

## Dhaka Eid Procession 2025: Revitalizing an age old intangible festive heritage of the Mughal and Bengal Sultanate

Md. Nahul Rahman<sup>1\*</sup>, Taslima Mohsina Mimi<sup>2</sup>, Mohammad Tammam Saad<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Computer Science & Engineering, Military Institute of Science & Technology, Dhaka, Bangladesh, <sup>2</sup>Department of Science & Humanities, Military Institute of Science & Technology, Dhaka, Bangladesh, <sup>3</sup>Department of International Relations, Bangladesh University of Professionals, Dhaka, Bangladesh

\*nahulutsho@gmail.com

The 2025 Eid al-Fitr procession in Dhaka, Bangladesh, marked the revival of an age-old intangible cultural heritage, blending historical customs inspired by the Mughal and Bengal Sultanate era with a blend of modern cultural dynamics. The joyous parade attracted countless excited people from diverse socio-religious and professional backgrounds with festive elements like traditional musical instruments, horse-drawn carriages, puppet shows, vibrant displays, folk motifs, totems, and diverse sculptures representing humans, animals, and nature like elephants, traditional bullock carts, similar to the Mangal Shobhajatra of Bengali New Year. It has transformed the streets into a vibrant unity, culture, and heritage display. This study aims to reveal how these rituals contribute to communal identity, social cohesion, and a sense of belonging among participants. It will try to understand the socio-cultural impact of the revival of this procession and its role in portraying intangible cultural heritage in a qualitative approach by analysing the existing mass media resources, including archival references connecting history to modern times, report evaluations from renowned e-news media platforms, revealing the event's success in reigniting public pride in Dhaka's own historical identity and effectively bridging tradition and conventionality. It will explore how contemporary issues shape these age-old traditions, offering insights into the resilience of cultural practices amidst change. Research findings can inform policymakers and cultural bodies about the importance of supporting such cultural practices, leading to initiatives to protect and promote intangible heritage, thus enhancing national cultural policy frameworks and strategies for example: integrating intangible elements like traditional crafts and symbolism into civic celebration, decentralization of cultural events, youth-led revival of traditions, promoting cultural diplomacy and tourism, promotion of unity in diversity by inclusive community engagement to ensure the continuity of cultural heritage for future generations.

**Keywords:** Dhaka, Eid Procession, Eid al-Fitr, Festive Events, Intangible Heritage Revitalization

## Bridging Generations through Kites: The Valvettithurai Kite Festival

Stephan Kirubalini

University off Jaffna, Sri Lanka

kirupalini@univ.jfn.ac.lk

The Valvettithurai Kite Festival, held annually on the 14th or 15th of January in the northern coastal town of Valvettithurai, coincides with *Thai Pongal*, a significant Tamil harvest festival. This paper examines the festival as a living tradition that embodies the role of intangible cultural heritage in negotiating continuity and transformation within a conflict and post-conflict Tamil community in northern Sri Lanka. It explores how this community-led celebration acts as a cultural bridge—preserving inherited knowledge, nurturing collective identity, providing a creative outlet for intergenerational expression, and adapting to contemporary challenges. Drawing on a qualitative methodology, the research is grounded in ethnographic fieldwork, visual documentation, and semi-structured interviews conducted with local participants, artisans, and community elders. The analysis is guided by performance theory and cultural memory studies, framing the festival as a site of symbolic and embodied meaning-making. The study pursues a twofold aim: first, to investigate how the festival sustains intangible forms of knowledge such as oral storytelling, kite-making craftsmanship, and ritual practices; and second, to assess its evolving role in cultural resurgence and youth engagement in the post-war context. The significance of this research lies in its contribution to wider debates on the preservation and transformation of intangible heritage in societies undergoing historical transition. By focusing on the Valvettithurai Kite Festival, the paper demonstrates how local, community-rooted festivals can act as powerful vehicles for intergenerational transmission and cultural continuity—bridging the past and future in ways that are both resilient and visionary.

**Keywords:** intangible cultural heritage, kite making, craftsmanship, transformation, transmission