



#FreeToo breaks internet as free speech goes viral

SAKEB SUBHAN

The Covid-22 outbreak continues to upend the world order.

Since the virus's outbreak was declared a pandemic in 2022, it has caused a massive loss of human lives, to the point that within a year, all international agencies had stopped keeping count and the world en masse gave up on data analysis.

It has since been up to the ordinary people to protect themselves.

That had an unintended benefit which by now has seen previously "third-world" or "under-developed" countries rapidly catching up with their "first-world" counterparts.

A feature of such countries were authoritative governments with little room for dissent from the subjugated.

The new normal had become everyone wearing caps, sunglasses, masks and gloves to guard against the transmission of the virus. In nations with authoritative

governments and insecurity acts enshrined in the law, any form of public dissent led to disappearances, with journalists being hit hardest.

But by 2023, most of the public, including journalists, all over the world, started posting videos of themselves criticising the powers that be tagged with the hashtag #freetoo.

In the videos, people can be seen donning protective equipment so none of them can be recognised and therefore none can be punished.

Injustices exposed, ideas shared freely, tyrants' wings clipped, progress even amid crisis.

Of course, there was initial resistance from the powers that be. People claiming to be heads of states posted videos asking that none can post videos with their faces covered. But as the politicians had their own faces covered as well, no one believed it was actually them.

Buttons come undone as Covid-22 pressures escalate

BY E R R, O R

The Button Sewers (BS) are back. All 10,137 of them from all across the country.

Last week they were all asked to stay home amidst fears of the Covid-22 virus.

On Tuesday, they were asked to come back to the capital city because buttons were popping everywhere and no one knew how to put them back. People are now finally realising the importance of this important yet overlooked group.

"We had to go into quarantine and now we don't have maids," lamented Fahreem, senior director of GibberishOnThePhone, the country's largest telco operator. "My wife has been making me wipe the floors. My pant buttons popped off the moment I bent down. I have never had to

stoop this low," he ended in tears.

All across the country, people simply cannot fit into their pants anymore. In the last one week, people have been stress eating all the food they had stockpiled for a month.

Samana, a sports writer for a national daily, lost an eye because of a button popping off his fat brother's pants.

"How am I going to play Pokemon anymore?" He cried pitifully like a sports writer who has nothing to do now because sports simply do not matter anymore.

The Button Sewers had to walk many excruciating kilometres from their homes. Many walked till their sandals tore and the factories they were going to sent them back, because "rules".

Community transmission of the virus is a big

worry now as they have nowhere to go and no sandals to wear.

One button repair factory owner Mrs Owlfowl had this to say: "We care for their welfare. We realise they need to go back and stay home because people on Facebook got really mad at us. We wish them happy, happy thoughts."

She declined to comment on where these poor workers would go back to mostly because she uses velcro and not buttons.

Meanwhile, Ms Robin A Hawk, privileged overseer of the BS Committee, served a petition to change the name from "Button Sewers" to "Button Sewerers" because the first one did not sound right. She sounded confident this will set things right while she stepped into her Lexus SUV.



