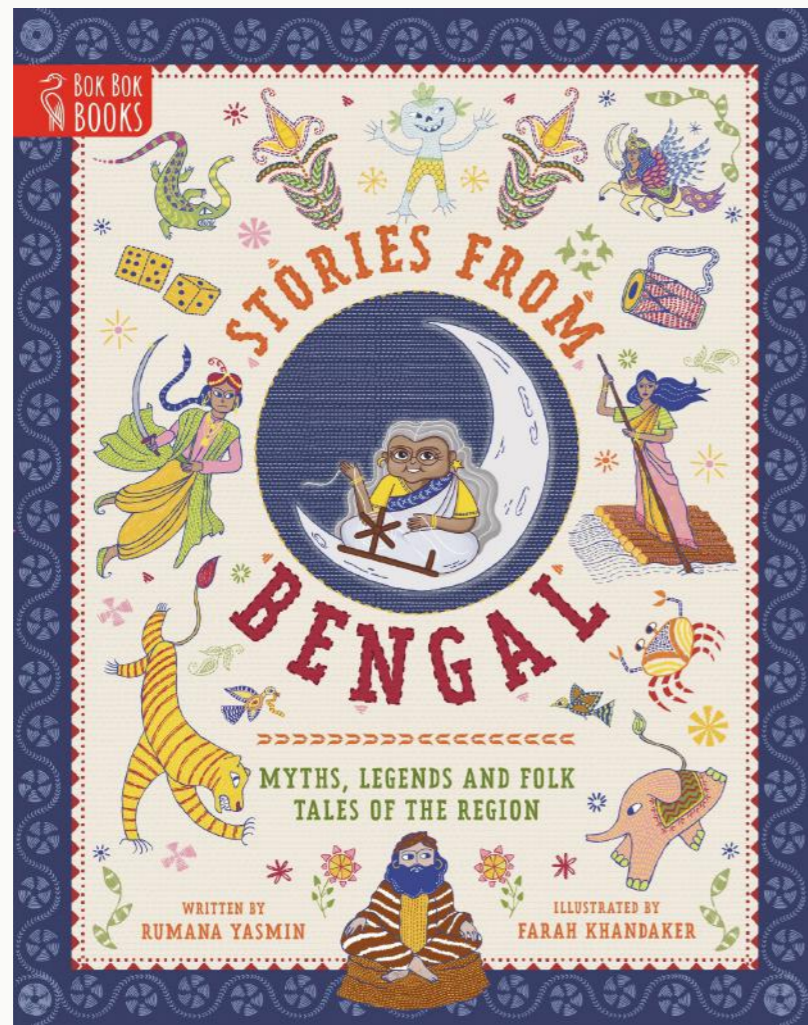


BOK BOK BOOKS

Rights Catalogue 2026



ENQUIRIES: rumana@bokbokbooks.co.uk



STORIES FROM BENGAL

MYTHS, LEGENDS AND FOLK TALES OF THE REGION

Retold by Rumana Yasmin · Illustrated by Farah Khandaker

A journey through Bengali storytelling traditions: discover how tales travel through songs and scrolls, why they're told across generations, and the gods, spirits, and legendary figures within.

Meet Chaader Buri, the magical grandmother on the moon, who spins stories from moonlight. Gathered around her, young readers discover the myths, legends, and folk tales of Bengal — a region rich with gods and goddesses, clever tricksters, mystical saints, and magical creatures. From Ganga's journey from heaven to earth, to the cunning escapades of Gopal Bhar, to tales of Sufi wisdom and wonder, these stories celebrate the diverse cultural traditions of Bengal. Retold by Bangladeshi storyteller Rumana Yasmin and illustrated with nakshi kantha-inspired artwork by Farah Khandaker.

AGE RANGE

7-11

GENRE

Traditional Stories

FORMAT

Hardback

EXTENT

40 pp

DIMENSIONS

250 × 320 mm

ISBN

9781739261443

PUBLICATION

September 2026

RIGHTS

World except UK English and Bengali

KEY SALES POINTS

Richly illustrated

Journey through Bengali mythology, folklore and legend for readers aged 7+

Nakshi kantha

Embroidery tradition woven throughout design and illustration

16 distinct chapters

Creation myths, trickster tales, proverbs and oral tradition

Diverse heritage

Hindu, Muslim and folk traditions across the region

British Council-supported

UK-Bangladesh collaboration with HerStory Foundation

Curriculum appeal

Independent reading, read-alouds and classroom use

Landmark publication

Underrepresented South Asian folklore for children worldwide

BEHULA AND THE SNAKE GODDESS

Stories That Live in Prayer and Song

“I am Monsha, Serpent Goddess. Worship me, and I will heal and protect you! Defy me and...”

Stories have been around long before there were printed books and libraries. You may wonder how people passed them on for many hundreds of years without writing them down. They did so through storytellers, who kept tales alive in their memories and voices.

For centuries, in the villages of Bengal, stories were passed on through poems, prayers, and songs. They may have been sung by boatmen journeying across vast rivers, or recited by wandering poets, or even performed dramatically under starlit skies.

Often, these stories were about powerful gods and goddesses and brave people. This story of Behula, who had the courage to face Monsha, the mighty serpent goddess, is one such tale that has been preserved through rhyme and ritual.

“No beast nor storm can stop me. I will save Lokkhindor.”

BEHULA'S STRENGTH

“Why should I pray to YOU, Monsha,” Chand shouted to the heavens, “when I pray to a God as great as Lord Shiva?”

Chand was a proud and powerful merchant, and in his world, power belonged to men — even among the gods. But Monsha, the goddess of serpents, wasn't one to be defied. She placed a terrible curse on Chand!

When Chand's youngest son, Lokkhindor, married the kind and loving Behula, Monsha sent one of her snakes to join the festivities. On their wedding night, the snake bit Lokkhindor, killing him instantly.

Something stirred within Behula. A death by snakebite was not final — those taken by snakes were set adrift on a raft, for they might yet be brought back to life. Behula would not wait on the shore. She climbed on beside Lokkhindor's lifeless body and set out across the river. “I will reach the heavens,” she vowed, “and I will bring him back.”

For six long months, Behula travelled, stopping at seven places to pray, sing and offer food to the goddess. And the foul fortunes she faced! Riding through raging storms, taming wild waves, fighting loathsome beasts and keeping away from wicked men.

She finally arrived at Monsha's abode, where she sang and danced to captivate the gods and goddesses. Monsha was persuaded by the strength of her care for Lokkhindor. She agreed to bring him back to life. But on one condition — if Chand bowed his head in prayer to her.

By this time, even Chand was moved by Behula's courage, and he finally offered a prayer to the Serpent Goddess. Peace was restored, and Behula and Lokkhindor were reunited.

MONGOLKABBO

This story is usually sung or recited in the form of a long verse called *mongolkabbo*, which means ‘poem of blessing’. Anyone listening to a *mongolkabbo* is said to be blessed with good luck.

‘SHAKTI’ IN EVERY STITCH

Every stitch is strength! *Nakshi kantha* makers put *shakti* (weaver's strength) into each tiny stitch, protecting and blessing their loved ones. Hundreds, thousands of stitches add up. Like Behula, they turn patience into something powerful.

A FESTIVAL FOR MONSHA AND BEHULA

Every year in Bangladesh Hindus and Muslims come together for *Shaone Dala* — a festival where performers on boats act out the story of Behula, singing and dancing to honour Monsha and keep everyone safe from snake bites.

AUTHOR

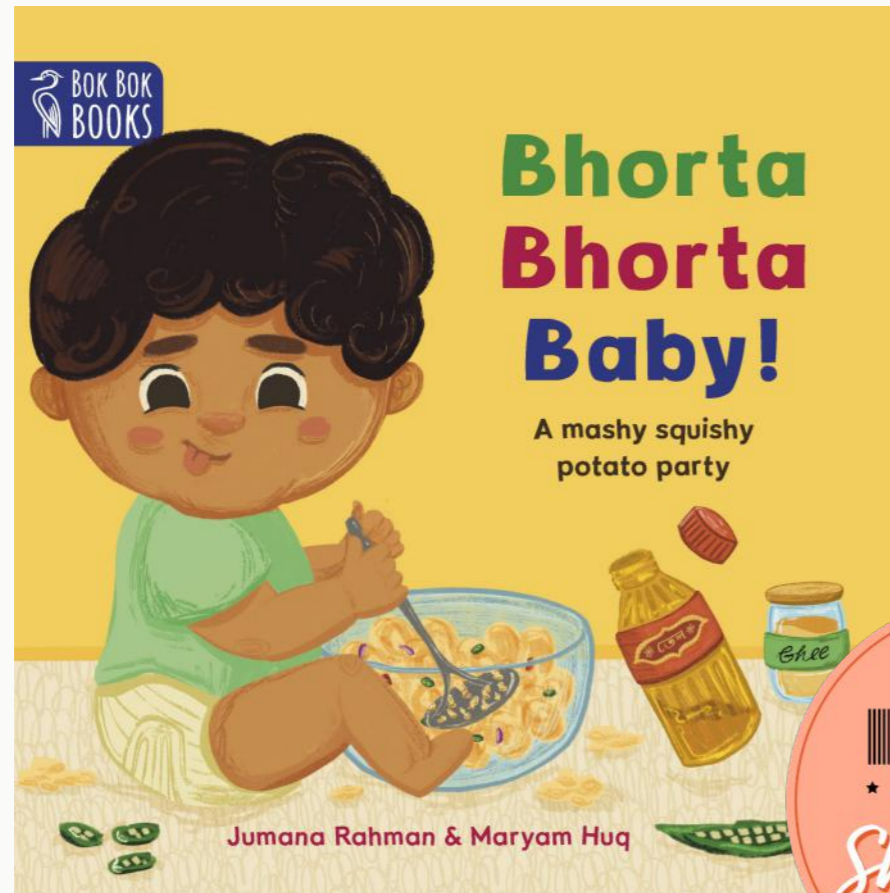
Rumana Yasmin

Born in Bangladesh and now based in the UK, Rumana works as a storyteller, educator, and publisher. Her love of Bengali folklore began in childhood and she has spent years gathering myths and legends for a new generation of readers.

ILLUSTRATOR

Farah Khandaker

A digital artist from Bangladesh, now based in Toronto. Her illustrations draw on the traditions of *nakshi kantha* embroidery, bringing Bengali folklore to life through bold colours and intricate patterns.



IBC INCLUSIVE BOOKS FOR CHILDREN
★ AWARDS 2025 ★

Shortlisted

BHORTA BHORTA BABY!

A MASHY, SQUISHY POTATO PARTY

Written by Jumana Rahman · Illustrated by Maryam Huq

A squashy, squishy, spicy invitation into the Bengali kitchen where tiny hands learn that cooking is the best kind of play.

There's also bharta being made here! Join in for some chopping, frying, mixing and squashing to prepare this yummy Bengali dish of spicy mashed potatoes. This is going to be the best ever mashy, squishy potato party! Perfect for tiny hands, this board book is an ideal introduction to the sights, sounds, aromas and flavours of the Bengali kitchen, sure to leave little ones hungry for their own culinary adventures.

AGE RANGE

0-3

GENRE

Fiction

FORMAT

Board Book

EXTENT

18 pp

DIMENSIONS

178 × 178 mm

ISBN

9781739261429

PUBLICATION

November 2023

RIGHTS

World except UK English and Bengali

KEY SALES POINTS

South Asian culture

Introduces food traditions to the very youngest readers

Full sensory experience

Bold colours, bold flavours, and lots of mashing and squishing

Made for families

Simple enough to inspire real kitchen adventures together

Joyful representation

Diversity baked into the story naturally through culture and cuisine

Early language skills

Action-packed food words: chop, fry, mash, squish

Love letter to real food

Celebrates fresh, homemade, wholesome eating

Series opener

First in a growing board book series rooted in Bengali kitchen life



AUTHOR

Jumana Rahman

A self-proclaimed fun mum, Jumana has been telling stories since long before she could write them down. She is passionate about passing on her Bangladeshi-Canadian roots to the next generation of third culture kids. She lives in Ontario, Canada.

ILLUSTRATOR

Maryam Huq

A UK-based illustrator whose bold colours and striking imagery carry a quiet emotional charge. Her work is rooted in her journey of reconnecting with her Bangladeshi heritage, with South Asian wildlife and landscapes weaving naturally through her illustrations.





KHICHURI FOR EVERYONE!

A RAINY DAY RECIPE

Written by Jumana Rahman · Illustrated by Maryam Huq

When thunder rumbles and tummies grumble, there's only one thing for it: a steamy, dreamy pot of khichuri, shared with everyone you love.

It's a rainy rainy morning and a little belly is grumbling! Good thing Nani knows exactly what to do. It's time for khichuri — warm, cosy, and a perfect remedy for a gloomy day. Watch the pot go "Hoo! Hoo! Hoo!" and khichuri baby go "Foo! Foo! Foo!" as this one-pot wonder comes together for the whole family to share. The second book in the *Bhorta Bhorta Baby!* series brings the same joyful, sensory energy to the ultimate comfort food: the beloved khichuri.



AUTHOR

Jumana Rahman

A self-proclaimed fun mum, Jumana has been telling stories since long before she could write them down. She is passionate about passing on her Bangladeshi-Canadian roots to the next generation of third culture kids. She lives in Ontario, Canada.

ILLUSTRATOR

Maryam Huq

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AGE RANGE

0-3

GENRE

Fiction

FORMAT

Board Book

EXTENT

18 pp

DIMENSIONS

178 × 178 mm

ISBN

9781739261450

PUBLICATION

March 2027

RIGHTS

World except UK English and Bengali

KEY SALES POINTS

Second helping

Introduces khichuri — one of South Asia's most beloved comfort foods

Weather, food, feelings

Rainy days and steaming pots make this ideal for cosy reading

Food for everyone

Khichuri is a dish for all ages, from babies to grandparents

Series momentum

Second in the *Bhorta Bhorta Baby!* series with established readership

Language as flavour

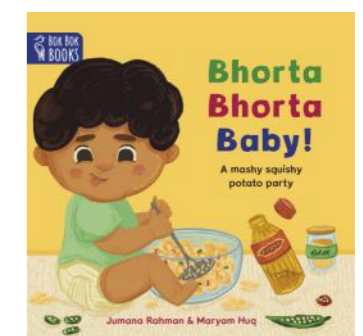
Khichuri, Nani, Ammu, Abbu, Babu — new words land gently and joyfully

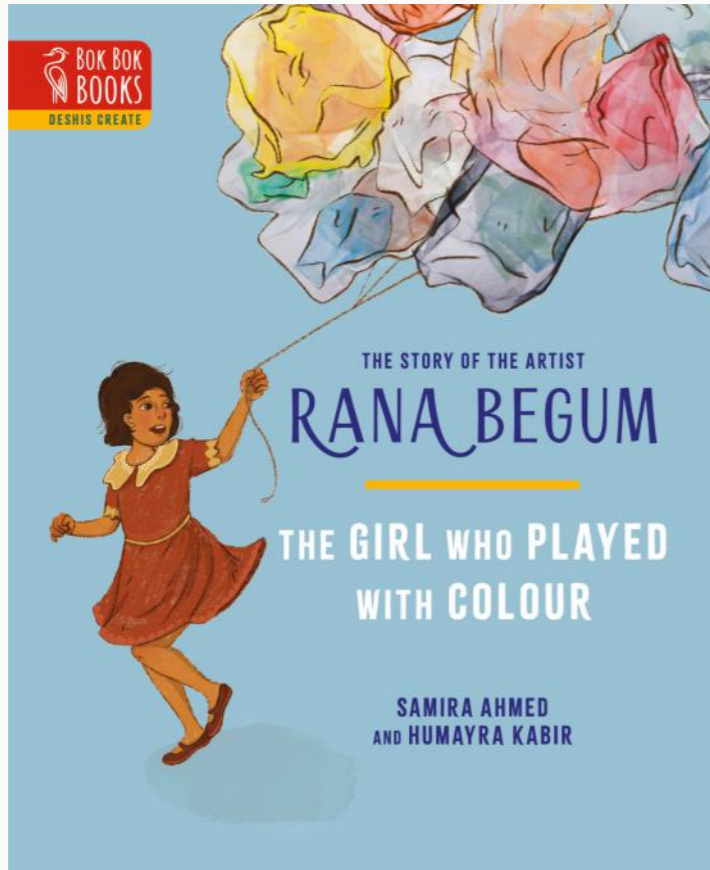
Family sharing

Every family member gets a bowl of warmth and togetherness.

Sensory energy

Same bold, hands-on spirit that made the first book a hit





She became fascinated by the relationship between light and colour. Her style was often influenced by Islamic art and architecture and what she saw around her.



THE GIRL WHO PLAYED WITH COLOUR

THE STORY OF THE ARTIST RANA BEGUM

Written by Samira Ahmed · Illustrated by Humayra Kabir

The inspiring true story of a girl who arrived in England unable to speak the language and used colour to find her voice, her identity, and her place among the world's great artists.

When Rana Begum arrived in England from Bangladesh at the age of eight, she couldn't understand a word of English. So her teachers gave her colouring pencils to keep her busy and everything changed. Drawn to light, geometry and the vivid colours of her Bengali childhood, Rana found in art a language that needed no translation. Despite her parents' fears for her future, she fought to study what she loved and went on to become one of Britain's most celebrated contemporary artists, a Royal Academician whose luminous sculptures and installations are exhibited around the world.

AUTHOR

Samira Ahmed

Dhaka-born and London-based, Samira is a writer, Air Traffic Control Engineer and the voice behind *The Millennial Ma*. She brings the perspective of a Bangladeshi immigrant mother to everything she writes, and is the author of the *Deshis Create* series.

ILLUSTRATOR

Humayra Kabir

A Bangladeshi illustrator whose warm, expressive artwork brings cultural depth and emotional resonance to every page. Her illustration style draws on her South Asian heritage to create imagery that is both visually distinctive and deeply rooted in character.

AGE RANGE

5+

GENRE

Illustrated Biography

FORMAT

Hardback

EXTENT

36 pp

DIMENSIONS

200 × 245 mm

ISBN

9781739261412

PUBLICATION

July 2023

RIGHTS

World except UK English and Bengali

KEY SALES POINTS

Real role model

Living British-Bangladeshi Royal Academician with genuine arts recognition

Unique formal concept

Every illustration reproduces Rana's actual artwork — the book is itself art

Universal story

Migration, language barriers, and finding your voice through creativity

Curriculum hooks

Art & design, PSHE, diversity and inclusion across multiple markets

Muslim representation

Islamic cultural identity woven naturally into Rana's story

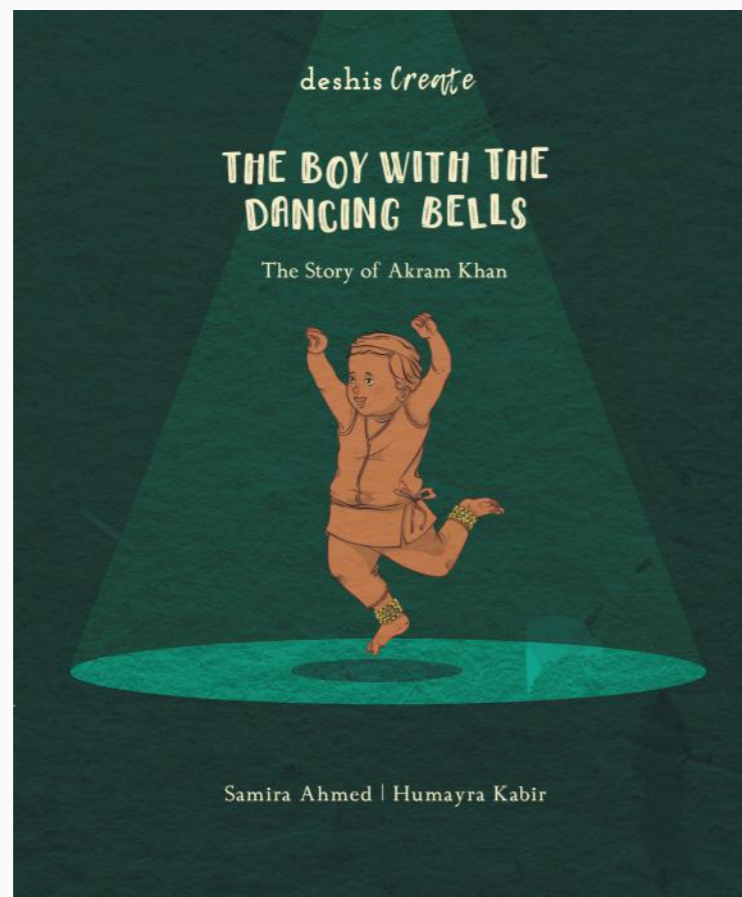
Gallery crossover

Links to Kettle's Yard, Whitechapel Gallery and London Fashion Week

Series appeal

Second in the *Deshis Create* series





THE BOY WITH THE DANCING BELLS

THE STORY OF AKRAM KHAN

Written by Samira Ahmed · Illustrated by Humayra Kabir

From the cramped flat above a curry house to the stages of the world — the true story of a boy who simply could not stop dancing.

