

THE DEFINITIVE  
**YOUTH**  
MAGAZINE

# SHOUT

DHAKA THURSDAY APRIL 16, 2020, BAISHAKH 3, 1427 BS

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OUR FIGHT WITH  
PANDEMICS

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ANOTHER DAY, ANOTHER  
ONLINE CLASS

PG 7



# YOUNG PROFESSIONALS AT RISK



PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

# EDITORIAL

The pressure to be productive during this period of self-isolation is one of the daftest things I have ever seen. This is preceded by the assumption that everyone's at home having a great time, which is also one of the daftest things I have ever seen. Not everyone enjoys being home, it's even more difficult to do so if it's all day every day that you're home. It's impractical to assume one can keep up their full flow of studies and/or work doing it entirely from home when the situation is as abnormal as it is.

It's difficult to pretend that everything's alright and everyone in the entire world is taking a long unexpected vacation when that is not the case for a bunch of people who are either not privileged enough, or not healthy enough. It's impossible to not be worried.

– Azmin Azran, Sub-editor, SHOUT



## PLAYWATCH

### MOVIE REVIEW



# TRILOGIES TO CATCH UP ON

#### JISHAD BIN SHIRAJ AL HAMID

While everyone is stuck at home and following guidelines to stop any further spread of the coronavirus, this might be a good time to finally watch excellent and most importantly, fun movie trilogies to pass the time with loved ones, or yourself; no one's judging. Here are a few.

#### SPIDER-MAN (2003-2007)

Sam Raimi's *Spider-Man* movies were early entries in the superhero genre, with *Spider-Man 2* being touted by fans and critics as being one of the greatest superhero films ever made. But the disappointing follow-up with *Spider-Man 3* threw the success of the prior movies out the window. Those willing to sit through Spider-Man fighting an unnecessary number of villains will find this trilogy worth watching.

#### BACK TO THE FUTURE (1985-1990)

As the title suggests, the *Back To The Future* movies have one thing in common, and that is; going "back" to the future from the past. The *Back To The Future* movies are super popular and an important part of pop culture. For the very few who haven't seen these movies, please do it, right now.

#### THE DARK KNIGHT TRILOGY (2005-2012)

*Batman Begins* tells the origins of how Bruce Wayne came to be Batman. The second entry into the trilogy—the crème de la crème—*The Dark Knight*, is hands down one of the greatest superhero films of all time. While the third film, *The Dark*

*Knight Rises*, has some plot holes but those can be overlooked and is nevertheless a great watch that wraps up the trilogy in a satisfying manner.

