

Foundation Highlights

Bangladeshis in Kitchener-Waterloo
Welfare Foundation (BDKWWF)



Volume 6, Issue 1, January 2026

Five Years of Stories, Voices, and Community

Five years ago, this newsletter began as a simple idea: a way to keep the Bangladeshi Canadian community in Kitchener-Waterloo connected, informed, and inspired. What started as a modest experiment has grown into a steady and trusted community tradition, built on shared stories of kindness during times of need, local pride, and the belief that staying connected makes us stronger.

Over these five years, we have celebrated milestones both big and small. We have highlighted our proud graduates, shared updates on relief efforts at home and abroad, offered resources during challenging times, and amplified the voices that make our community unique. Every edition has been shaped not only by the editors, but also by the readers who contributed ideas, photos, questions, and encouragement. This newsletter has always been a collaborative effort, and that is what makes it truly special.

As we mark this anniversary, we extend our heartfelt gratitude. Thank you for reading, contributing, debating, cheering, and showing up. Thank you for proving that community is not just a place, but a shared practice.

Looking ahead, we are excited to continue evolving. Expect deeper stories, more opportunities to participate, and new ways to stay connected. The next five years promise to be just as full of energy and curiosity. Thank you for being part of this journey.

Looking Ahead

As we move into 2026, we look forward to continuing our work together. With Ramadan approaching, please watch for details about the Ramadan Food Drive planned for February to March 2026.

Also the Monzur Kabir - BDKWWF Scholarship Application is now open! Please see page 4 for details. Nominate someone and be a proud actor in fulfilling someone's dream!

Wishing everyone good health and peace in the new year!



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Friendly Reminder!



It's the time of the year when we pay our annual membership fee. It's \$120/year or \$10/month.

And don't forget to send your article, grad photos, news or anything that is suitable for this newsletter!

Remembering Sonia

Sonia's passing at such a young age has deeply saddened us all. Despite our heartfelt prayers for her recovery, she left us too soon. Sonia, lovingly called Arzita by her mentor mother, came from a village background marked by hardship. She lost her father when she was only two months old. Her mother, unable to care for her, placed Sonia in the care of her maternal grandmother, Nani, who worked as a housemaid and struggled to make ends meet. Despite these challenges, Nani ensured that Sonia was enrolled in elementary school.

As Sonia grew older, financial constraints made it impossible for her grandmother to continue supporting her education. Sonia moved to Dhaka to work as a housemaid, where she met a kind hearted woman who became her mentor mother. Recognizing Sonia's ambition and eagerness to learn, she enrolled her at Mirpur Cantonment School, offering her a new beginning. Through determination and hard work, Sonia completed her schooling and passed her higher secondary examinations with an outstanding GPA of 4.92 out of 5. Her dreams of building a better life for herself and supporting her grandparents were finally within reach.

Tragically, those dreams were cut short when Sonia was struck by a speeding bus while crossing the road. She sustained critical injuries and later passed away, leaving her community heartbroken. All expenses related to her hospitalization, transportation to Fakirhat, and burial have been covered by a family in Dhaka.

The kind-hearted people of the Kitchener-Waterloo community responded spontaneously to the appeal for financial support for Sonia's treatment. In February, a total of \$3,300 was raised, along with an additional \$50 contributed by BDKWWF. Sadly, by the time the funds were fully collected, Sonia had already passed away.

In consultation with the community, the donated funds were used to support the future well-being of Sonia's maternal grandparents. The family used the assistance to reconstruct their dwelling house, which had been in urgent need of repair, providing them with safer and more dignified living conditions. We acknowledge with gratitude that the people of KW contributed.

Sonia's life, though brief, was a testament to resilience, hope, and the power of compassion.

May her soul rest in peace.



Sonia, a brave girl who defeated her challenged childhood and was on her way to fulfil her dream to achieve high education.



The house being constructed at Fakirhat, late Sonia's grandparents' village.

Dr. Monzur Kabir - BDKWWF Scholarship Graduate Update

Omar Faruque, MBBS (Class of 2025)

Omar Faruque is a proud winner of the BDKWWF / Dr. Monzur Kabir Scholarship and successfully graduated with an MBBS degree in 2025. He was admitted to Chandpur Medical College, Chandpur, on January 10, 2020. Recently, we reached out to him to learn about his feelings and aspirations. Here is what he shared:

Omar learned about the scholarship through his uncle, Engr. Abdul Manan, and his cousin, Kamrul Anwar Liton. Over a period of three and a half years, he received approximately BDT 4 lakh (equivalent to CAD 5,250) in seven installments. This support fully covered his educational expenses throughout medical school and also enabled him to assist his family financially.

With the help of this scholarship and his own dedication, Omar completed all his professional examinations on the first attempt. He proudly shared that his younger brother is now pursuing Electrical and Electronic Engineering (EEE) at RUET, reflecting the broader positive impact of the support he received.