Akram can't stop moving. Dancing is the only thing that channels his endless energy, and when he discovers kathak at the age of seven, the jingle of the ghungur bells around his ankles stops him in his tracks. He is spellbound. But the road from restless boy to world-renowned choreographer is anything but easy. He practises in cramped spaces above his family's restaurant and tours the world with the Royal Shakespeare Company at thirteen. He hides in a garage to train alone, pushing himself further. Akram Khan's journey is one of passion, perseverance, and finding your own unique voice.

After a year of performing with Peter Brook, Akram struggled to get back to his usual life. He skipped school for a year and hid himself in the garage.

He spent that time training with the family VHS recorder, immersing himself in Indian dance routines.

AUTHOR

Samira Ahmed

Dhaka-born and London-based, Samira is a writer, Air Traffic Control Engineer and the voice behind The Millennial Ma. She brings the perspective of a Bangladeshi immigrant mother to everything she writes, and is the author of the Deshis Create series.

ILLUSTRATOR

Humayra Kabir

A Bangladeshi illustrator whose warm, expressive artwork brings cultural depth and emotional resonance to every page. Her illustration style draws on her South Asian heritage to create imagery that is both visually distinctive and deeply rooted in character.

AGE RANGE

5+

GENRE

Illustrated Biography

FORMAT

Hardback

EXTENT

36 pp

DIMENSIONS

200 × 245 mm

ISBN

9781916108455

PUBLICATION

November 2021

RIGHTS

World except UK English and Bengali

KEY SALES POINTS

True story to dance to

Biography of one of the world's most celebrated choreographers

Deshi role model

Part of the *Deshis Create* series celebrating Bengali artistic heritage

Perseverance at heart

Akram faced racism and self-doubt, but kept dancing anyway

South Asian dance

Introduces kathak and ghungur bells

Cross-curricular appeal

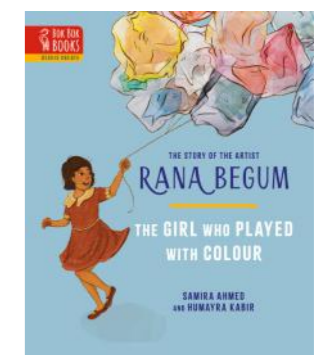
Supports dance, PSHE and diversity education in school settings

Beautifully illustrated

Humayra Kabir's artwork gives the book the feel of a cultural artefact

Series opener

First title in the *Deshis Create* series





WHITE & BLACK

Illustrated by Farah Khandaker

A black and white world bursting with sound — onomatopoeic rhyming words in Bengali and English for the youngest of readers.

Explore the playful nature of language in this rhyming bilingual book where onomatopoeic words come alive with bold, striking images. The littlest of readers cannot see the world in colour — illustrator Farah Khandaker has created the high contrast, black and white illustrations in this book to introduce 0-2-year-olds to the wonderful world of books.

White & Black is an ideal first book for bilingual families, and a joyful early introduction to Bengali for little ones growing up between two languages and two worlds.

