guarantee your visa or entry. Please seek advice from the embassy before you book your flights and pay your registration fee. If you need any help Muslim Charity staff are on hand to advise and guide you through the process.

What's Included

- Customised Cycling Jersey (to be collected from the London office one week before leaving the UK)
- Customised medal (once ride is complete in Bangladesh)

This amount will cover transport, hotel, food and accommodation costs whilst in Bangladesh and is based on 2 persons sharing one room.

Muslim Charity will manage and arrange all of the logistics in Bangladesh, including pick-up from Dhaka airport.

Please note the tour will finish in Sylhet on **Monday 14th February 2022**. You will need to make your own arrangements from that evening onwards. This includes any flights you may need to take from Sylhet to Dhaka to connect with your international flight back to the UK.

If you need any assistance, please speak to Rashid Ali, your event organiser.

How to Register

If you would like to register, please do so by clicking the link below.
www.muslimcharity.org.uk/tourdebangladesh

There will be a registration form to complete and a confirmation will be sent to you via email.

If you have any queries, please call Rashid Ali, Community Engagement Manager on 0207 100 4930 or email rashid@muslimcharity.org.uk with any queries/questions you may have.

Alternatively

Call Rashid Ali (Community Engagement Manager)
On 0207 100 4930 or
email rashid@muslimcharity.org.uk
with any queries/questions you may have.





Street Children Bangladesh

Muslim Charity has been working with street children in Bangladesh for almost 5 years. Along with local ground partners we have established a mechanism to rescue 'street children'.

We have several sites in Dhaka that act as informal schools to engage, track, and encourage children to come off the streets. These are manned by social mobilisers and experienced staff who will rescue children into our transitional shelter.

The transitional shelter again based in Dhaka is where children will start their healing process. It's a safe place where we will start to extract the journey and story of the child as well as develop leads to find their families.

The children are kept for a maximum of 6 weeks and if within this time their families are found they are reunited with the support of government agencies.

For the children that have no family they are referred onto partner or government orphanages.



FAQs

Who can take part in the Tour?

You must be a good cyclist with a good level of fitness.

Anyone interested in experiencing the impact of Muslim Charity's work in Bangladesh and wishing to explore the beauty, sights and sounds of this wonderful country.

Participants must be 18 years or older before the date of departure and be of good health to travel.

How much will it cost?

The fee for travelling on the tour is £500 per person. This amount will cover all transport, hotel, food, internal flights and accommodation costs whilst in Bangladesh and it is based on 2 persons sharing one room.

This fee does not include the Sylhet to Dhaka internal flight at the end of the tour.

At the time of publishing the tickets from UK to Sylhet Bangladesh are as follows.

UK – Dhaka = £450
Sylhet to Dhaka = £50

Total International Flights - £500

Remember you can pay your tour fees in 2 instalments. All final payments must be made 4 weeks before travel.

You will need to raise a minimum of £1,500 which will go towards our homes for street children project.

You will need to raise at least 80% of the total 4 weeks before departure.

What kind of bike do I need?

You will need a road bike for this challenge. If you do not have one, please speak to us as we may be able to loan you a bike for this challenge.



How do I transport my bike?

You will need to purchase or hire a bike box. These can be hired for approx. £100 for the journey or purchased for £300.

Alternatively, you can take your bike in a cardboard box which if you ask nicely you will find near the recycle bins at Halfords. However, we do not recommend this method.

Please remember Muslim Charity is not responsible for any loss, damage or theft of your cycle during transport or taking part in this challenge.

Which Airline and luggage allowance?

Please check as some airlines allow you to use your luggage allowance towards the weight of your cycle. At the time of writing Qatar and Emirates allow you to use your allowance towards your bike but please check before booking.

What kind of hotel will we be staying in?

We will stay in comfortable 3-star hotels. These have been carefully selected for their service, comfort, and safety. All hotels have been vetted by our staff and evaluated by our volunteers on previous trips.

We will let you know the exact hotels when we release the final itinerary 4 weeks before travel.

What's the situation with toilets?

