



THE DEFINITIVE
YOUTH
MAGAZINE

SHOUT

DHAKA THURSDAY APRIL 9, 2020, CHAITRA 26, 1426 BS

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THIS IS THE FINAL BOARDING CALL...

PG 3

OPENING NIGHT

PG 7

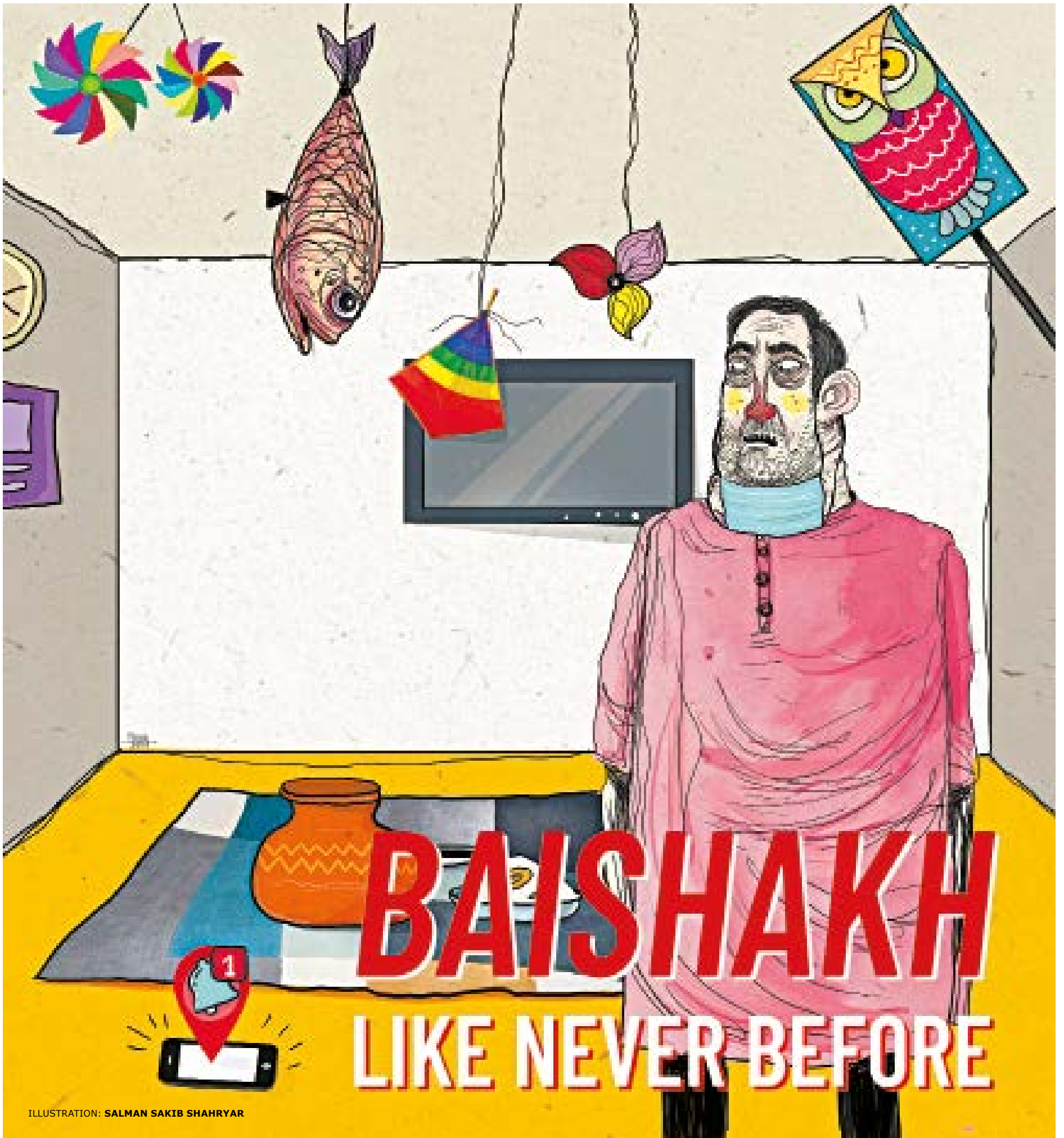


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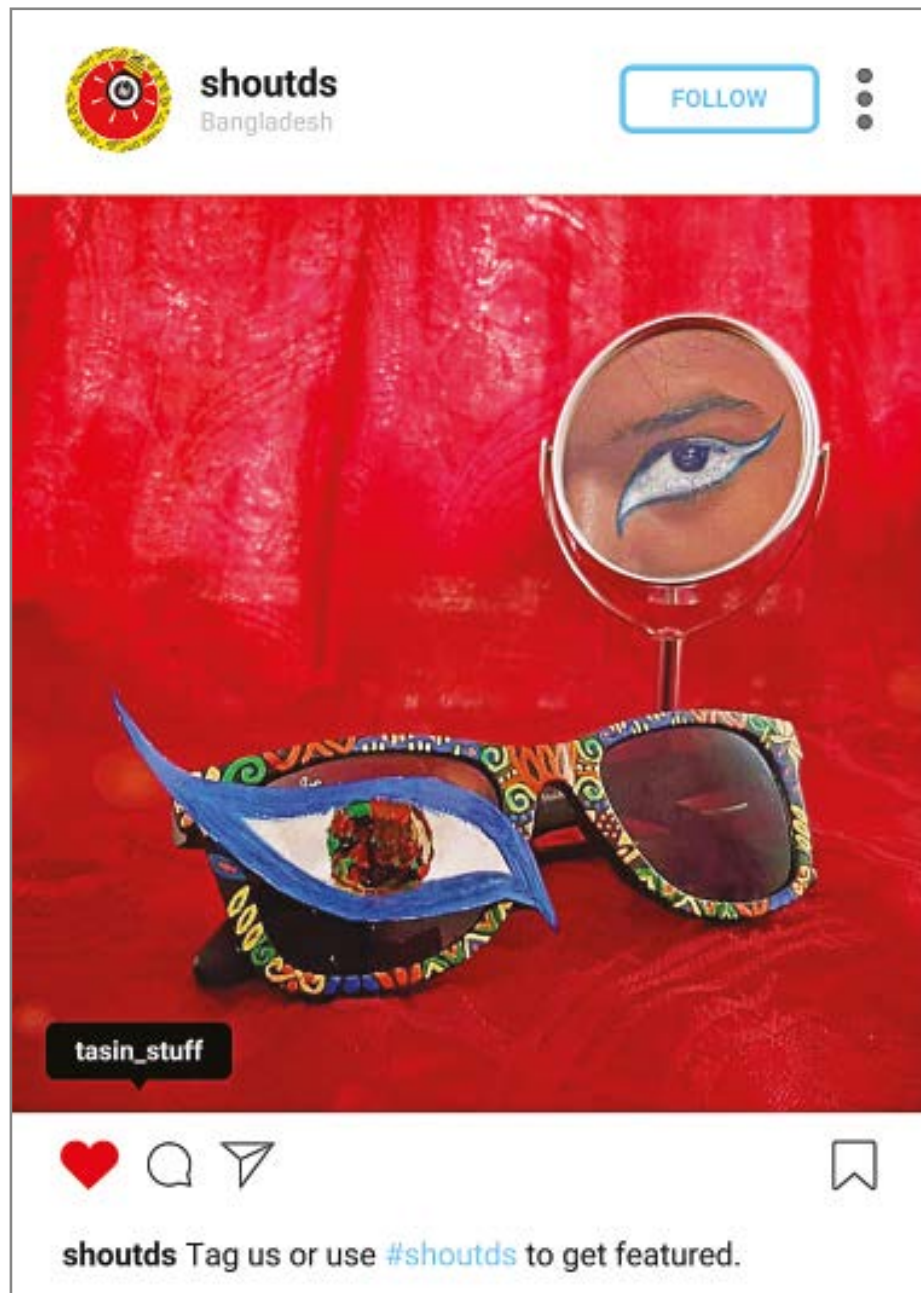
EDITORIAL

The upcoming Bengali new year will be like no other. There will be no songs early in the morning, no festive processions around the city, no fanfare and no friendly chit-chat over foamy coffee. What will be, however, is that we will be home. And home is where the heart is.

Even though the world is unwell today, it is important that we keep our spirits up. Why not make the best of the opportunity at hand? We may not be able to rejoice and paint the town red and white, but we can share a laugh with parents at home, maybe not text but call our friends and wish them well, talk and sing to family and colleagues over video calls. Happiness is really what we make of it.

And so we shall create happiness. If not us, who? And if not now, when?

