

THE DEFINITIVE  
**YOUTH**  
MAGAZINE

# SHOUT

DHAKA THURSDAY DECEMBER 17, 2020, POUISH 2, 1427 BS

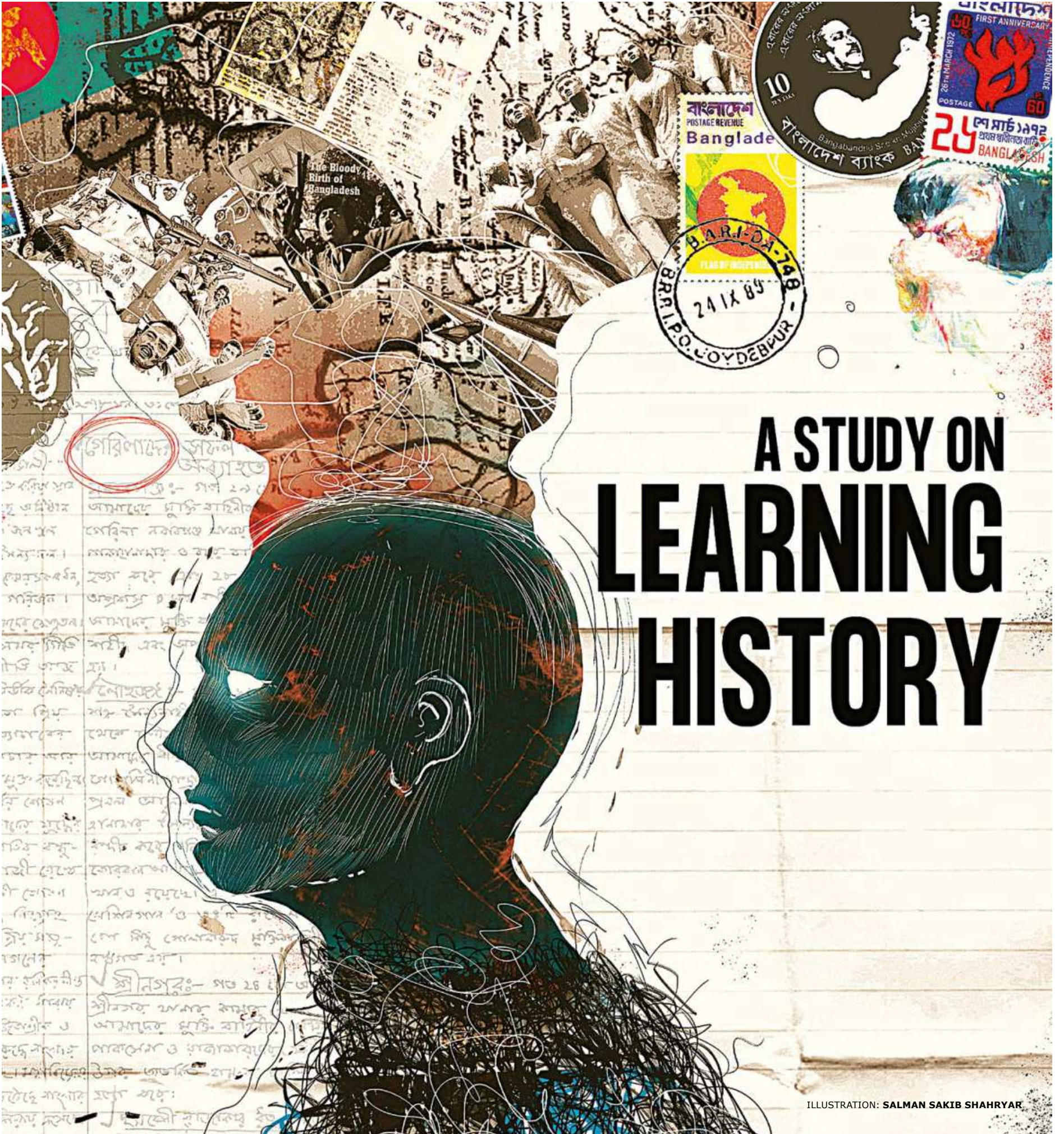
A PUBLICATION OF *The Daily Star*



A LOVE LETTER TO THE BEST  
THING EVER

PG 3

1971  
PG 4



## A STUDY ON LEARNING HISTORY

ILLUSTRATION: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR



# EDITORIAL

History is one of my favourite subjects. Always has been. Back in school, I used to rest my chin on the desk, and listen away as the History teacher (who also happened to be my favourite teacher; no surprises there) taught us about what had happened around the world, in its past. But I knew there was always more to it.

As we grow up, we start asking the more significant questions in life. It's the same with history. More than just "what happened" and "when it happened", we must also ask "why it happened". And in the pursuit of our own curiosities, and with a stroke of passion, we end up loving this need/want to know.