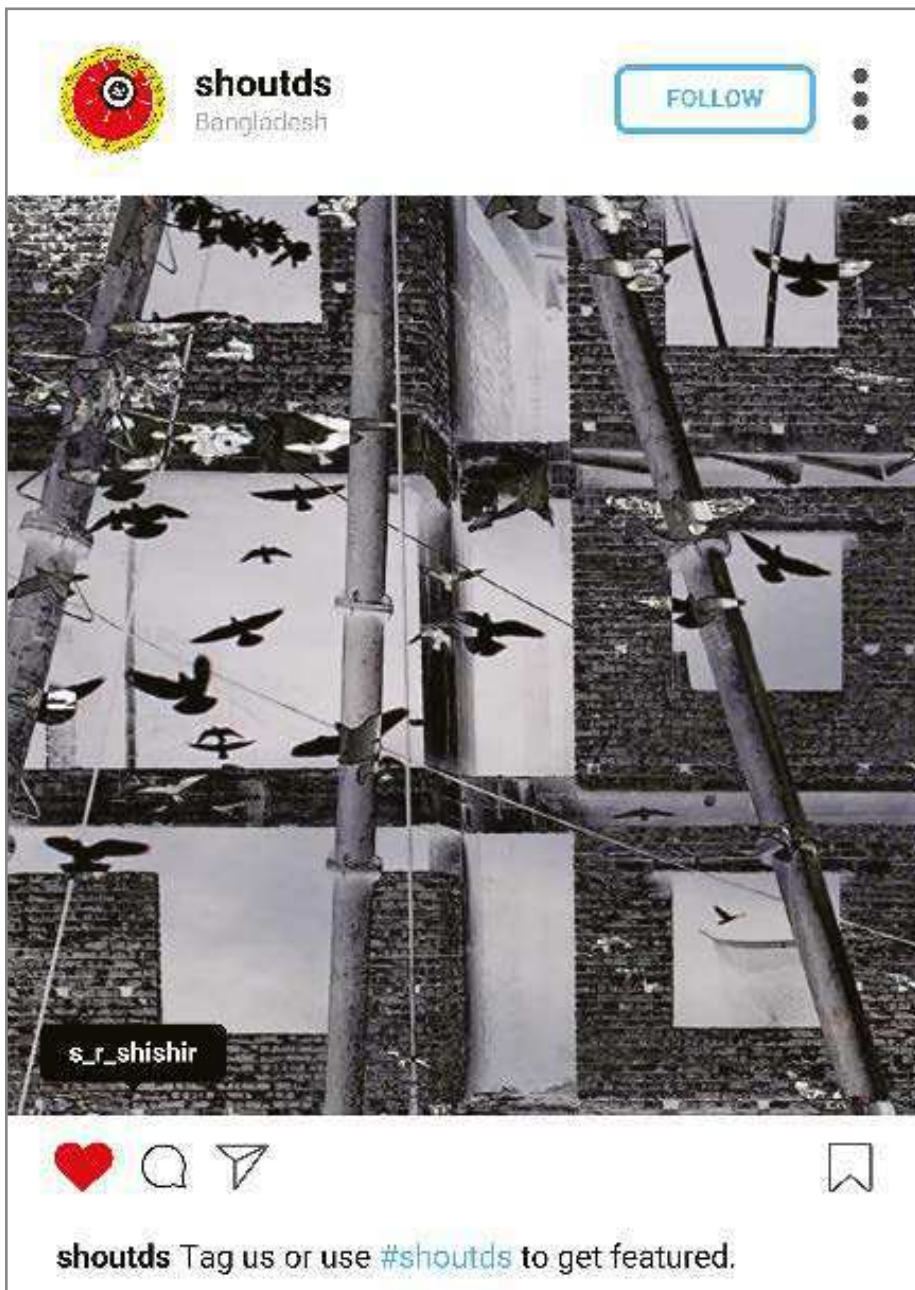
#### TOY STORY (1995-2019)

Pixar's first-ever film revolutionised the animation genre with its groundbreaking visuals back in 1995, although it's not as impressive now. The maturity with which the story is told about toys coming to life will suit viewers of any age, starting from a toddler to grandparents. Although this is a quadrilogy, I feel *Toy Story*, *Toy Story 2* and *Toy Story 3* tell a complete story that may not warrant viewing of the fourth film, but I would recommend watching all four movies and have a box of tissues by your side because you'll need it.

#### THE LORD OF THE RINGS (2001-2003)

*The Lord of the Rings* trilogy is helmed as one of the best trilogies ever created with each movie delivering quality material to enjoy with the family. Coming in at a total runtime of 726 minutes, this is sure to keep viewers entertained for hours at end. Although these movies may not be liked by everyone, especially casual movie watchers, those who do watch will understand why the *LOTR* trilogy is so well-known and loved by fans and critics worldwide.

*Jishad Bin Shiraj Al Hamid is unusually terrified of social gatherings and would much rather stay at home and laugh at dank memes. Send dank memes at jishadshiraj66@gmail.com*



# My Newfound Appreciation for Life at Home

**AAHIR MRITTIKA**

I've been in the same outfit for days now, and I wouldn't have it any other way. This oversized and worn-in t-shirt has seen me on my best and worst days, and offered comfort on both. It's my supportive companion, taking in my snot and tears as I wipe my hands on it for everything. There's a small hole on one of the sleeves where my finger gets stuck every time I try to get the shirt on; it's like a little joke between us. The material has the right amount of softness that can only be achieved by wearing it for months: it's light enough to let the breeze flow in, but stiff enough so it doesn't hang too loose. My mother has been trying to steal it forever to use it as a cleaning rag. But if I never take it off, she can't do that, can she?



ILLUSTRATION: JUNAID IQBAL ISHMAM

The stripes of my pyjamas match the green accents of my t-shirt. They comple-

ment each other to create a harmony of cosiness. It's rather fashionable how the green stripes cross with the blue ones to form a checkered pattern. They've several coffee stains all over them that make me nostalgic about the late nights with looming examinations. Since then, my coffee has gotten better and exams harder. Spending so much time in quarantine, I've developed the perfect combination for coffee. I hum my favourite songs when I make it every morning and the glorious smell hits me. I often fantasize about opening up a little cafe serving this coffee in my pyjamas and t-shirt.

I had never realised my gratitude for these articles of clothing before. I only reached out for them when I was too tired, or when period cramps hit and I wanted to curl up and cry. Being in

quarantine gave me a lot of time to be thankful for the small things I have. The tiny plate from when I was a child that only I get to use, with Meena and Mithu on it, remnant of all the valuable life lessons this cartoon taught me; the light white shawl I wrap around myself like an embrace, when it's slightly chilly at night.

As I settle down on the sofa to watch the news, I realise this is what home feels like. Good coffee in the red mug I won at a lottery, my mother annoyed at me for putting my feet up on the cushion, my father worried about how dark my future is because I woke up at noon, and crunchy toast biscuits.

*Aahir Mrittika likes to believe she's a Mohammadpur local, but she's actually a nerd. Catch her studying at mrittikaahir@gmail.com*

# Keep Your MENTAL HEALTH in Check

**ADHORA AHMED**

As the death toll keeps rising and panic brews even more, we fear for ourselves and our loved ones. For those in self-quarantine or self-isolation, home can start to feel like a prison. While we are constantly being told to wash hands and check for physical symptoms—for good reason—the conversation surrounding mental health is painfully scarce.

During crises, experiencing stress and anxiety is almost always inevitable. News cycles contribute significantly to this, since most of the coverage is negative. If you feel dismayed by all the chaos, limit your exposure to news. Don't have the TV on all day or read the papers too often. Designate a specific time of the day to get updates.

Social media is no better, if not worse. As if the disheartening facts weren't enough, outlandish rumours like coronavirus "interviews" might confuse or scare you even

more. If this bothers you, take a break from social media. Rely on trusted sources like WHO, CDC and IEDCR for information.

It's okay to be clueless on how to spend all that extra free time in self-quarantine. Indulge in activities you enjoy to take your mind off of Covid-19. Read books, binge on Netflix or whatever floats your boat, as long as you stay indoors.

Social distancing might have put a temporary halt on hangouts. But, this is a time to feel grateful for technology. Connect with your friends or loved ones if you're feeling lonely; they're probably going through the same thing. Self-quarantine won't feel so bad anymore.

The body and the soul are intertwined, so eating healthy, working out, sleeping well and staying hydrated are important for your mental well-being. Doing breathing exercises and meditation also help to put your mind at ease. Better if it's in an area where you can access nature and sunlight,



DESIGN: KAZI AKIB BIN ASAD

like your balcony or rooftop.

This time is especially difficult for people with pre-existing mental health conditions. With additional anxiety induced by the Covid-19 pandemic, symptoms might worsen or new ones may appear. Keep an

eye on any of these signs and continue treatment, if you're undergoing any. If you're feeling overwhelmed by negative emotions, which may lead to thoughts of self-harm, seek professional help or contact any of *Kaan Pete Roi* hotlines, which are listed on their website <http://shuni.org>

If you really think about it, the basic precautions to combat Covid-19—washing hands, staying home—are easy to follow. If you're feeling sad, remember that you're saving millions of lives just by doing these. Take some pride in that. And remember, this too shall pass.

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*Adhora Ahmed daydreams too much. Send her reality checks at adhora.ahmed@gmail.com*



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# Our fight with pandemics



TASNIM ODRIKA

*For a lot of us, this current situation that has gripped the world might be frightening. Some of us might be struggling with the behaviour changes we've been asked to adopt, such as social distancing and self-quarantine. However, this is not the first time pandemics have struck our Earth.*

Throughout history, time and again outbreaks have taken populations by surprise but human beings have always been able to walk out of the other end, although not completely unscathed but with new lessons that have helped them fight their next battle with the invisible enemy.

Before the advent of global transport networks, outbreaks usually remained contained in specific parts of the world but even in those days there were some diseases that have managed to wipe out civilisations across the world. The bubonic plague was one such disease. This plague was caused by the bacteria *Yersinia pestis* and had managed to travel the world on the back of rats by infected fleas.

