

# Subscribing to newspapers in the new normal

We saw our fathers and grandfathers reading newspapers while having their morning tea. Later, with us, we read the papers in the car on our way to work or during hurried breakfasts. No matter what, there was a certain feel about holding the newspaper in our hands. For some, it has not changed still.

Syed Munawar Husain, 75, and CEO of a private company said, "There is no alternative to reading a newspaper in the morning. Children today have this inclination towards reading online news. To me, there is simply no comparison between the two.

I do not feel comfortable reading news online. With print, I can relax, take all the time I need and read at my own free will. There are no other distractions in-between – like popups or anything else."

Husain is not alone in this. Others still share the joy of holding a physical version of the newspaper.



"Reading newspapers is a habit that both my husband and I share. In fact, we keep four different newspapers just to know different perspectives of the same news," said Mehrin Chowdhury, 35, and a journalist.

There are, however, naysayers who can no longer justify the longing for news in print, or the nostalgia attached to it.

"I never understood the importance of reading news in print. Online is very effective, because I can read it on the go. Following news online helps in staying updated on the latest occurrences in an instant and hence, we do not have to wait for the next day to find out about some 'stale' news.

"Digital sources are not only convenient, catchy, time-saving, but also the future for time-constrained people like us," said Erina Munawar, 29, MD of a private company.

One can still find grounds on all that has been said above. The newer generation truly finds little pleasure in reading a newspaper. The outbreak of the coronavirus and its spread in Bangladesh also puts a health spin on the argument.

NB Mansoor, owner of Ethnica, a popular

household accessories brand, has stopped taking newspaper since March and feels strongly about not reinstating it.

She said, "The WHO comes up with new guidelines every other day. I get confused. I truly feel uncomfortable holding anything that comes in from an unknown source, that too in bed while having tea.

I am not sure how compliant the press is regarding COVID-19 health guidelines. I do miss holding a fresh newspaper first thing in the morning, but I cannot picture myself reading it wearing masks and gloves! I'll wait till I feel safer."

One must reiterate, the chances of an infected individual contaminating any commercial goods is quite low, and the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) infection from a package that has been moved, travelled,

and exposed to different conditions and temperature is also low. And as far as newspapers are concerned, independent studies have also shown that there is negligible, if any, chance of contamination of the coronavirus through newspapers.

Kaniska Chakraborty, freelance consultant said, "We have reinstated physical paper in our household for about three months now. Initially, we were sanitising our hands after handling the paper but we stopped that in a couple of weeks. Having said all that, I have stopped reading papers thanks to incredibly shady, negative and unethical journalism. Do not want negativity in the morning."

Mehrin Chowdhury shares some of Chakraborty's health concerns.

She said, "I am aware of the lack of evidence of contamination through newspapers, but still, I spray disinfectants and keep the paper away for a while to dry before reading it. We have been keeping newspapers since the initiation of the pandemic and never stopped in between."

Personally, I too never stopped my newspaper, and read from both digital and print content. I believe that now that we are accepting the threat of the virus, but leading our lives with it taking all possible precautions, it is high time for us to buy the morning papers. And the most interesting thing of all, there is no threat of contagion to begin with!

*This week, Star Lifestyle has some recipes for summer coolers, and this week's episode of Lifestyle Talkies will feature a fitness coach. Don't forget to buy our print copy and catch us online.*

— RBR  
Photo: Collected

## ◆ HOROSCOPE ◆



### ARIES (MAR. 21-APR. 20)

Keep tabs on your spending. Don't lend anything to anyone. Difficulties in the relationship can lead to estrangement. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



### TAURUS (APR. 21-MAY 21)

Make plans with friends. Your ideas won't suite everyone. Take some time off from your partner. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



### GEMINI (MAY 22-JUN. 21)

Your coworkers can betray you. Things aren't as they appear. One-sided relationships are likely. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



### CANCER (JUN. 22-JUL. 22)

Sort out your partner's mess. Your hard work will be rewarded. Consider making changes at home. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



### LEO (JUL. 23-AUG. 22)

Help if you can. Family members can take advantage of you. Travel should be on your agenda. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



### VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEP. 23)

Keep your ties to friends strong. Travel is evident. Your partner can anger you. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



### LIBRA (SEP. 24-OCT. 23)

Look into alternatives. Read some books on self-awareness. Take some time off work. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



### SCORPIO (OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Make changes in your relationship or end it. Make some changes at work. Relatives will be cordial. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



### SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Short trips will be educational. New relationships will surface. Think hard before going into business. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



### CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

Don't hurt your partner. Children may not be honest with you. Keep your thoughts to yourself. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



### AQUARIUS (JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

Consider selling your ideas. People will notice your hard work. Property investments should payoff. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



### PISCES (FEB. 20-MAR. 20)

Refrain from overspending. Deal with the right individuals. Don't lead someone on. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.