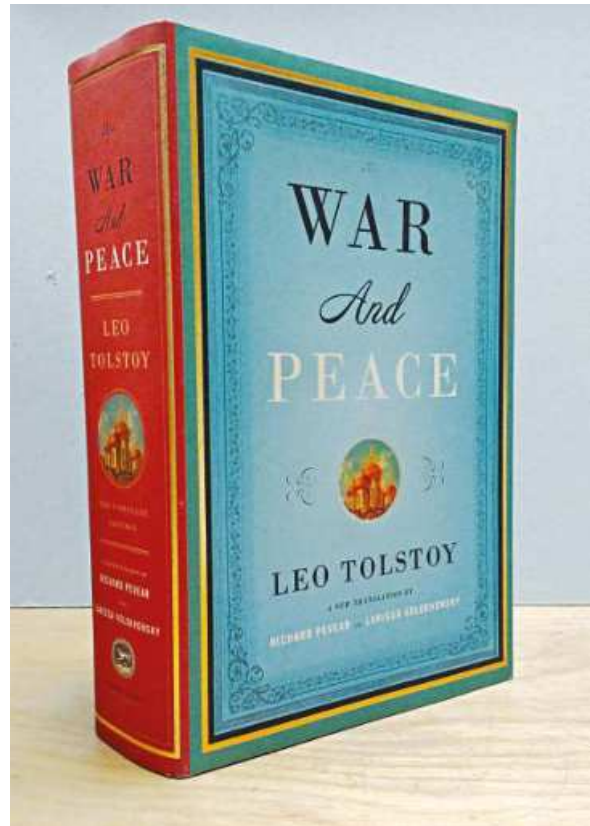
– Kazi Akib Bin Asad, Sub-editor, SHOUT



PLAYWATCH

BOOK REVIEW

BOOKS YOU CAN FINALLY READ (AND FINISH)



AYSHA ZAHEEN

Quarantining can be difficult for many of us. However, it provides the perfect opportunity to get started on that TBR list. The indefinite time we are spending indoors surely gives us the incentive to pick up those long novels that we shied away from all this time.

IT BY STEPHEN KING

The plot revolves around seven children who fight an embodiment of terror, exploiting the fear of his victims to disguise himself while hunting. The creature usually appears as Pennywise the dancing clown, every 27 years when the bowels of the city regurgitate. The novel starts off with six-year-old Georgie Denbrough's paper boat being washed down into a storm drain before he encounters Pennywise. The story picks up shortly after, as the aforementioned seven teenagers face the wrath of this dark and abject entity, teaming up to conquer it.

GONE WITH THE WIND BY MARGARET MITCHELL

This 1936 classic is the tale of Scarlett O'Hara, a proud 16-year-old when the Civil War breaks out in America and changes the course of time. She uses whatever means she can get her hands on, scampers with little resources, and rises from the claws of poverty. The story proceeds to show how she uses her brains, wit, and charm to survive in a society that evolved against her favours, manipulating her way through the odds.

WAR AND PEACE BY LEO TOLSTOY

This novel focuses largely on the aftermath of the French invasion, inclusive of the poor among the rich, civilians among soldiers, and unfortunates among the greedy. Five Russian aristocratic families are agents that show the changes brought upon by the Napoleonic era, diffusing in a previously Tsarist society. What is beautiful about this read is, it is never entirely a novel. Tolstoy transfuses philosophical discussion in the plot involving Natasha Rostov, a noble boy in war, and the illegitimate son of a Count; effectively giving an intellectual edge to the novel that even non-fiction readers would enjoy.

1Q84 BY HARUKI MURAKAMI

A dystopian novel, the story centres Aomame and Tengo, a woman who has discovered being in a parallel universe and a ghost-writing math teacher whose new project is giving him unsolicited insight on his past. As Aomame discovers her childhood love in Tengo and gets heavily involved with a religious cult, she gets directed toward this journey of self-discovery and unravelling authenticity. It may not be everyone's cup of tea, but the whimsicality of the novel is what made it fit in this list.

There may never be a better time to pick books like these up. Thus, putting these off for later is not an option.

Aysha now likes her tea and coffee both sweet because life itself is better. Placate her at zaheenaysha10@gmail.com

This is the final boarding call...

ROSHNI SHAMIM

It baffles me how this quarantine period is making people go crazy. I, personally, have been having a ball; just this past week, I was out travelling across the land. I am very excited to tell you as well as welcome you, dear readers, to my home travelogue.

Being an impulsive traveller, my flights are always last minute. This works out well most times, save for the occasional hoarding seen when boarding for the Airbus to Bathroom Town. Quite honestly, this becomes most stressful when traveling with my parents; they prefer to be the first ones there and the last ones to leave. While waiting for my flight, I also find lounges to be the best spot to relax. I highly recommend choosing the Bedroom Lounge, as they provide the comfiest facilities and a wide array of activities to choose from such as sleeping, procrastinating and essentially getting nothing done.



As a frequent flyer, my layover destination is usually the same. From a few minutes to even six or more hours at Living Room Luxury, the transit time simply flies by. If you are ever travelling by the same transit, make sure to enjoy their entertainment facilities, along with some quick snacking food stops.

While we are discussing transit activities, I would also encourage my readers to ex-

plore the duty free section. At Living Room Luxury, there is a great duty free section on the south-east wing, known as Balcony Balm. Although almost everything you see within sight from Balcony Balm is restricted for transit passengers right now, it is still a great experience to just take in the delightful views — empty roads, the quiet breeze, and all that lush greenery emits a definite 5-star

rating from me.