A decade ago, I learned history from textbooks and encyclopedias. Now, a single conversation with a colleague is a lesson in world history. What hasn't changed is my love for gaining more knowledge about the world.

After all, the Greek word "historia" means "knowledge acquired by investigation."

-- Kazi Akib Bin Asad, Editor In-charge, SHOUT



## PLAYWATCH

### MOVIE REVIEW



# ANOTHER PERFECT NOLAN FLICK

### ABHOY HRIDDO

From the dark set pieces to the bizarre concept of time, *Tenet* is one of the best blockbusters to come out during the Covid-19 pandemic, and proves the fact that some movies can be most enjoyed in cinema halls.

The story follows the protagonist, played by John David Washington, and Neil, played by Robert Pattinson, as they search for a man who can invert materials in time, meaning they move backwards. Rather than suggesting the fact that timelines can be of multiple branches, the movie states that what has happened has happened and will happen. The science here is not fully wrong but is not fully right either. Yet, it is just perfect to make the movie entertaining and leaves room for a lot of innovation.

Like *Inception's* concept of heists being in layers of dreams, *Tenet's* thrilling set pieces focus on altering time as some characters are moving backwards while others are moving forward. This makes for some of the most outstanding and fresh action scenes in cinema. Characters fight each other in different aspects of time, which leaves huge space for creativity that the director nailed and like every Christopher Nolan movie, the action here is never meaningless and the audience will always have to be glued to the screen to get a proper understanding of the whole movie. With a perfect soundtrack, the whole tone and aroma really feels like a movie from Nolan.

The movie, however, constantly tries to rationalise the time travel, making it stuffed with expository dialogue. It spends almost 120 minutes of its 150-minute runtime to explain what is happening and why it is happening. Nolan digs very deep down his own rabbit hole, which may lead to some people having to take notes throughout the film to keep track, making this Nolan's biggest mistake. Even though the film takes a lot of influence from past Nolan films like the *Dark Knight* or *Dunkirk*, the stakes do not feel as high, the maze isn't as well constructed as *Inception* and furthermore, the film fails to fully explore the characters, unlike *Interstellar*. This makes them more like puzzle pieces to the plot rather than a whole realized character itself which costs the movie its much-needed emotional tone.

In the end, the film boils down to a James Bond movie by Nolan with a Bond inspired villain, shadowy agents and Russian oligarchs. Even with its flaws, *Tenet* is enjoyable from the very first second to the end. *Tenet* is not Nolan's best work, but it is a great movie and the perfect movie to discuss with your buddies. It does a good job at leaving questions in the mind of audiences and like *Inception*, it will leave audiences theorising about it for months.

*Abhoy Hriddo is a depressed antisocial teenager who over analyses everything around him. Give him a knock at abhoyhriddo@gmail.com*



shoutds  
Bangladesh

FOLLOW

BANGLADESH'S FIRST  
ONLINE INTER-SCHOOL QUIZ COMPETITION

The Daily Star  
  
**GENIUS**  
 POWERED BY **WALTON**  
 Smart Fridge

MONDAYS AT 9 PM, LIVE ON

The Daily Star

YouTube f LIVE

AN INITIATIVE BY  
**SHOUT**



shoutds Tag us or use #shoutds to get featured.



# A Love Letter to the Best Thing Ever

**RASHA JAMEEL**

My eyes first register the display of my phone as I turn off the alarm, and then immediately roll back inwards as my mind goes to its happy place: THOUGHTS OF FOOD.

The cerebral folds in my brain fight off the sleep gradually as images of warm flaky paratha, savoury beef nihari, and fried egg flood every corner of my mind. My nose gets imaginative with the smell of fresh

of *jhalmuri* with the help of someone's discarded business card, straight out of a paper cone. I can say the same about the mixture of mangoes, rice, and milk on a summer day -- *aam-doodh-bhaat* -- the true ambrosia, if there ever was one. And if you aren't spending your rainy days having *khichuri* and *begun bhaji*, you're missing out.

Speaking of *khichuri*, did you know that the dish itself has managed to connect cultures throughout the Indian subcontinent,

Asia, and have been heavily hybridised in our country to suit the Bengali palate. This demand for fusion food is a concept that can bring culturally different communities together and help them bond over conversations on the multicultural similarities that they share through food.

The presence of food on social media has only boosted the aforementioned phenomenon, with the introduction of food being perceived as either a mode of communication, or an art form. The former has fared well in our country, courtesy of popular local food bloggers such as Fahrin Zannat Faiza (@khudalage), couple Ridima Khan Ipsha and Rasif Shafique (@petukcouple), all of whom have taken to blogging about the eating scene in Dhaka. Bangladeshi food bloggers haven't just introduced their audiences to underrated eateries throughout the country, but have also taken them on an entire journey of how strong a significance food has in our Bangladeshi heritage, from the alleyways of Old Dhaka to the posh neighbourhoods of Gulshan and Banani.

