

## **An Exceptional week with ACHR Team!**

It was Ramadan! A very tight timing for everything, three times dinner and busiest street of the year due to Eid shopping! People, vehicles and every street are busy, busy!!

However, we managed to explore different communities of Bangladesh with a number of enthusiastic and very energetic community architects. We heard many stories of reality from the communities. Sometimes, we could find our own reflections. A greater realization was accepting them as a part of our city. The communities we visited were barely visible to us in our everyday life. CAN's visit made us see and love things of ours more dearly.

***Perhaps we miss to see potentials when it is around us; we forget to value them properly!***

In four days we visited eight beautiful communities. Each of them was unique in their own ways. In some communities, "people" were the strength; in others we could find potency in social assets like good connection with authority, unity among themselves and belongingness of their neighborhood.

On the very first day we visited Vashantek and Korail Boshoti followed by Kallayanpur and Vholar Boshoti on the next day. On the third and fourth day, we went to Rahmat camp, Baunia Bazar Boshoti, Dalit community of Robi Dash Lane and PWD Telegu Sweeper Colony.

It was amazing to see each community's strength and sense of togetherness. ***I was wondering if this social asset is also present in wealthy communities!***

In our visit, we were introduced to their saving systems. In some communities we found very passionate youth group working for their communities; especially in Kallayanpur Pora Boshoti, Robi Dash Lane and Rahmat camp. Some excelled as a community beyond our expectations!

Within our very busy schedule, we met people from different NGOs, Government, World Bank and National Housing Authority. We had fun with kids, enjoyed good community spaces also could sense a bit of rural living. Tight timing yet we didn't forget to explore typical Bangladeshi food, old city, the fun of having iftar on boat, deck of a launch and lastly shopping!

Something that I learnt again:

A kid asked me in Kallayanpur slum "What do you have in your home and who lives with you?" The question made me smile! After a while I answered "I have things at my home, whatever you have in your home; and I live with my parents just like you". She started giggling to my answer!

*I realized me and the kid has no difference in our needs. It's very simple. Perhaps I live in a better quality place with proper facilities but lack of community space and she lives with lesser facilities but has good community facility. Both of us need a balance! **A balance of proper living!***

***It was a long week full of learning, fun and brainstorming for new ideas! A heartiest gratitude to dear ACHR team for the patience you all showed to move around our city!***

***Thank you so much for giving an opportunity to explore a new path for Bangladesh.***

\*In Bangla we call "slum" as "Bosti". But I feel in most cases this is used to undermine a certain group of people. I would rather like to mention those communities as "Boshoti", where I could see the reflection of a better community living than our so called modern city apartments.

**Few photos of our visit to different communities:**



**Vashantek Boshoti**



**Korail Boshoti**





**Kallayanpur Pora Boshoti**



**Volar Boshoti**



**Rahmat Camp**





**Baunia Bazar Boshoti**



**Robi Dash Lane**



**PWD Telegu Sweeper Colony**