You will have access to clean toilet facilities in hotels. However, when we travel these may not be very clean. You will need to be a little intrepid and adventurous and may have to go 'where no man has gone before'.

In any case we will make regular stops on long journeys and prompt you to use the facilities where available.

Most of the break points are mosques on route so you can stop to offer prayers and use the facilities.

What should I bring?

The total duration of the tour is 11 days so please bring with you enough clothing for that duration.

We recommend small luggage so it's easy to transport as you will be living 'out your suitcase' as the tour is fast paced.

Suggested List:

Toiletries, Camera, 2 pin plug adapter, chargers, and sunglasses.

FAQs

Can we take cash?

Please do not carry large amounts of money with you. We will be using your tour fee to cover the costs of boarding, food and other travel expenses on your behalf. We request you to carry not more than £1,000 or equal amount in Bangladeshi Taka.

If you wish to exchange money, please do so at the airports. In general, they give best rates.

What will the weather be like and what belongings shall we pack?

We will advise you to bring clothes appropriate for temperatures between 20°C to 25°C.

Please bring clothing that is comfortable and appropriate for the country. We ask all participants to respect local cultures and customs while in Bangladesh as we are guests in their country.

While the cities are very cosmopolitan and no one will care what you may be wearing the rural and remote places are very conservative. We ask all participants to be aware of this situation and where possible wear clothing that is comfortable and appropriate for our destination.

Layers

Please think of layers when travelling so you can add and subtract easily as the weather changes. Also, in the evenings temperatures can drop so please bring a warm fleece or comfortable jacket.

Footwear

Comfortable closed toe shoes are a must. Please think of the various terrain. So please bring shoes that are comfortable and not new. Similarly, some comfortable sandals or flip flops are ideal for the evening and when we are travelling between places.

Loss or Damage

Although we will make utmost efforts to ensure the safety of your belongings but will advise you not to carry expensive and luxury articles with you as we cannot take any responsibility for loss or damage while on tour.

Who picks me up on arrival and how do I stay in touch with my family?

A Muslim Charity representative will pick you up from the airport and drive you to the hotel.

Most of the time participants will book themselves on the same flight and you will get to know each other before-hand from all the conversations we will have on our WhatsApp group and meet ups before we travel.

You will also have mobile numbers for our team leads from the UK and Bangladesh should you need to contact someone in an emergency.

What is the position on mobile phones and communication?

You can purchase a SIM from Dhaka airport using your British passport as ID. Please refer to their packages for calls and internet.

Please bear in mind that it can take up to 20-25 minutes to get a SIM card.

In any case we will make all efforts to facilitate communication by staying in hotels with WiFi facilities. The quality of the WiFi services may vary according to areas and is subject to availability of electricity.

How do we interact with locals and communities and do you have any advice for this?

We request all our participant to be friendly but aware and respect local faiths and cultures by adopting appropriate clothing and behaviour.

When interacting with children we ask that you seek permission before holding and interacting with them. We will fully brief you before each visit to make sure that we follow the ground partner guidelines and adhere to all Muslim Charity policies with regards to child protection.

During your travel you will also meet vulnerable families and communities therefore, we request you not to offer cash or any other gift to any person. If you wish to help someone please talk to a Muslim Charity representative who will advise further.

Can I extend my stay?

Muslim Charity has arrangements made only from 4th to 15th Feb 2022. Please make your own additional arrangements either before the tour or after.

Due to the nature of the tour we cannot let you break away from the itinerary.

Can I arrange my own accommodation?

No. Unfortunately due to a tight travel schedule, participants will be asked to stay in Muslim Charity provided accommodation/hotels. Muslim Charity will ensure that selected accommodation/hotels are secure and safe and also comfortable for participants.

Will single-sex accommodation and facilities be available during the trip?

Yes. Single-sex accommodation will be provided and each hotel room will be shared by two participants. Unfortunately, we cannot offer single rooms.

Any additional questions?

We are on hand to offer advice and guidance on all aspects of the tour and your kind fundraising activities.

For any assistance relating to this tour please contact:

Rashid Ali (Community Engagement Manager)
Telephone: 0207 100 4930
Email: rashid@muslimcharity.org.uk





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