ILLUSTRATION: DOODLE BHAIJI

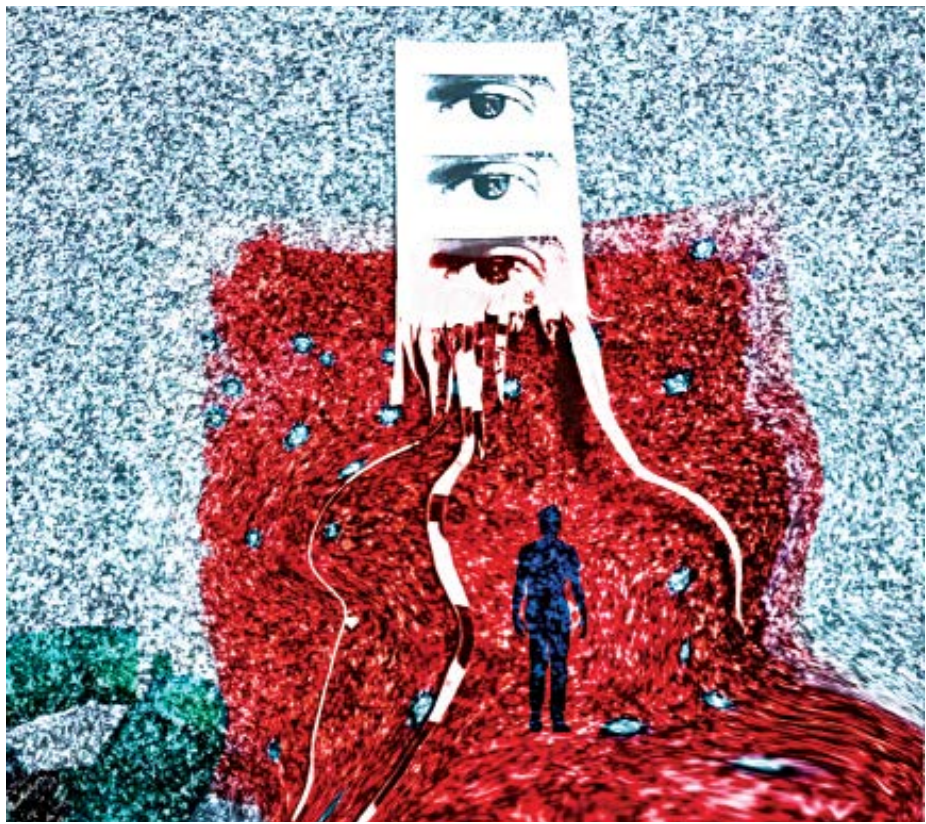


ILLUSTRATION: KAZI TAHSIN AGAZ APURBO

Aunty tests positive as she can't keep her nose out of people's business

Rise in nose infections since factory closures and doctors allegedly not doing their jobs

LUBNAN KHALEESI

A 46-year-old aunty, who ran the most successful tabloid in her daughter's school, yesterday tested positive for having the viral nose infection and being a total you-know-what.

She was admitted to a city hospital with the infection and was immediately put in the isolation ward as she could not stop talking about the nurses.

"She was admitted with verbal diarrhoea and very grand delusions about herself and other people. I knew the case was serious because as soon as I saw her, she began telling me about one of our doctors and how they had been ignoring her," Dr Pratik, the on-duty doctor said.

"In these times, it is not only important to wear masks and gloves, but you must keep your nose out of other people's business. The very air can be contagious," he added.

The aunty, who we cannot name but have all met, has also been asked who she has spread her malicious gossip to. Steps are being taken to have all of them quarantined.

The latest case has left no one surprised. The number of nose infections caused by being nosy has increased in the city ever since some factories did something and some doctors did not do something. People have since not left those two professions alone, with everyone pretending they had a stake in both the sectors all along.

The number of positive nose infections currently stands at 241. This number includes some 122 uncles, some young ones, and some aunts.

The youngest case is that of a three-year-old boy who would not stop spouting off about how bad the internet was and kept trying to tell Bangladeshi internet service providers how they should do their jobs.

And boy don't even get me started on the civil society numbers.

Lubnan Khaleesi is currently a power-tripping egomaniac (who internally blames her zodiac sign for it) and eternally a 10/10 stunner with an infectious laughter.

The Bloodfall at Ocean Drive

OSAMA RAHMAN

Cradled between the hill and the sea,
Is a Bloodfall,
Of all the kills you didn't see.
It's a brilliant red,
Glinting against the sun.
It smells a little of iron.
And of fresh bullets from a gun.
There's a Bloodfall at Ocean Drive, have you seen it?
It's a sight to behold, come on friends, I really mean it.
A beautiful sight,
That cascading crescent.
Come spend all your money here,
A land welcoming
The princes, paupers and peasants.
A lord's blessing.
A gift for a daughter to find her essence.
It's a gift is what it is.
So pure and untouched.
A birthright for us.
Nothing unjust.
There's a Bloodfall at Ocean Drive, have you seen it?
It's a sight to behold, come friends, I

really mean it.
Captured it and gave it a freedom as a token.
Perhaps it was a beast and we poked it?
And now it's woken.
Still so fragile, so it must be broken.
Tame it or rope it.
Tie it up and dope it.
Flood it with madness till its choking.
Why is it still hoping?
There's a Bloodfall at Ocean Drive, have you seen it?
It's a sight to behold, come friends, I really mean it.
But now it seems another floods about to burst.
Pull up old blueprints, go on and dam it.
Bloody blood, can you feel my thirst?
There were folks starving elsewhere, maybe understand it.
The Bloodfall is the beauty, the Bloodfall is mine.
It makes the sound of a million screams,
But look how it does shine!
There's a Bloodfall at Ocean Drive, have you seen it?



ILLUSTRATION: NANJIBA SHOILY