AGE RANGE

0-2

GENRE

Early Words

FORMAT

Board Book

EXTENT

18 pp

DIMENSIONS

152 × 152 mm

ISBN

9781916108400

PUBLICATION

September 2019

RIGHTS

World except UK English and Bengali

KEY SALES POINTS

Newborn-ready

High-contrast illustrations specifically designed for 0-2-year-olds

Bilingual

Bengali and English sit side by side throughout

Memorable words

Onomatopoeic rhyming text introduces new words in a memorable way

Fills a real gap

Bilingual Bengali-English books are hard to find

Early years appeal

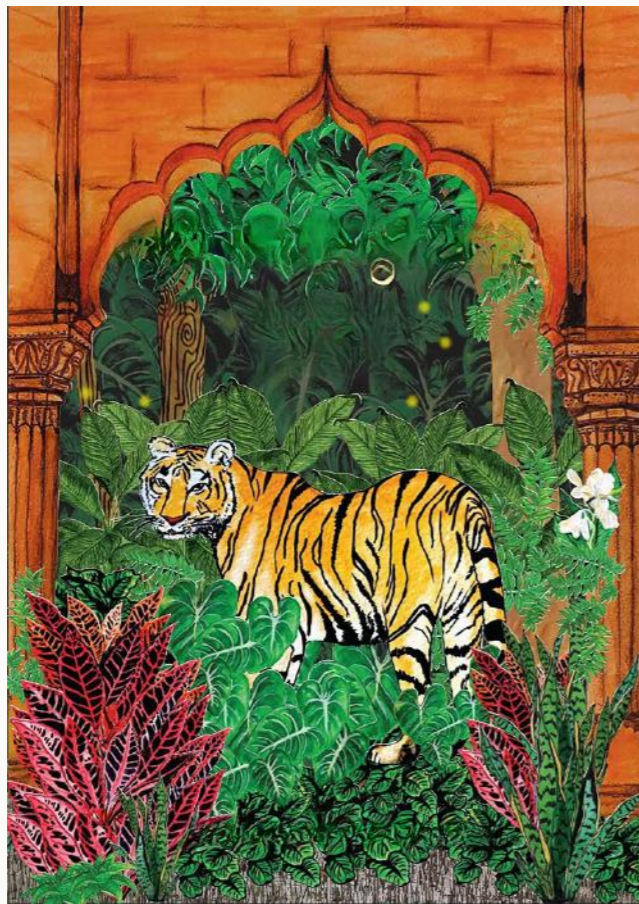
Perfect for nurseries and early childhood settings



ILLUSTRATOR

Farah Khandaker

Farah Khandaker is a digital artist from Bangladesh, now based in Toronto. Her illustration style is bold and varied, spanning a wide range of visual approaches and techniques. White & Black is her debut picture book.



WHERE THE TIGER LIVES

AN ILLUSTRATED ENCYCLOPEDIA OF BANGLADESH

Written and Illustrated by Alia Yousuf

From the mighty rivers to the Sundarbans mangrove forest, a richly illustrated journey through the landscapes, cultures and wonders of Bangladesh.

Where do the mightiest rivers in the world meet the sea? Where does the Royal Bengal Tiger roam? Where do ancient faiths share the same streets, and where do monsoon rains transform the land?

Where the Tiger Lives is an illustrated encyclopaedia of Bangladesh — a country of extraordinary richness, too rarely seen on the shelves of children's libraries. Across twelve chapters, Alia Yousuf's vibrant watercolours bring to life the habitats, seasons, festivals and faiths of a nation with stories to tell on every page.

A landmark reference book for young readers, and a love letter to Bangladesh.

AGE RANGE

7-11

GENRE

Non-fiction

FORMAT

Hardback

EXTENT

40 pp

DIMENSIONS

245 × 300 mm

ISBN

9781739261467

PUBLICATION

April 2027

RIGHTS

World except UK English and Bengali

KEY SALES POINTS

Bangladesh revealed

The first illustrated encyclopaedia of Bangladesh for young readers in English

Many wonders to explore

Rivers, habitats, seasons, faiths, cities and the Sundarbans — all in one volume

Vibrant watercolours

Alia Yousuf's rich, detailed illustrations bring every corner of Bangladesh to life

A labour of love

Created by a Bangladeshi author-illustrator passionate about sharing her homeland with the world

Curriculum ready

Geography, culture, religion and environment across multiple markets and school settings

WHERE The Tiger Lives...

The ROYAL BENGAL TIGER moves like a shadow through the Sundarbans, its striped coat blending with the dense mangrove forest. As the national animal of Bangladesh, this majestic predator is more than just a symbol; its survival is tied to the fate of the country's last great wilderness. But with threats like habitat loss and climate change endangering both the tigers and the forest they call home, the question remains—how much longer will these striped hunters rule the Sundarbans?



Female tigers give birth to 2 to 6 cubs and raise them alone for two years, teaching them how to hunt. A tiger's roar can be heard over 3 km through the forest.



Bengal tigers can run up to 65 km per hour and leap over 8 meters.

The word "tiger" comes from the Iranian word "tighre," meaning "arrow."



A Bengal tiger's backhand swipe is strong enough to be fatal.

The largest Bengal tiger found in the wild weighed 389 kg and measured 3.37 meters in length.



Bengal tigers have powerful back legs—they can jump up to 5 meters! (For comparison, basketball leg end Michael Jordan could jump about 3.18 meters).



Threats to the Bengal Tiger

Royal Bengal Tigers are endangered, meaning there is a high risk of it disappearing from the wild. The Sundarbans forest, covering over 6,000 square km, is crucial for their survival. Fewer than 2,000 Bengal tigers remain in the wild, with around 100 living in the Sundarbans.



The biggest threats to tigers in Bangladesh are illegal logging, poaching, habitat loss, and the use of tiger parts for medicinal purposes.

Over the past 100 years, the Bengal tiger population has dropped by 95%. **40,000** **1,400**

There are now more Bengal tigers living in captivity than in the wild.

Tigers need large, undisturbed natural spaces to live and hunt, and the Sundarbans provide the perfect home for them.

As Bangladesh changes, its rivers shift, its forests shrink, and its people adapt—will the Royal Bengal Tiger still have a place in the land where the tiger lives?

Climate change is a growing danger—70% of the Sundarbans is just a few feet above sea level, and by 2070, rising seas could submerge the forest.