For my final review, I would like to highlight a wild adventure in the West. While I travel most to Kitchenia, my spontaneity decided to venture a little further. Unexpectedly, I ended up in The Parentica Lands. This was a mixed experience, as initially, the citizens were extremely friendly upon arrival. However, the longer I stayed, the more intrusive their conversations became. Suddenly, they were now a lot more interested to know what my plans were for the future, what are my current goals, why am I so useless, etc.

Although I find it healthy to occasionally do some extreme activities, my trip to The Parentica Lands was definitely a one-time trip only. The food gets a definite 5-star rating though, if you are a fan of fresh fruits, hot tea and sumptuous home food, that is.

For my next trip, I am hoping to travel to Roofstan, widely known for its scenic beauty. For now, I will be making sure to take some rest and get over my current jet lag.

Making art in times of a pandemic

ANTARA LABIBA NIKITA

Human life entails some degree of misfortune. At the core of misfortune lies uncertainty, which gives rise to an acute sense of powerlessness among people. If anything, the Covid-19 pandemic has made this fact very intuitive. In such trying times, art can be, and often is, used as a tool to fight this uncertainty.

Art, no matter what, cannot replace the need for proper healthcare, financial stability, or effective policymaking. In the same vein, engaging in creative projects requires a base level of privilege, which not all people have during a pandemic. Lastly, everyone copes with trauma differently, which means art will not be of utility to all. However, to the people who respond well to art, it can be an effective tool in the face of adversity. At the very least, it can provide the artist with some headspace. The value of art truly shines when it is used to craft new and empowering narratives during tough times.

Looking back at history, one will find music detailing tragedy and victory, and paintings depicting trauma and hope. Both anecdotal evidence and a growing body of research support the positive impacts creating art can have. And people are catching on. While scrolling through social



ILLUSTRATION: NOOR US SAFA ANIK

media, one will find more than the usual number of sketches, comedy skits, and poetry verses tucked between the regular news and awareness posts. At the same time, online spaces dedicated to showcasing user-submitted art are now brimming with entries. Through this collective art creation, people are finding comfort and forging communities.

This surge in art posts on social media is an indication of the newfound value placed on creating art. Even if a person chooses not to showcase their artwork online, it does not take away from the value the art-making process can bring to the person. The time and energy that could have been spent on mindlessly consuming content, is now spent on engaging in something creative and fulfilling. In doing so, the artist reclaims whatever degree of agency they have, which allows them to interpret the circumstances in their own way.

“Having the liberty to express my emotions through different mediums of my art is my only form of closure in this state of uncertain solitude,” says Venessa Kaiser, an architect and artist who has found solace in her creative endeavours. Even if the uncertainty of the times do not diminish in any way, the sense of powerlessness in people does fade. That is a reason compelling enough to make time for creativity, especially now.

In the best case scenario, a person can make sense of their losses and create empowering narratives for themselves. In the worst, such artistic endeavours serve as distractions only. However, in times of a pandemic, being able to take one’s mind off trauma is a meaningful enough end, too.



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The detachment I feel from cultural events

NABIHA NUSAIBA

A red and white saree, a wrist full of bangles and a bucketload of excitement. I had it all. I was not yet four when my dad had been assigned to duty on Pahela Baishakh at Ramna Park. The entire house was in a state of hullabaloo as its residents donned themselves in new clothes to celebrate the auspicious day with him. I spent all of that day inspecting the world from a king's viewpoint, sitting atop my father's shoulders. And oh! The things I saw. In my book, nothing will ever trump the new year celebrations of 2005. Over the next few years, dad was posted all over the country while mom travelled the world. Orchestras in Ramna were taken over by *nagardolas* in the neighbourhood park before finally being replaced by processions on the television. The television remains turned off now, cultural festivals have blended into my regular days, leaving me feeling monochrome while the world showers in vibrant colours.

Pahela Baishakh isn't the only victim of my indifference. You could throw heaps of marigold at my head during *Pahela Falgun* or drown me in a pool of flour during *No-banno*, I doubt I will do anything but cough a little. The perpetrators?



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

A LACK OF TIME

My parents tried their best to introduce us to our culture. But there's only so much you can do when you're physically unavailable and paranoid about the wrongs of the world. After 12 years of complaining, God pulled an UNO reverse card on me. Suddenly, I was the family member to be

swamped with work from all those yearly board exams.

A REPETITION OF TIME

You wake up, put on some makeup, do your hair, get into a nice outfit and set out for an amazing day. When I was four, I was excited to go to my first ever festival. For me, the great unknown lay ahead. After a while,

it became more of a hassle. You do the same things every year just to experience the same things you did last year. Granted, these only happen once a year, but they're still the same things.

A SHIFT IN TIME

One of the things my mother has in common with my friends is their mutual hatred for crowds. Most of my friends prefer trendy restaurants to Ramna Park. Me? I love crowds. Where there's a crowd, there's life. Younger me thought I would thrive on *Mangal Shobhajatra*s but I never thought I would have to do it by myself. Have you ever been to a procession alone? If so, my contact details are below, let's figure out what's wrong with you.

