

AFTER PAGE 4

Samina Amin, Banker

In the last six months, we have realised one thing more than ever — there is only one thing constant in life, and that is change. Rest of it is all variable. So, we have to be resilient if we want to survive. Private space is a luxury when the whole humanity is facing the test in the history of time. We need to re-program our minds and re-program our lives. I have always adjusted with what life offers and kept my faith strong. So, no complaints, I just appreciate what I have.

Supriti Sarkar, Communication Officer, NGO

No, I don't like working from home. But I've somewhat adjusted to it now. Yes, it affects my private space. There's no longer a clear distinction between the different roles I have to take on. On any given normal day, there's no time allotment for when I stop being a daughter, sister, employee or wife. My private space is no longer a time for me to wind down, re-charge, or even be able to enjoy the late-night rain shower fully, because work has crept into every inch of my literal and figurative space in life.

Working from home now means having to establish the new balance. To simultaneously be responsible and meet the demands of both office and home life. This new normal might be great for many who love the idea of working at home in their pyjamas. My reality is that even if I want to, I can't switch off that work button anymore.

Yes, I have saved a tonne on eating out and transport costs but it has come at the cost of burnouts and mental fatigue. This new (ab)normal has already been fully realised by many. But if put in my hands, I would only look at this as a temporary solution to a pandemic. Offices are meant for employees; homes are meant for loved ones.

Kyoko Bhuiyan, Executive, Expressions Social, Expressions Ltd

I like working from home but it's a whole lot of adjustment. It's not ideal to be honest when you're working as an executive in an agency doing social work.

I am a social person so I miss interacting with people, but at the end of the day I get to spend lots of times with my dogs and my cat so it's not too bad. As for the future, I think the best way to move forward is to take the best precautions you can and hope that everyone around you is doing it too.

It's a question about trust and respect and people should always take that into consideration. Honestly, wearing masks in Dhaka in general is highly recommended and now more than ever we should practice this 'new normal' which is essentially just normal now. Thanks to the Internet we can do almost everything sitting at home. We should make sure that people have access to that, especially schools and in the rural population. I'm sure us, as humans can persevere and will be able to come out of this pandemic if we all just do the bare minimum as wearing a mask. Also, we have to remember to be kind.

During this time when there's so much to feel bad about, at the end of a day I still want to feel good, and get rid of that headache and boredom.

— **RBR**
Model: Niki

#FASHION

Reviving the ailing fashion industry of Bangladesh

Maheen Khan, the president of Fashion Design Council Bangladesh (FDCB) is no stranger to the fashion industry, and to readers of Star Lifestyle. With the pandemic and economic downturn in mind, we at Star Lifestyle sat down with the esteemed Maheen Khan to discuss how a united country can help the ailing fashion industry of Bangladesh and get over the challenges of the pandemic in the shortest time possible.

Here are some of the highlights from that meeting. For the full interview, catch today's episode of Lifestyle Talkies. More information can be found at the end of the article.



How is the fashion industry of Bangladesh faring during the trying times of the pandemic?

Thankfully, the industry is doing better than expected. While remaining inside our homes



and staying safe, we are wearing new clothes and trying our best to keep up with fashion. We are trying our best to look our finest, even if it is for an online engagement. This very effort gives us hope that there is a silver lining.

Is antiviral leisure a fad or is it here to stay for long?

Antiviral leisure wear, like masks and gloves are a big thing now for Bangladesh, considering both the local and export markets. Studio Mayasir has been busy manufacturing masks in the recent times. All our masks bear important messages, related to the environment, health and heritage. I don't know about the long term, but it is definitely here to stay in the near future.

What is the current situation of the artisan community of our country?

They are definitely suffering the most, because of the slump in sales during the pandemic. But it is our duty — to take care of the artisans during such trying times. If our business is not faring well, we can apply for stimulus packages, especially loans (collateral free and low interest) offered by the government, to keep our

working capitals running. This will help us to pay the artisans in the least and keep their livelihoods safe and protected for the time-being.

What else can the nation do — especially the privileged with adequate disposable income?

We can definitely share our blessings with those who need them. Rather than spending money on unnecessary items, we can help the poor and the needy survive through the pandemic. The FDCB and many other organisations are helping in this aspect, the blessed can join-in by making generous donations that reach the right people, especially the distressed artisan community of our society. With an intense unity like this, we can definitely beat the pandemic and the economic turmoil that it viciously spreads.

By Mehrin Mubdi Chowdhury Essentials:

Tune in to *Star Lifestyle presents Lifestyle Talkies, today at 7:30 pm, on TheDailyStar Facebook page for the full interview. For any queries or interview topic suggestions, mail us at lifestyleds@yahoo.com*

Photo: LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed