



## OUTCAN Guide | Life in Bangladesh

### LOCATION

- **Country:** Bangladesh
- **City:** Dhaka (capital)
- **Base:** Embassy Posting
- **Mission Acronym:** DHAKA

### OTHER INFO TO CONSIDER

- **Residency Registration:** Foreigners must register with the Department of Immigration and Passports within 90 days of arrival.
- **Visa Requirements:** Canadians require a visa to enter Bangladesh. For stays longer than the visa period, an extension must be applied for.

### POPULATION

- **Size:** Approximately 21 million people in Dhaka
- **Ethnicity:** Predominantly Bengali

### LANGUAGE(S)

- **Official Language:** Bengali (Bangla)
- **Local Languages:** English is widely used in government, business, and education.

### COST OF LIVING

- **Currency:** Bangladeshi Taka (BDT)
- **Exchange Rate:** 1 CAD = 65 BDT (July 2024)

### QUALITY OF LIFE

- **Climate:** Tropical monsoon climate:
  - **Dhaka:** Hot, humid summers (up to 40°C or 104°F), mild winters (down to 10°C or 50°F), monsoon rains from June to October.
- **Natural Disasters:** Prone to cyclones, flooding, and occasional earthquakes.

## LAWS AND CULTURE

- **Drug Laws:** Severe penalties for possession, use, or trafficking of illegal drugs.
- **Alcohol:** Legal drinking age is 21. Alcohol is available in licensed bars and restaurants but is generally limited due to cultural and religious norms.
- **Driving:** The legal blood alcohol limit is 0.00%. Strict penalties for drinking and driving.
- **Cultural Influence:** Predominantly Muslim country, with significant Hindu, Christian, and Buddhist minorities. Respect for local customs and dress codes is important.

## SAFETY AND SECURITY

- **Driving:** An international driving permit is required. Driving conditions can be challenging due to traffic and road conditions.
- **Crime:** Petty crime like theft and pickpocketing is common. Exercise caution, especially in crowded areas.

## HOUSING

- **Support:** Embassy postings. Families are allocated a place based on the local housing committee's recommendation.
- **Availability:** A range of housing options including apartments and houses with varying levels of Western amenities

## EMPLOYMENT

- **Spousal Employment:** Limited opportunities. Employment in the local economy may be subject to local regulations and taxes.
- **Op Tempo:** Varies depending on position. Travel within the region may be required.

## HEALTH CARE

- **Access:** Medical care varies by region. In major cities, modern hospitals and private clinics are available.
- **Language:** English-speaking doctors and staff are common in major cities.
- **Special Needs:** Services may be limited. Consultation with medical officers is recommended.
- **Pregnancy and Birth:** Comprehensive care is available in private hospitals.
- **Dental:** Private dental care is widely available. Upfront payment is required, with reimbursement through health insurance.
- While OUTCAN, families of Canadian Armed Forces members are enrolled in comprehensive medical coverage through the [Public Service Health Care Plan](#), which is administered by [MSH International](#). Families are covered for dental care through the [Public Service Dental Care Plan](#) by [Canada Life](#). Look for places that direct bill to your insurance where possible.

## SCHOOLING

- **Schools:** Several international schools are available in major cities, offering various curricula such as IB, British, and American systems.
  - **Examples:**
    - American International School Dhaka
    - International School Dhaka
    - Scholastica
- **Special Needs:** Services may be limited. Consultation with schools and education management is advised.
- Consult with [CEM](#) and schools prior to any commitments.

## CHILDCARE

- **Availability:** High-quality childcare services, including daycare and preschool programs, are available in major cities. English-speaking staff are common.

## TRANSPORTATION

- **Airport:** Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (DAC) in Dhaka.
- **Public Transport:** Public transportation includes buses, rickshaws, and taxis. Ride-sharing services like Uber and Pathao are widely used.
- **Driving:** An international driving permit is required for driving in Bangladesh.

## RESOURCES AND AMENITIES

- **Military Family Services:** No specific center in Bangladesh, but remote support is available through the global MFS team: [globalmfs-sfmmondiaux@cfmws.com](mailto:globalmfs-sfmmondiaux@cfmws.com)
- **Mental Health Resources:** Limited services. Consultation with embassy or consular services recommended.
  - Family Information Line: [FIL-LIF@cfmws.com](mailto:FIL-LIF@cfmws.com)
  - [CFMWS | Mental Health | CFMWS](#)
  - For additional resources or questions please reach out to your Global MFS Team: [globalmfs-sfmmondiaux@cfmws.com](mailto:globalmfs-sfmmondiaux@cfmws.com)
- **Internet:** Quality of internet service varies by region, with major cities having reliable service.

## ACTIVITIES

### Historical Sites

- **Lalbagh Fort:** 17th-century Mughal fort complex in Dhaka, a popular tourist attraction.
- **Ahsan Manzil:** Historical pink palace and museum located on the banks of the Buriganga River in Dhaka.
- **Sixty Dome Mosque:** UNESCO World Heritage Site located in Bagerhat, known for its impressive architecture.

### Nature and Outdoor Activities

- **Sundarbans:** Largest mangrove forest in the world, home to the Bengal tiger and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- **Cox's Bazar:** World's longest natural sea beach, a popular destination for relaxation and water activities.
- **Srimangal:** Known as the tea capital of Bangladesh, offering lush green tea gardens and scenic beauty.

### Cultural Experiences

- **Dhaka Art Summit:** Biennial event showcasing contemporary art from South Asia and beyond.
- **Bangladesh National Museum:** Located in Dhaka, it offers a comprehensive overview of the country's history, culture, and art.
- **Traditional Festivals:** Experience vibrant festivals like Pohela Boishakh (Bengali New Year) and Durga Puja.

### Modern Attractions

- **Bashundhara City:** One of the largest shopping malls in South Asia, located in Dhaka.
- **Jamuna Future Park:** A large shopping and entertainment complex in Dhaka, offering a variety of shops and activities.
- **Gulshan Lake Park:** Popular urban park in Dhaka for leisure and outdoor activities.

## Markets and Shopping

- **New Market:** One of the oldest and busiest shopping areas in Dhaka, offering a wide range of goods.
- **Dhaka College Market:** Known for affordable clothing and accessories.
- **Chawk Bazaar:** Famous for traditional foods and iftar items during Ramadan.

## RESTRICTIONS TO CONSIDER

- **Common Law Relationships:** Not legally recognized.
- **Same-Sex Couples:** Not legally recognized and can face social and legal challenges.
- **Medications:** Prescription medications are regulated. Narcotics and certain pain medications are controlled substances.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Canadian Travel Advisories  
<https://travel.gc.ca/destinations/bangladesh>
- CIA World Factbooks (One Pager from the US)  
<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/bangladesh/>
- Living Abroad (from Gov.UK)  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-in-bangladesh>

## FOR MORE COMPREHENSIVE INFORMATION, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO REACH OUT TO THE RESOURCES BELOW

- Global MFS Team: [globalmfs-sfmmondiaux@cfmws.com](mailto:globalmfs-sfmmondiaux@cfmws.com)