CAPTURING TIME

Lately, *melas* are more of a marathon. The first person to get a profile picture worthy photo taken of themselves wins. Listen, I get it. You got all dressed up, it'd be stupid not to. But it's annoying when that is all you do. Why can't we also sit and experience the music while munching on some sugar candies? Why not do both?

Nusaiba secretly wonders if she's pronouncing her name wrong. Set her straight at n.nusaibaah@gmail.com

Board games you can play online

FAIZA ADIL

Social distancing is uncharted territory, bottled up in our homes, texts and calls just don't seem to really imitate the solidity of interacting and hanging out with your friends and loved ones. A frustrating yet fulfilling game of just about any board game is another luxury that we can't afford right now, but there are a few places that just about cut it. Stuck at home with an abundance of time and the constant company of the internet, here are board games you can play with your friends online!

SKRIBBL.IO

Trying to figure out what your friend is trying to draw or act out makes some of the most memorable memories, it's hilariously frustrating. Skribbl.io is like an online Pictionary, but it's fairly easy to set up and play, with quirky sound effects, an interesting point system and funny avatars. Each round, one player draws out their word with an array of colours and everyone else simply types out their guesses in the chat box. Skribbl has slightly better drawing tools compared to the array of other I/O games out there, so that's a point in its favour.

PRETEND YOU'RE XYZZY

Cards Against Humanity is the most entertaining of games out there, and a big boost to your ego at every round you win. After



all, it's all about your sense of humor. Pretendyoure.xyz lets you join games or create rooms where you can decide what the cards are about. This spin off lets you pick your own packs and rules and is just like the original version.

WEBOPOLY

While it may look confusing, Webopoly is an interesting version of classic Monopoly but with other websites as property and a few unique tweaks. The game goes like every monopoly goes, you know what to expect. Give its appearance a little bit of patience, once you're used to it, it's just as frustrating as traditional Monopoly!

PLAY.UNOFREAK

Say what you will, a quick game of Uno is always fun. Play.unofreak lets you create games, or play with complete strangers, it's fast and simply - Uno. The best part however, is the fact that you get to decide on the most arguable moves Uno has; stacking and doubling cards, this is a site where you play it how you like it.

PLAYINGCARDS.IO

Basic games are under often underappreciated, a simple game of go fish, cards, checkers or crazy eights goes a long way. Also with their own Cards Against Humanity spinoff, Playingcards.io lets

you play all of these games and create your own! A simple site that just does the job and hits quite a few birds with one stone.

There's dozens more sites like these that you'll find if you go digging on the internet which you could most definitely do with all of this time at home. But these are some that'll get you started, get your friends and get on these websites to beat your boredom!

Faiza enjoys the lazy company of her overweight cat and a million deadlines, reach her at faiza2421@gmail.com



PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

Baishakh Like Never Before

FAISAL BIN IQBAL

The nation-wide celebrations of Pahela Baishakh — the most significant festival of the Bengali calendar — will not take place this year. As sad as it sounds, we have to come to terms with it. Covid-19 has stalled the entire world, and with growing concerns over community transmission and how social gatherings can accelerate the spread of the virus, cancelling the celebrations was the only viable option.

There is, however, ways you can actually celebrate the event. If online classes and work from home can be a thing, why not "*bashay boshe Baishakh?*" As odd and unsatisfying it may sound, this is perhaps the only way we will be able to keep our minds off the panic, and celebrate the festivities from within the safety of our home. Here's how.

Well, you start the day like you would normally on the morning of the Bengali new year.

Get up early and take a quick shower. Then, put on the colours of the day — red and white, preferably. Stay away from the dark tones. Given that you will be spending the entire day at home and away from all the heat and chaos, you can wear that saree or panjabi without a worry. If you could not care any less about traditional attire, just put on anything you are comfortable with. Thankfully, aunts cannot judge you for your wardrobe while you are indoors.

For breakfast, you might have to skip on the *panta-ilish* supreme mega combo offer, assuming that you could not get the *ilish* because of the shutdown. Hence, you will need an alternative. You could try *muri* with a mix of your choice, most likely *chanachur* and *morich*. Boom! The *phalmuri*. Or, you could do a typical quarantine experiment and make an abomination out of it; puffed rice with Nutella.

After a hearty breakfast, it is time to meet up with friends. Sadly, you do not have the option to "*Melay laire*" this year. You will need to come up with yet another alternative to hanging out with your friends. Luckily for you, applications like Zoom, Messenger and Discord can connect you without you or them having to come out of social isolation. One group video call, and you will get to be with all your friends on the same platform.