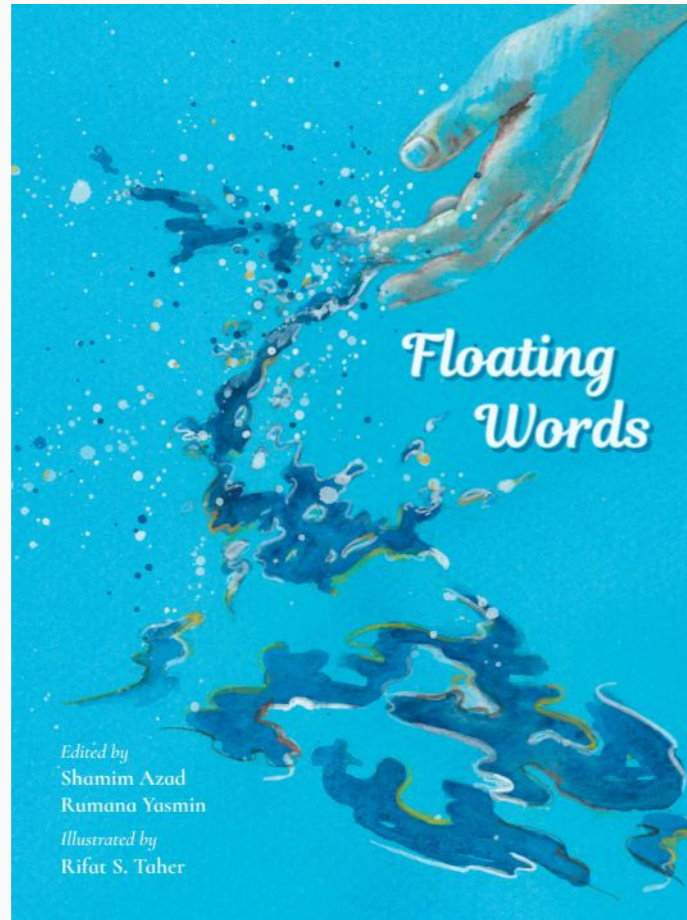
Protecting Bengal tigers means protecting Bangladesh's last remaining wilderness and the many animals that depend on it.



AUTHOR / ILLUSTRATOR

Alia Yousuf

Alia Yousuf is a Bangladeshi writer, illustrator and investment professional based in Singapore. Where the Tiger Lives is her debut picture book — a labour of love and a heartfelt tribute to Bangladesh, created in the hope that children everywhere might discover and fall in love with her home country.



Edited by
Shamim Azad
Rumana Yasmin
Illustrated by
Rifat S. Taher

FLOATING WORDS

Edited by Shamim Azad and Rumana Yasmin

A collection of children's poetry by Bengali authors that dives deep into the relationship with water — and surfaces urgent questions about the world we are leaving behind.

Floating Words grew out of online poetry workshops hosted by Bok Bok Books during lockdown, bringing together Bengali voices from the diaspora to explore their deep connection with water. Edited by award-winning British-Bangladeshi bilingual poet Shamim Azad and illustrated by Rifat Sultana, this is a tender, urgent anthology rooted in a culture that knows better than most what it means to live alongside water — and in partnership with environmental charity CPRE, a springboard for climate conversations in classrooms everywhere.

AGE RANGE

7-11

GENRE

Poetry

FORMAT

Paperback

EXTENT

32 pp

DIMENSIONS

210 × 297 mm

ISBN

9781916108417

PUBLICATION

September 2021

RIGHTS

World except UK English and Bengali

KEY SALES POINTS

Born in lockdown

Curated through Bok Bok Books online workshops — a community project with a real origin story

Bengali voices

Diaspora poets exploring culture, identity and nature through a uniquely Bengali lens

Climate urgent

Opens vital conversations with young readers about rising sea levels and the climate crisis

Strong Educational Reach

Linked to 'Poetry for Climate Action' school workshops — student participation over 750

Bilingual expertise

Edited by award-winning British-Bangladeshi bilingual poet Shamim Azad

Jal or Pani

Lipi Halder

When the sun beats overhead
Two friends, Ram and Rahim,
Go swimming in ponds and streams

Splash, splash, splashing,
Intent in their games,
Amongst the cormorants, the herons,
The ducks and the fish

After a gasping-gulping bath,
Rahim climbs onto the bank
'O Ram, get me pani'
Ram runs off in search of jal.

'Did you get me pani?' Rahim asks
Ram's jal quenches his thirst

He wraps his arms around his friend
And asks, deep in thought,
How is it, Ram, that it has come to be
That you call it jal and I say pani?

The Boy

Ray Manju

All around the boat, a sloshing, plashing chorus
Oars dip and surface, the boat moves gently along
The boatman casts a net into the murky depths
A blue-radiant kingfisher perches on a branch -
With a sudden splash, a cormorant dives in
A fish hurls itself upon the bank
The boy had been lurking, his meal beckoning,
As if the breeze along the river had carried to him
The smell of chilli-coriander-mustard gravy,
Served with steaming rice and Mother's sweet words.
All of a sudden the rain comes crashing down
Snatching the fish, he runs off towards home.



Ram and Rahim may speak the same language but they use different words for 'water'. Ram, who is from a Hindu background, uses the word 'jal', while Rahim, who is from a Muslim background, uses the word 'pani'. They may not share the same word for water, but they do share the same understanding of thirst, and of friendship.