The first pandemic caused by this plague is argued to have helped the fall of a Roman empire. The plague infected the emperor Justinian and hence this first pandemic was named after him and called the Plague of Justinian (541-542 AD). During that time, the spreading mostly occurred through sea ports where the infected rats could easily sneak in through the ships. The exact death toll is argued although eventually the disease wiped out about 40 percent of the population of Constantinople (Istanbul today). This disease did not leave our world immediately and the bacteria resurfaced again in the form of the infamous Black Death (1347-1351). This time the disease killed about one third of the European popula-

tion. As far as we know, this particularly fatal bacterium is known to have caused three of the deadliest pandemics in our history.

Flash forward to modern times, outbreaks can spread much more easily now, resulting in pandemics. The most prevalent of them include the cholera and flu pandemics. The 1918 Spanish flu is one of the first unusually dangerous flu pandemics to hit the world which managed to wipe out about a quarter of the world's then population. It was caused by a sub-type of the influenza A virus called the H1N1 influenza virus. Other sub-types of this virus have caused other flu outbreaks such as the Asian flu (1957-1958), Hong Kong flu (1968-1969), and the most recent swine flu (2009).

Now, the question lies, how has the world coped with these pandemics? In the past, people had no idea about the spread of diseases. But when the Black Plague hit Europe in 1347, some of the people realised that getting sick had something to do with being near other sick people and began to stray clear of them. To further prevent the spread, whenever sailors arrived at shores, they were kept inside their ships for 30 days. In Venetian law, this was known as a *quarantino*. Later on, the number of days was increased to 40, or *quarantino*, and this is where we get the word "quarantine" from.

Similar to this, with every new outbreak, humans have found more and more innovative ways to tackle the situation. Smallpox

had been a deadly disease with unusually high mortality rates but this disease resulted in the invention of the vaccine and finally resulted in the complete eradication of a disease for the first time in recorded history. Cholera outbreaks were widespread in the 19th century when an intelligent British doctor named John Snow identified that contamination of the drinking water results in contraction of the disease. He emphasised on protecting drinking water from contamination and we largely have him to thank for improving global sanitation.

With much newer outbreaks such as that of HIV, we have had more knowledge and resources at our disposal. The disease was identified back in the 1980s and what's different with this pandemic is that, here, prevention worked much better than cure. Although there are still no effective vaccines, strategies preventing the spread of the disease have proven highly effective and drugs have been designed to prolong the life of the infected. Between the years 2005 and 2012, the yearly death toll had dropped significantly down to 1.6 million from 2.2 million. Although the disease is still present, it has been successfully contained.

The most recent pandemics have been the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) (2002-2003) and swine flu (2009-2010) outbreaks. One striking difference between the current Covid-19 outbreak

and all the previous outbreaks is the presence of social media. Although social media makes dissemination of information surrounding the disease much easier, it makes the spreading of misinformation just as easy. This results in the population having to fight against both the disease and the rumours surrounding it.

With each of these outbreaks, the health officials and the public find newer ways to cope and also become better prepared for future scenarios. We can always employ these previous lessons we have learnt but it's never easy to accurately predict the trajectory of a current outbreak since all of them are unique. One important lesson we can take away from the Covid-19 outbreak is how crucial personal hygiene such as washing hands can be.

This definitely will not be the last outbreak. With population numbers soaring and climate change, emergence of new diseases will become much more prevalent in the future. Therefore, all we can do is be prepared.

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The writer would love to get feedback. Send her an email at [odrika\\_02@yahoo.com](mailto:odrika_02@yahoo.com)



# YOUNG PROFESSIONALS AT RISK

SYEDA AFRIN TARANNUM

*Leaving plans and to-do lists on the back burner, uncertainty has taken over the rest of our unmarked days on the calendar. While for many of us it seems like a temporary break from our stream of daily activities, this disruption comes with a high cost to young professionals. Be it the financial hurdles they are having to face right now or the many challenges that await them due to lost time, the youth of Bangladesh is having to prepare for the unknown.*

We spoke to a few young professionals about their experiences to better understand the situation they have been dealing with.

#### TUTORS AND PART-TIME EMPLOYEES

Tutoring is one of the most accessible methods for young people to earn some quick money, especially for students. While commonly perceived as a method of earning a little something extra on the side, it is for some, a way to make livelihoods for oneself and their families. However, with the current shutdown, duties for a tutor have become difficult to deal with.

Abdullah Al Mamun, a third-year Computer Science student of the University of Dhaka lives with his family in the capital's Lalbagh area. His tutoring and his brother's low-paying job are the main sources of income for the family. Under the current shutdown, he has had to dig into his savings to pay for living expenses this month, giving rise to anxiety about his family's expenses for the coming months.

Not only are the tutors struggling with income for the future, many are yet to receive payment for the previous months which could have helped suffice. Hafsa Rashid, a second-year student of North South University and tutor of over three years says, "Due to the current situation, I tried to adapt according to the needs and hence started taking online classes. Sadly, attendance was significantly lower as parents commented they 'did not believe' in online classes even though I had prepared extra notes and materials for the students. I put in more effort in my lectures but have had to deal with parents asking to pay less or none at all for virtual classes since 'it isn't the same'.

She adds, "My income has dropped significantly which would have otherwise helped my family. Unsure of how we may make ends meet in the coming months, I am having to consider dropping a semester as we're already being asked to pre-advise for the next semester's courses."

Apart from tuition opportunities, young people also involve themselves in multiple other part-time jobs. One such individual, Sabreen Alim, barista at a popular cafe in Dhaka, says, "Since we all aren't able to work home due to the nature of the job, we've had to take leave without pay. Some of the senior baristas are still going to work to run the basic activities but as my family lives in Chittagong, I had to come back home and ask for leave earlier than the others."

**FRESH GRADUATES AND INTERNS**  
For those who have just graduated or about to graduate in the near future, the next few months are extremely important. With uncertainty being the only common denominator, all previous plans seem futile and new ones, unapproachable.

"This was the time for us to explore our opportunities and establish ourselves

professionally. Though I was fortunate enough to get recruited by a private company just a week before the shutdown was announced, I had to start working from home even before I got the opportunity to get accustomed to the office environment and understand how things work," says Nikita Riffat, a recent graduate of engineering from North South University.

Not only are the experiences and adjustment being impacted, but some are also struggling to find jobs altogether. Mushfiqur Rahman\*, intern at a digital marketing agency, says, "This internship is the last credit requirement, after which I will be done with my undergraduate degree. According to previous plans, I was to apply for jobs in the tenth week of my internship, or at least start a conversation in my current

aspect of reduced payment due to the pandemic. Internships barely pay and reducing that certainly makes a difference, however, since it is an academic internship, the experience is more valuable than the remuneration."

Speaking about his learning experience as an intern at a bank, Tahsin Nawaz says, "Although the workload has been reduced significantly over the last weeks, so has the number of customers and the size of the workforce. After all, internships are opportunities to learn skills in a real-life setting. So, handling customers and learning to work collaboratively is a huge part of it. This has not only limited my abilities to learn all the services provided by a bank, but has caused the work environment to change drastically."

Remotely tech-educating teachers has been one of the biggest challenges and though we had already given demonstrations to a few teachers beforehand, due to the nature of the work, many teachers approaching us were not able to successfully transition their classrooms.

"At one point, we noticed that most teachers were comfortable using phone applications, as they are more user-friendly. So then, we had to quickly reallocate our resources to release a mobile phone app variant at the earliest," he adds.

Furthermore, many start-up businesses are incurring major losses due to the unpredictability of future events. Nahian Ibnat Beg, co-owns an event management firm which officially launched last year. About the challenges her firm is having to face, she mentions, "Until the end of February, things were still close to normal. We had received multiple bookings for events and the respective advance fees as well which we had used to buy material and placed orders for resources. Shortly after, we had to return all of the advances, even the ones we had already spent by exhausting our existing reserve. We had also just recently started receiving organic exposure but that has also stopped. Now we have no upcoming work and savings."

Things are drastically changing by the day and people from all fields are having to adjust their activities and work patterns, if they even have the opportunity to be working from home. To help make better sense of current situations, we spoke to Pro-Vice Chancellor (Designate) of Northern University Bangladesh, Prof. Dr. Engr. Md. Humayun Kabir about the current challenges and the prospective impacts.

"The most prominent challenge faced by young people during this situation would be the frustration that would inevitably arise. But, these young minds need to be able to deal with the situation positively and learn how to work unitedly. They must remain goal oriented and patient in order to be able to mitigate the impacts. I believe being optimistic is absolutely essential. New jobs will be created and the young generation will have new scopes for jobs. Hopefully our economy will be revived soon, but they must keep working hard," he says.