As you engage in the casual Baishakh conversations, you will suddenly realise that this might be the first Pahela Baishakh where you cannot take pictures with your friends. Of course, that is not entirely true as you can just take screenshots of your video conference. You can use all the beautiful filters just like you would in a normal selfie. Some of those filters will even put flower crowns on your head, just as fake as the ones they sell at the fairs, but free.

At the fairs, you usually get to witness a wide range of live performances arranged

for your entertainment — concerts, puppet shows, and the occasional argument between a food-stall owner and a customer over the price of a plate of *fuchka*. These are nothing you cannot recreate at your home. With a little effort, you too can entertain yourselves just like they do at the fairs.

Speaking of food stalls, it is possible that delivery services will be running full operations that day. So, if you feel like it, you and your friends could simultaneously order the same food from the same place. You can even play a mini game to see who gets the fastest delivery. Fun, right?

The *mangal shobhajatra* is the biggest Pahela Baishakh attraction every year. However, this year the procession will not be carried out due to the ongoing crisis. Should that stop you from doing a "mini" shobhajatra at your house? Absolutely not. Make some giant paper masks, and parade around the house with them. Your family members will either be elated at this cultural display, or probably grow more concern about your mental health, something you do not see that often.

By evening, you and your friends are supposed to be at a coffee shop somewhere in Banani or Dhanmondi. Since that is impossible right now, you guys should go back to talking over social media. Make some Dalgona coffee to give yourself that coffee shop feels. In case you want a more realistic experience, just

take all the chairs at your home and bring them inside your room. Occupy those chairs with anything you can find around you, like stuffed toys or dirty laundry. Afterwards, wait in the corner with your coffee, and as it gets cold, see if any of those inanimate objects gets up from their respective chairs and leave. Chances are they won't, nor will they get anything to eat or drink, and that's as real as it gets. With that cold cup of authentic Dalgona, your Baishakh celebrations will have officially come to an end.

At the end of the day, what we need to remember is that this pandemic has the entire human civilisation with its back against the wall. For now, our best and perhaps only chance at keeping ourselves and our loved ones safe from this disease is through social distancing. We will have to keep maintaining this precaution until we find a cure. We know, this Baishakh will be different for all of us. For once we will be entering a new year where we cannot just forget the past and move on.

For your safety, as well as the safety of your loved ones, stay home, follow the rules, and help flatten the curve. *Shubho Noboborsho*.

Faisal wants to be the very best, like no one ever was. To survive university is his real test, to graduate is his cause. Send him memes and motivation at abir.afc@gmail.com

IUBAT stages William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet



The Department of English and Modern Languages staged William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* on March 11, 2020 at the IUBAT Open Auditorium, followed by the Certificate Awarding Ceremony of the Book Reading Competition, organized by the Department and British Council. Chairman, Department of English and Modern Languages, Prof. Dr. Momtazur Rahman delivered the welcoming speech. British Council Director Cristy Crawford adorned the event as the chief guest while Treasurer of IUBAT Prof. Selina Nargis was the special guest. *Romeo and Juliet* was performed by students of the inaugural batch of BAEng program and directed by Md. Kawsar Uddin, Assistant Professor of the Department. The drama generated tremendous enthusiasm in the atmosphere. A team of passionate faculty members of the Department worked hard for weeks to make the staging a success, and on this grand day, along with the students of the only batch, they made it an evening to remember for everyone.

A PARADIGM SHIFT: *The Case of AIUB*

DR. CARMEN Z. LAMAGNA

It is a hard fact that the high-risk sites for the spread of the Covid-19 are schools, colleges and university campuses. This evolving situation will not only be vastly disruptive but also a paradigm shift in Higher Education Institutions (HEI). The coronavirus is most fatal for the aged with underlying health medical issues. That may be an appropriate description for HEIs brought about by the coronavirus.

The "black swan" an unforeseen event that changes everything, is upon us: a change that prompts us in HEIs to rethink how we operate at every level, one of those unpredictable, unforeseen events with extreme consequences.

In Bangladesh and elsewhere, students live in close community proximity, take classes in four-walled classrooms, eat and spends time for class work and activities in communal settings, and cheer on their teams where shaking hands, high fives and hugs are common. With the shutdown, some HEIs has moved quickly to create a remote-teaching alternatives.

The Covid-19, a virus could be more of a catalyst for online education and other ed-tech tools. With social distancing as the most effective tool for flattening the infection curve absent a medical test kits, and a vaccine, the wave of sending students home and finishing the academic year/semester online is good for all of us. Social distancing is a temporary new norm, where HEIs can develop more of the pedagogical and administrative tools to operate as a distributed organization.

Unfortunately, in the country, most HEIs struggle with having a remote workforce for the duration of the shutdown. Unlike the tech sector, they are not built for remote work and may have little experience in doing or managing it.