EDITOR

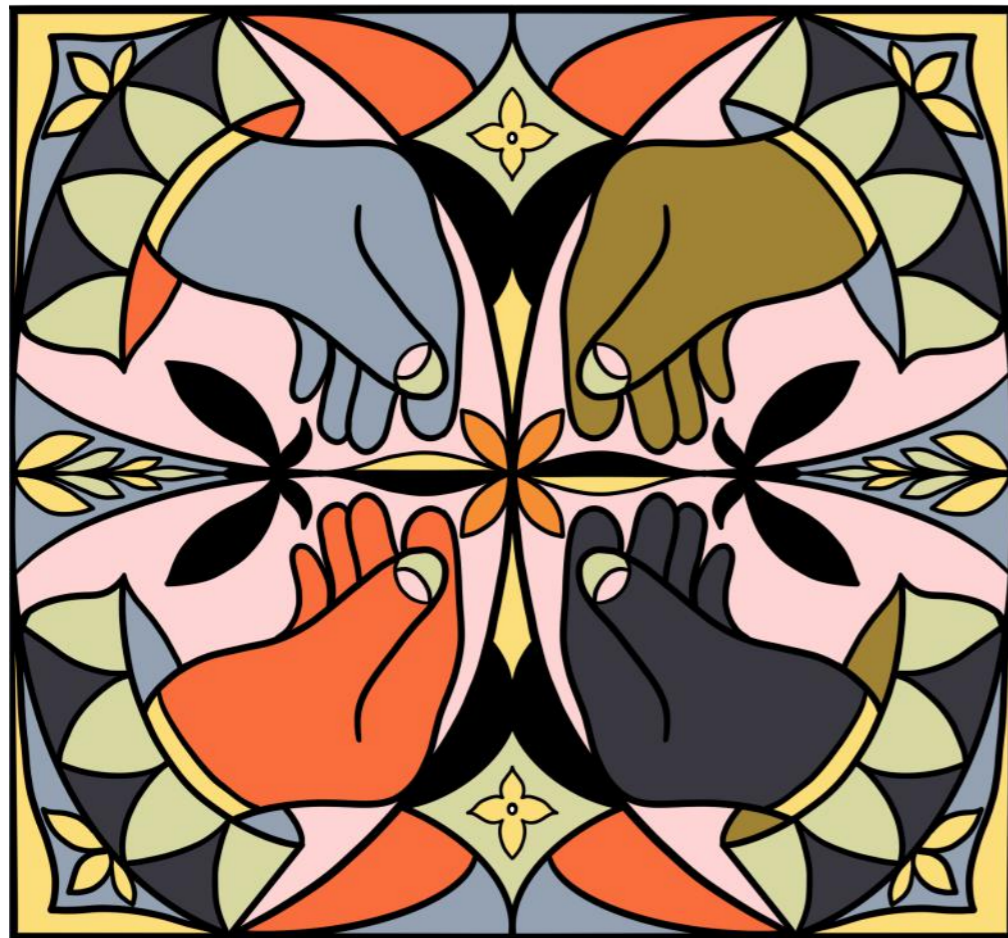
Shamin Azad / Rumana Yasmin

Shamim is an award-winning bilingual poet, storyteller and translator with over 37 published works in English and Bangla, and recipient of the 2020 Arts in the Community Award for keeping the arts alive during the pandemic. Rumana is the founder and director of Bok Bok Books, combining her passion for children's literature with her commitment to environmental justice.

ILLUSTRATOR

Rifat S. Taher

Rifat S Taher is a visual artist based in Virginia, USA. Her versatile practice spans painting, printmaking, photography and collage, drawing inspiration from traditional art forms, architecture, nature and music.



D.I.C.E.

A COOPERATIVE BOARD GAME FOR DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, COMMUNITY AND EMPATHY

Co-created with Primary School Children

Roll to Reimagine is a cooperative board game where players build knowledge, recruit allies, and work together to defeat racism and injustice in their community — designed by children from Middlesbrough, for everyone.

Your community is under threat. Misinformation is spreading, prejudice is on the rise, and the only way to fight back is together.

D.I.C.E. is a cooperative board game in which teams travel across the community — visiting schools, libraries, and local spaces — to gather knowledge, recruit powerful allies, and collect the tools needed to defeat events of racism and injustice before time runs out.

Built on a simple but compelling mechanic, featuring a 20-sided dice, every decision made by the team matters. Do you push forward and challenge the next event — or take more time to build your strength?

Created with young people from Middlesbrough, D.I.C.E. is a game that doesn't just talk about fairness and inclusion — it was shaped by the communities who embrace it.



AGE RANGE

7-11

GENRE

Board Game

ISBN

9781739261474

PUBLICATION

September 2026

RIGHTS

World except UK English and Bengali

KEY SALES POINTS

Made by children, not about them

Co-created with students from two Middlesbrough primary schools, giving the game genuine authenticity and a powerful story

Cooperative, not competitive

Players work together against the game, making it ideal for classrooms, family play, and community settings

Curriculum-relevant themes

Fairness, inclusion, prejudice, and community action, handled accessibly for ages 7+

Sparks real conversations

Cards are designed to be read aloud and discussed

Fast to learn, easy to play

A Quick Play Guide gets groups going in minutes

Flexible player count

Works from 2 players up to a full class group with facilitation

Beautifully illustrated

Original artwork by Sofia Barton brings the community world to life

A first for participatory publishing

Part of Bok Bok Books' mission to put young people at the centre of creative production,