The Covid-19 crisis has not only impacted career plans and work opportunities for the settled, but also incomes and livelihoods for young individuals and their families. Changes are taking place at an unprecedented rate and hence it can be tough to make sense of situations and plan accordingly. In a situation that is foreign to everyone, only time will tell how the young professionals can rise beyond such life-altering disruptions.

\*Name has been changed for privacy

Syeda Afrin Tarannum would choose 'The Script' over 'G-Eazy' any day. Continue ignoring her taste in music on [afrintara@gmail.com](mailto:afrintara@gmail.com)



PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

workplace about a new, permanent role. Instead it has all gone into a tailspin at the moment."

When asked about the impact it has had on his internship experience, he says, "Since timetables don't always align, the creative process has not been the same as it was when everyone would get together and collaborate. Even though most details have been ironed out by now, it took some time to get there. However, things are a little more structured in an office environment and the implementation of work from home takes up more time and throws off the work-life balance as there are no actual closing times and weekends. There's also

#### ENTREPRENEURS

Start-ups and businesses require a lot of time to plan and strategise every aspect before they are launched. Each step until and even after the launch is absolutely crucial, but with a crisis that is ambiguous in nature, multiple steps may have to be skipped and losses have to be incurred according to the nature of the situation.

Ekram Mohammad, CEO and Lead Programmer of an e-learning start-up was asked about the experiences they've had in the past few weeks. He responds, "Due to the shutdown, the demand for online platforms had plummeted drastically, so we had to rush and launch our website before it was ready.



DESIGN: KAZI AKIB BIN ASAD

READER SUBMISSION

## Coronavirus: A Thought on Higher Education

ARUP BARUA

The novel coronavirus pandemic has shuddered the entire world—people from all walks of life are going through unprecedented events and experiences. Around the globe, from the North to the South, high-income countries to low-income countries, lives of the masses have come to a grinding halt.

Thousands of international students are enrolled in hundreds of universities worldwide—to pursue their higher education—owing to their high-quality education, institutional reputation, proper academic amenities, employability etc. However, current and sudden outbreak of coronavirus has severely affected global education system in general. Here, I would like to highlight some impacts on higher education, which might interest potential students in the middle-way of their odyssey to higher education abroad.

Currently, a large number of students are among the worst sufferers, those who are about to complete their final semester and year program. Most likely these students have to accomplish the rest of their programs through online teaching methods; there is a ghost of a chance to resume classroom teaching in the ongoing academic year. Many universities are adopting a binary pass or fail system instead of conventional grading system.

Students who are going to commence their programs in 2020-21 are about to be affected. Timely inauguration of academic programs might not be feasible, or it would go online if regular timeframe needs to be ensured. Thousands of students have received admission offers, funding, scholarships, but further processing like applying for respective country visas cannot be performed right now due to the temporary closure of diplomatic missions and embassies.

Students who had previously planned to start in 2020-21 session, with a self-financing modality, I would request you all to reconsider your decision.

Given that following months as well as the rest of the period of this year would be uncertain in many ways, but certainly oscillating. In addition, I urge you all to get country specific information and advice from your friends, peers or acquaintances, who are already studying and living in your country of desired destination. For instance, many students opt for part-time jobs to manage their own living costs; economic recession will trim such opportunities heavily.

Now, applicants with an awarded scholarship and secured full-funding, take a bow. You must maintain all sorts of regular communications with your respective university, scholarship-awarding authority, and funding agency to keep yourself up-to-date. As you already have a confirmed decision, you don't have to worry much about your movement and required actions.

Lastly, but most importantly, those who are in the row to apply for the next sessions, particularly 2021-22 and 2022-23—you have to be meticulous, and keep observing all latest developments in the political world and your field of interest. Following this ongoing global crisis, the interest and priorities of global leaders would be subject to change, which will shape university funding; the total number of scholarships could be discounted, and a set of academic disciplines would obviously get higher funding than before, which might include biomedical engineering, genetic engineering, molecular biology, medical science and research, nursing education, bio-informatics, artificial intelligence, applied physics, public health, telemedicine, health economics, crisis response, and humanitarian action, to name a few. Consequently, potential applicants should have to prepare themselves accordingly to upgrade their portfolios.