There is also a financial backlash on this. Students may not be in the classroom, some of whom either typically welcomed the respite or may have actively resisted it, but are getting the same curriculum, course, and teachers and administrative staffs, and the cost of making the shift to online delivery and adding the requisite supports will actually be more costly.

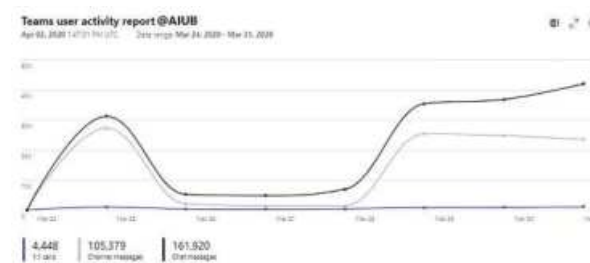
No one wants to think about a scenario in which the situation persists into the next semester and universities are unable to reopen. Not a likely scenario, but a possible

one. Even if campuses can reopen: Will the anxious parents want to keep their children closer to home? Will traditional-age students have discovered online education as a viable and more affordable alternative?

These events prompted the American International University – Bangladesh (AIUB) to go online (virtual).

The classes of all four Faculties of the institution has been shifted online, enabling students and teachers to conduct and undertake their classes within the safety of their homes. From the March 20, 2020, AIUB has successfully initiated all its classes, for both undergraduate and graduate programs, online through the Microsoft TEAMS Application. Since 2008, AIUB has been affiliated with Microsoft live.edu, currently known as Microsoft 365, making it one of most long-standing and strong collaborations, with the technology giant, in the country till date.

As a result of this collaborative affiliation, AIUB students, faculty members, and officials get unlimited user

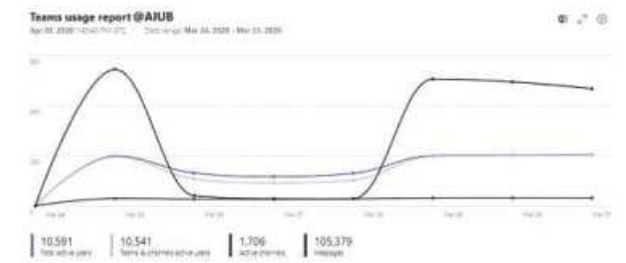


access to many of its applications, including the Microsoft TEAMS. It is a unified communication and collaboration platform that combines persistent workplace chat, video meetings, file storage, and application integration. Being one of the first private universities in Bangladesh to make the move within days of the initial outbreak in the country, AIUB has now gone fully virtual with its classes with the licensed MS TEAMS App that students, teachers and other employees can access using their own university email IDs.

In its ongoing Spring 2019-20 semester, approximately 10,000 active student users along with around 650 faculty members of AIUB are accessing this online platform, utilising it to its full capacity for online class lectures and team-based work projects. Faculty members are delivering lectures through video conferencing with embedded

PowerPoint presentations, whiteboard incorporations, and desktop sharing options. Students can communicate with them through video, audio or message boards for queries, clarifications, and class participation, as required and appropriate. They can also participate in the quizzes and assignments through this platform. Several online meetings with the academic and administrative-support staffs are held regularly.

The platform enables an interactive and versatile set-up as an alternate medium to conventional in-class teaching and learning environments, augmenting another layer of advanced digitised education in the modern world today. The initiative safeguarded the students from incurring the loss of the semester, giving them, their parents, and guardians the peace of mind. To date, positive feedbacks are relayed by the teachers including the enthusiasm shown by the students to make the learning requirements more adequate and satisfactory,



as the learning objectives are given utmost attention and consideration.

Agility, flexibility, and resiliency aren't just fundamental skills for the 21st century students. They're imperative skills for the 21st century educational institutions — especially in an era when disruptive pathogens and natural calamities are predicted to become all the more common.

Whether or not Covid-19 quickly subsides, the life as we knew it has been permanently altered.

Tumultuous times have a way of reordering reality and, in the process, opening doors to new opportunities and mind-sets.

The writer is Vice Chancellor of American International University - Bangladesh (AIUB).

FABLE FACTORY

LOOK FOR ME

TUBA TUHRA KHAN

People ask me where I'm
 As if I cocooned myself in the night.
 But why love, I'm out here, right in plain sight!
 No no, my dear, I'm not tucked away in some mountain or faraway star!
 I'm here, right here, waiting, just as you are.
 For I'm in the flutter of butterflies
 And in the buzzing noise of the beehives.
 I'm in the thump of the falling leaves
 And in the calm after a great tide.
 I'm there when you smile when the warmth of the sun hits your face.
 I'm there when you're crying and curse your miserable fate.
 I'm in a lover's first kiss.
 In their first heartbreak and their sinful bliss.
 I'm in the pain, in the glory
 In the happiness, in every part of the story.
 I'm there whether you want me or not
 In every second of your thoughts.
 I'm in the evil, in the saint
 In the beggar, in the vain.
 For I am you and everything you want me to be.
 All you need is to want
 To see.