Omar passed his final MBBS examination in August 2025 and is currently undergoing his internship training at Chandpur Medical College Hospital. He is focused on strengthening his clinical knowledge and practical skills.

Looking ahead, Omar aspires to become a competent medical professional guided by strong ethical values and a patient-centered approach to care. He describes medicine not merely as a profession, but as his passion. He expressed deep gratitude to Almighty Allah and extended heartfelt thanks to the entire BDKWWF family for standing by him throughout his journey.

This is yet another inspiring example of how community support can transform lives and help build a better future.



Omar Faruque,
Graduate, MBBS,
Chandpur Medical College,
Chandpur, Bangladesh



A loving picture of Dr Monzur Kabir family. Thanks for sharing this!

BDKWWF - Dr. Monzur Kabir Scholarship Scholarship Overview and Application Process

Dr. Monzur Kabir (BDKWWF) Scholarship has been introduced in the honor of late Dr. Monzur Kabir – an honourable past member of BDKWWF who passed away in July, 2020. With the generous donation of the Kabir family and BDKWWF members this scholarship was established to help a Bangladeshi student to pursue their dreams. Anyone but primarily the BDKWWF members can nominate a student to receive this scholarship. Below are the terms of this scholarship:

- 1. Who can receive the scholarship:** It's for the meritorious but in financial need student in Bangladesh, (a second year student of a Higher Education Program that starts after the Higher Secondary Certificate or equivalent),
- 2. How much:** It will be for a full program. However, the maximum amount of the scholarship will be decided based on the need of the applicant and by the Scholarship Sub-committee of BDKWWF,
- 3. Length and Starting of the Scholarship:** It will be handed over in the second year of a usually 4 years program but there is scope to receive it starting from first year,
- 4. Application form:** Application should be submitted in the MK (BDKWWF) application form,
- 5. Frequency of the scholarship money handover:** It will take place at the beginning of each school year,
- 6. Sorting of multiple nominees:** Subcommittee will select the eligible candidate either by discussing and/or by a random lottery draw of the names,
- 7. Responsibilities of the nominator:** To make sure the application form is filled out properly and in time, handing over the money and tracking the progress of the student up to a certain level. The nominator should be one of the 3 references.

Dr. Monzur Kabir (BDKWWF) Scholarship Application Form (sample) (Please email any BDKWWF member for the original application form)

Applicant's Name; Date of Birth; Address; Telephone No; Email Address; Year of SSC/Examination; Mark/Result/GPA; Name of Secondary School;
Year of HSC Examination; Mark/Result/GPA; Name of College/Higher Secondary Institute;
Name of Current Institution/University/College; Mark/Result/GPA of the exam of first year (if applicable); What is your Career Goal;
Write in short why you think you deserve this scholarship;
Please give three references.

Winter Driving Tips

Transport Canada has shared helpful winter driving tips to stay safe on slippery roads and in poor visibility. Here are a few key reminders. The full article is available on Transport Canada's website.

- **Be alert and prepared:** Drive well rested and always wear a seat belt. Children should wear lighter winter clothing in car seats so harnesses fit snugly, and use blankets for warmth if needed.
- **See and be seen:** Remove all snow, ice, and frost from your vehicle, including the roof, hood, windows, and lights. Use headlights in poor visibility, and pull over safely if conditions become too dangerous.
- **Adapt your driving:** Adjust your speed to road and weather conditions, leave extra distance between vehicles, and avoid passing when conditions are poor.
- **Use winter tires:** Winter tires provide better traction in cold, snowy, and icy conditions due to their softer rubber and specialized tread.
- **Brake and steer safely:** Allow more stopping distance, look far ahead, and avoid sudden braking or sharp steering that could cause skidding.
- **Be ready for emergencies:** Keep your phone charged and carry a charging cable. Call 911 if you need emergency assistance.



Staying cautious and prepared can make a big difference during winter driving.

Source: <https://tc.canada.ca/en/road-transportation/stay-safe-when-driving/winter-driving/driving-safely-winter#winter-driving-tips>



Stay Informed

Follow local news and Waterloo Region alerts for snow events, road conditions, and weather warnings.

<https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/living-here/significant-weather-events.aspx>

Winter Safety Tips for Homeowners in Waterloo, Ontario

Winter in the Waterloo Region brings snowstorms, icy conditions, and occasional power outages. Preparing your home early can make a significant difference in keeping your family safe and comfortable. The Region of Waterloo and local fire officials strongly urge residents to keep all exterior appliance vents and gas meters clear of snow and ice to prevent serious hazards, most notably carbon monoxide poisoning. Here are a few more key steps to consider.

1. Prepare Your Home for Extreme Cold

Weatherproof doors and windows to reduce heat loss and help prevent frozen pipes.

Insulate exposed pipes, especially in basements, crawl spaces, and garages.

Keep your thermostat at a consistent temperature, as sudden drops can increase the risk of burst pipes.

Stay informed about winter alerts issued by Environment and Climate Change Canada so you can respond quickly.