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## Can social isolation lead to the end of our burnout?

ROSHNI SHAMIM

Much like the confusion in defining self-quarantine and self-isolation these days, the line between “stress” and “burnout” falls very thin. While both accentuate the eventual demise toward emotional and physical exhaustion, their projection differs widely. In the context of a workplace, stress is what would make a person go a little crazy by the end of the week; burnout will make the person not even show up.

During this period of what is defined as social isolation, a silver lining does exist in the form of burnout recovery. Interestingly, most of us remain unaware that there are various types of burnouts that may be affecting us in different ways. Burnouts can be caused through individual, interpersonal or organisational factors. In the long run, these factors can inevitably spill and destroy the individual's relationships with other people. If not taken seriously, burnouts can cause a long-lasting damage to a person's mental health.

Therefore, while most of us are currently spending hours deciding over what to watch on Netflix, now can also be an excellent time to utilise the self-space and recover from any presiding burnouts. Aside from doing self-care in the form of face masks, workout videos and binging shows, it is time to dig a little deeper. The first step therefore, is to figure out the factors that contribute to our burnout.

The problem with identifying contributors that cause burnouts is the fact that most of us choose to remain in denial of what we are processing internally. By taking some time off from the outside world, a little quality time on ourselves can lead to correctly probing and figuring out where that drained uneasiness comes from. Once we have our stressors figured out, it becomes easier to heal ourselves from within. By separating the factors that cause our burnout, we already begin to take tiny steps away from the exhaustion that has been winding us down consistently.

For those of us who are working from home, it is time to make a daily habit of appreciating ourselves for each task that furthers our progress, instead of only aiming to frantically reach the end. Sleep also plays a significant role here; all that physical and emotional exhaustion is not only draining for the mind, but even for our bodies. The social isolation period serves as the perfect opportunity for us to rest our minds as well as to relax our taut muscles.

Although this transition of practicing social isolation is already difficult to accept readily, using it wisely can lead to much happier days ahead. A step towards working on ourselves through simple means can brighten up this dark time, perhaps even by a great margin.



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# LIVING WITH A LOOOOONG NAME

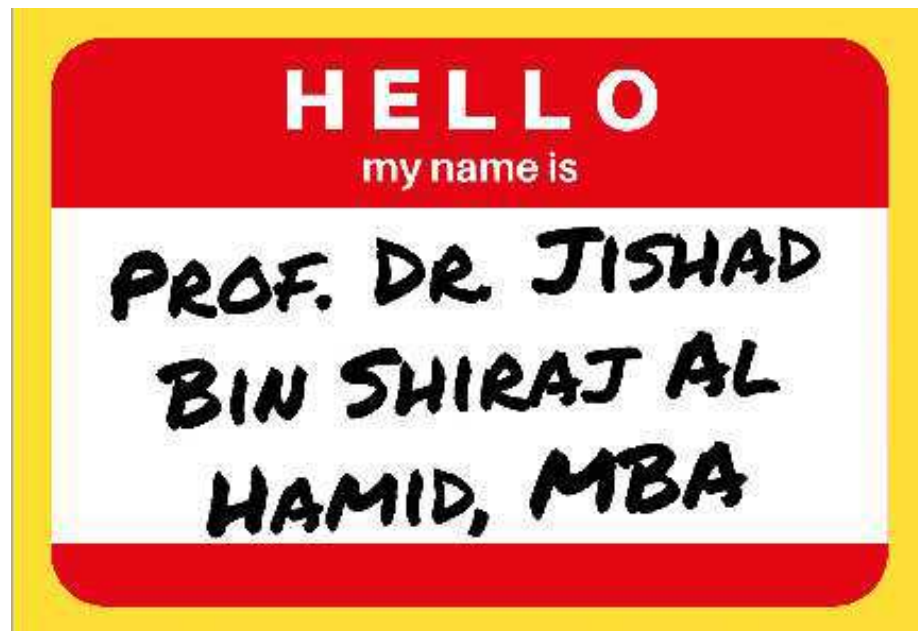
## JISHAD BIN SHIRAJ AL HAMID

Being born into a Bengali family you'd expect your parents to name you something common like "Sujon" or "Protik" or something Arabic like "Omar", but rarely something like "Jishad". A name many of you have probably never heard of. In addition, it is then followed by four other names to wrap it all together.