The writer is an SSC candidate from Viqarunnisa Noon School.



OPENING NIGHT

MRIITIKA ANAN RAHMAN

"Ten minutes till show time! Why is everyone running around? Asha, where is the other half of your costume? Have you ever seen an angel with one wing!" Rasul darted through the narrow corridor backstage ducking from prop pieces and shoving tiny child actors out of his way. "You dropped your halo again!" Rasul picked up the cheap plastic wire wrapped tiara of sorts and chucked it across the hallway.

"Rasul! Hi, there's a problem," Misha said emerging from the dressing room. "The tailor accidentally delivered the wrong costumes. I've got 6 of the poor villagers dressed in giant hedgehog costumes. Didn't you say they were doing some sort of odd animal themed play on the stage downstairs?"

"Doesn't matter, there's no time. The audience will make what they will of it." Rasul bolted across the excessively air conditioned chilly backstage area clutching his clipboard with a mess of papers overflowing.

Ever since the day had started, Rasul felt things weren't right. They had prepared for the play for six months and today was opening night. The dancers had perfectly synced, Amin the stage hand had finally learned to operate his walkie-talkie and Maya had learned to lie perfectly still when she's stabbed at the end of Act Three.

Rasul was confident when he exited the theatre the night before but this morning, things didn't feel quite right. He had an inexplicable pain in his stomach from the moment he woke up. In the six months of rehearsals, he had not once been late but this morning, his Uber driver denying his trip at the last moment made him reach 15 minutes late. This was not a good sign.

"Seven minutes!" someone yelled in the background.

Rasul and Maya, the assistant director, barged into a green room. Maya had



ILLUSTRATION: RIDWAN NOOR NAFIS

desperately made many phone calls and crafted long emails in hopes of being made director but despite her best efforts, the board felt her level of experience was best suited in assisting Rasul. She had promised, disappointedly, that she would help make the production run seamlessly. Now, as the actors around them noticed, she was sweating visibly.

"We have a problem," Arun announced jumping up to face Rasul. "We can't find Leela." Arun's face was painted a shocking

orange with yellow and black lines criss crossing all over his skin that made his brown eyes look ghastly.

"What do you mean we can't find Leela?" Rasul demanded. He could feel the pain in his stomach kicking in again.

"I don't know. She was here when we came in but when they started hair and makeup we suddenly couldn't find her. I told Maya this morning," Arun started walking towards the door, his slender body carrying the weight of his sleek costume

well with the lower part of his costume slithering behind him.

The room was a burst of activity as all the other actors flocked to take their positions, the wings of their elaborate costumes flapping, their robes flowing behind them.

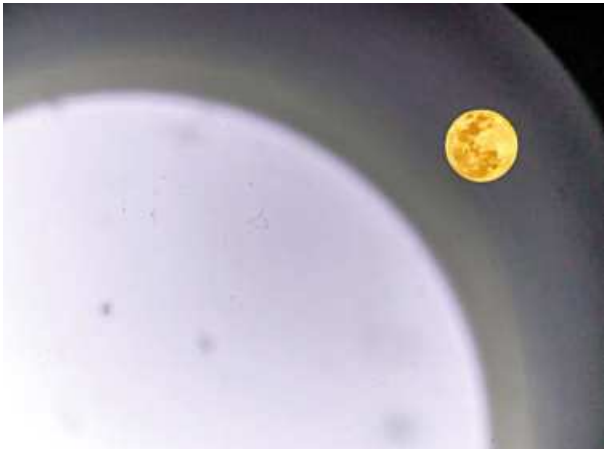
"You knew about this earlier?" Rasul asked.

"I just didn't think panicking you would help, I thought she would turn up on time," Maya announced before bolting out the door as someone yelled, "Two minutes people!"

Rasul sat down on an abandoned chair in the deserted dressing room. The room was dead silent compared to the ruckus before. The table tops were overflowing with makeup, wigs, paint and costumes. Leela being missing spelt disaster for the show and he suddenly felt six months of his hard work being squashed in one instant. He had planned every detail.

Outside, as the curtains went up, the empty stage shone with lilies sprinkled across it. And from above flew down a girl, smiling and quiet. She wasn't Leela nor did she look anything like her, but in the large, dark, hall with ricocheting music and cramped seats, who was to see and who was to know.

Mrittika Anan Rahman is a daydreamer trying hard not to run into things while walking. Find her at mrittika.anan@gmail.com



CANVAS

With brush strokes of colour,
One, two, three
Nature claims what it illustrates
From the darkest skies to the deep blue sea

PHOTO: PAHN CHAKMA
TEXT: KAZI AKIB BIN ASAD