2. Be Ready for Power Outages

Winter storms can lead to power outages. Make sure you have:

Flashlights and extra batteries

A battery-powered radio

Backup phone chargers

Extra blankets

Avoid using outdoor heaters or barbecues indoors, as carbon monoxide poisoning is extremely dangerous.

3. Maintain Safe Access Around Your Home

Clear snow and ice from walkways promptly to prevent slips and falls.

Use salt or sand to improve traction.

Keep driveways clear so emergency vehicles can access your home if needed.

During major snow events, vehicles may need to be removed from roads to allow snowplows to operate efficiently.

4. Fire and Heating Safety

Have your furnace inspected annually.

Clean your chimney if you use a fireplace.

Keep space heaters at least one metre away from anything flammable.

Install and regularly test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.

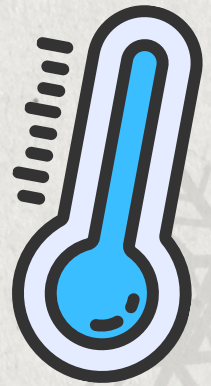
5. Prepare for Severe Storms and Blizzards

Blizzards can make roads unsafe and increase emergency situations.

Stay indoors during severe weather alerts.

Keep a 72-hour emergency kit with food, water, medications, and essentials.

Ensure pets have adequate warmth and shelter.



Stay Informed

Staying prepared helps protect not only your household but also your community throughout the winter season.

https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/living-here/emergency-response-plan.aspx?_mid_=33474

At A Glance: BDKWWF's Monetary Contributions from January to December 2025

Date	Project	Amount	Comment
March 2025	Fund raised for the treatment cost of a girl (Sonia) who was hit by a public bus in Dhaka.	\$3300	In the midst of her treatment/surgery she passed away unfortunately. The money donated to the grandparents who raised her and were the legal guardian. Pls read the full story on page 2.
December 2025	Canadian Red Cross	\$150	Annual contribution of BDKWWF
December 2025	Canadian Cancer Research Society	\$150	Annual contribution of BDKWWF
December 2025	Holiday Food Drive	\$1000	Cheque handed over to the Food Bank of Waterloo Region
Total (Jan - Dec 2025)	-	\$4600	

Did you know?

In the last 6 years, together we have donated:

A Total of \$12,9368.00 to various humanitarian causes all over the world.

- Year 2020 - \$14,602,
- Year 2021 - 40,304,
- Year 2022 - 21,240,
- Year 2023 - 19,750, and
- Year 2024 - \$28,872
- Year 2025 - \$4600

Please take a moment to celebrate this success!

Community Resources

Community Workshops and Activity Guides

City of Waterloo Program and Activities Guide
 City of Kitchener Active Kitchener
 City of Cambridge Activity Guide
 City of Guelph Programs and Activities

Free Skates

Thank you to our generous sponsor, Koppers + Greene Orthodontics for these complimentary public skates that are provided at no charge to the community. Mark your calendar and register in advance, up to 72 hours prior to the skate.

Muslim Social Services of Waterloo Region

Muslim Social Services of Waterloo Region is a nonprofit that provides culturally and spiritually sensitive humanitarian and social services to both Muslim and non-Muslim communities in the area.

Programs can be viewed and registered for at www.msswr.org/ourprograms, with more information available on their website: www.msswr.org.

Sun, Jan 18 from 3:30 to 4:20 p.m. at RIM Park
 Sun, Feb 22 from 3:30 to 4:20 p.m. at RIM Park
 Thurs, Mar 19 from 4 to 4:50 p.m. at AMCC
 Register at this link:

About Us



**BANGLADESHIS IN KITCHENER WATERLOO
 WELFARE FOUNDATION**

Subcommittees

There are many ways one can be actively involved with the Welfare Foundation! Some of these are to include yourself in one of the subcommittees:

- Food Drive Subcommittee
- Wellness Subcommittee
- Student Scholarship Subcommittee

We are always interested in new voices and ideas for any of these or outside of these fields.

Bangladeshis in Kitchener Waterloo Welfare Foundation (BDKWWF) is a voluntary organization registered and approved as a charity organization under the Provincial Government of Ontario.

Our Mission

Improve life of the vulnerable people in Bangladesh and all over the world by extending humanitarian support through our concerted efforts and promote friendship and bondages around the world among people of all origin.

Our Vision

The BD-KW Welfare Foundation will be a fully humanitarian organization through which Bangladeshi community in Kitchener-Waterloo voluntarily demonstrate their effort and caring for others in need.

Membership

Becoming a member is easy, just email bdkwwf-info@googlegroups.com to get started today.

Membership fee is \$120 /annually or \$10/per month per family.

Newsletter

Our Newsletter aims to publish two times in a year, January and July.

If you like to subscribe to the newsletter please email

bdkwwfinfo@googlegroups.com or by visiting our website: www.bdkwwf.ca currently under construction