What's wrong with having a long name? Well, having such a long name means you reach a character limit on many platforms such as Facebook or Instagram. Not only that, growing up Bengali in an Arab country meant I stood out at school, and having an oddly long name was the cherry on top. A typical attendance call for me was: "Jeshad? Did I say that right? Jeshad... Bin... Seraj Al Hameed? That's a long name."

Yes, I'm aware, and I'm also aware of the fact that you just mispronounced and figuratively massacred my name.

Moving back to Bangladesh and enrolling in a new school also meant having to adjust to a new environment, and that followed with my name saw a bombardment of questions from the teachers. The



DESIGN: KAZI AKIB BIN ASAD

obvious one was, "What's the meaning behind your name?" To which I would reply, did not know, and neither did my parents. I suppose they grabbed a name out of thin

air and felt it had a nice ring to it, so just went with it. There were more questions like "Why is your name so long?" the answer to which included my family history

and I had to explain that "Jishad" is my name, "Shiraj" is my father and "Hamid" was my grandfather. A look of amusement and slight confusion could be seen on the teachers' faces.

Enough about attendance and school, let's jump to the real deal—exams. That's right, exam sheets have only so much space to write your name in, and my name being 22 characters long consisting eight syllables and five words, you could say it's a challenging fit. I found a solution; I write my name on a microscopic level and pray the examiner has good enough vision to make sense out of my ant-sized writing. My methods have proven successful so far, except for that one time it didn't, and I don't like to talk about that one time.

When my family members and friends ask if I ever do a PhD would my name then be "Dr. Jishad Bin Shiraj Al Hamid", I say, "Absolutely. Absolutely it would."

William Shakespeare wrote, "What's in a name?" True, especially in one that is peculiar and unusually longer than it needs to be.

## When your parents are strict about music at home

### PROTEETI AHMED

Are you a music junkie? Do you have "Music is food for the soul" printed across your t-shirt? Congratulations, you are a certified person of culture according to the Internet. But does music not roll in your house? Please find below five solutions for when you are facing some issues in your preparations to become the next big thing.

#### Use your furniture

Convert one side of your wardrobe into a soundproof studio. You keep all your clothes on The Chair™ anyway. If worst comes to worst and you have to hide this arrangement, just stuff all your clothes in there, and then when you have to use it again, just replace your clothes onto The Chair™ again.

#### Write your own lyrics

If it's just modern songs and the lyrics they sing that your parents have an issue with, try singing *slightly* different songs. Instead of "Can't Help Falling in Love" and "I Know What You Did Last Summer", try singing "Can't Help Salah from a Dove" and "I Know What Your Dad Ordered". This way you can at least still practice the same tunes.

#### Hook, line and sinker

Carrying on from the last one, if your parents like a specific genre of music, then be sure to play that on full blast.



Put on their favourite piece of music at maximum volume, then be very patient. If it plays on for long enough they'll get sick of it, and then you can put on your own music because anything would be a welcome change at that point.

#### Pretend it's the 70s

Tell them you're just listening to the radio. If they don't believe you, make sure to keep some kind of high-pitched version of what you were practising running in the background and then pretend you can't hear anything. So, when they'll furiously start looking for the sound source, you can try and manage to convince them that nobody else can hear the sound. Then you have to convince them

that aliens are trying to contact them, and then pretend to have an existential crisis in front of them.

#### Get help

Go to your friend's house after convincing them of your melancholy, take their ukulele out of its case, and persistently try and make them teach you that Chain-smokers song.

There you have it—some quarantine-friendly solutions to your specific problem, and some to look forward to for when this is all over.

Proteeti Ahmed is just trying at life. Share life stories that also follow Murphy's Law with her at [proteeti.14@gmail.com](mailto:proteeti.14@gmail.com)

**SONGS YOU CAN SING TOGETHER ON VIDEO CALL**

**ALIF LAILA THEME**

**I WANT IT THAT WAY**  
*Backstreet Boys*

**SHEI TUMI**  
*Ayub Bacchu*

**LIVIN' ON A PRAYER**  
*Bon Jovi*

**UPTOWN FUNK**  
*Mark Ronson ft. Bruno Mars*

**SRABON ER MEGH**  
*Different Touch*

**BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY**  
*Queen*

**ALL RISE**  
*Blue*