Calcuttan food bloggers Saptarshi Chakraborty and Insiya Poonawala (@bongcats) upload recipes on their YouTube channel of all the traditional Bengali food that they have grown up eating, ranging from the classic "plastic er chutney" to the Tagore-family favourite "Chhana'r polao", with all the videos served with a side of soothing ASMR noises and a descriptive note highlighting the nostalgia surrounding each dish. To admire food as flawless works of art, look no further than the blogs of Sameera Wadood and Shababa Suzana Hossain (@fatduck21).

Food consultant and chef Sameera Wadood believes in the superiority of local

ingredients over imported ones, using the former to come up succulent fusion recipes termed SW Originals, such as the "Bilimbi Glazed sous vide Chicken Breast stuffed with spiced Binni Bhaat quenelle wrapped in Charred Kale" and "Pomelo Glazed confit Chicken served with sweet Beetroot Puree". For her blog's first anniversary, Wadood launched three new fusion recipes involving Bengali favourites Mymensingh black sticky rice, *chittoi pitha*, *kalo jeera*, Koral fish, and *kalo jaam*. Food stylist, photographer and chef Shababa Hossain is an expert in food photography, giving her followers a brilliantly-captured look into the true beauty of food, which one seldom pauses to appreciate. The Fat Duck's blog discusses the history behind different foods alongside personal anecdotes connected to them.

Having reached the end of the article, I imagine you're thinking that my obsession with food is seemingly boundless.

You're not wrong. My YouTube recommendations are overcrowded with notifications from 50 different food channels from Food Insider to Banglar Rannaghor. The happiest dreams I've ever had were always about me all by myself in a land of *jilapi*, *roshmalai*, rocky road ice cream, and edible cookie dough. I have 19 secret stashes of potato chips and candy bars all over the house that my parents know nothing about.

I don't think I have a problem. There's nothing in the world that can keep you from obsessing over food, it's simply the best thing ever.

*The author meticulously plans out her 13 daily meals on a regular basis. Drop a 'good luck' note for her overworked digestive system at rasha.jameel@outlook.com*



PHOTO: KAZI AKIB BIN ASAD


ghee and spices, and my tongue salivates on cue.

Of course, the idea of breakfast isn't just about taste, smell, sight, touch, and sound, it's also about the contents. The food itself is of paramount importance in the celebration, with the rest being necessary additions. The first time I heard *Brooklyn Nine-Nine's* Charles Boyle discuss the 12 components of food satisfaction, I thought he was exaggerating. Then I came to realise firsthand that Boyle had a point, food can't just be enjoyed merely through the mechanical action of chewing and swallowing, there's a lot more to it.

I can always have some homemade *biryani* whenever I damn well please, but that won't even come close to having it piping hot straight out of a humongous "*dekchi*" at the legendary flagship outlet of Haji'r Biryani at Old Dhaka. Having homemade *fuchka*, *bhelpuri* and *jhalmuri* might be a more hygienic option according to public health surveys, but the satisfaction of consuming those snacks in your own house is meagre at best when compared to munching on them by the roadside. Nothing like shoving into your mouth that first scoop

even undergoing a British makeover during the colonial era as the Anglo-Indian "kedgeree". *Khichuri's* ingredient composition, flavourings, consistency, etcetera is known to vary from region to region. While we Bengalis serve the iconic dish as dry yellow rice, South Indians and Biharis prefer to turn the rice and lentils into a mushy paste, the British prepare their "kedgeree" with smoked haddock, boiled eggs and parsley, and Fiji Island inhabitants have their *khichuri* like porridge.

The Bengali *khichuri* isn't the only iconic dish known to us that has been subjected to multicultural hybridisation. Amongst rice dishes, there are also *biryani* and *polao* which have also received global attention, having attained popularity in countries beyond the Indian subcontinent, going over to the Philippines, the Middle East and the African continent as jollof rice, bringhe, and many other variations. Popular items such as the dumplings found all over Dhaka now that we know and love as "momos" are variations of the Chinese *jiaozi*, Korean *mandu*, and Japanese *gyoza*. Momos are believed to have originated from the Nepali and Tibetan communities in Southeast



## মাইলস্টোন স্কুল অ্যান্ড কলেজ

■ College Code: 1056 ■ School Code: 1098 ■ EHN: 108572.

**ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি-২০২১** **প্লে/নার্সারি থেকে ৯ম শ্রেণি**

বাংলা ও ইংরেজি (জাতীয় শিক্ষাক্রম) মাধ্যম

- শ্রেষ্ঠত্বের স্বীকৃতি : ২০০৮ সালে ঢাকা বোর্ড কর্তৃক শ্রেষ্ঠ শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান হিসেবে স্বীকৃতিপ্রাপ্ত।
- ফলাফল : পিইসি, জেএসসি, এসএসসি ও এইচএসসি পরীক্ষায় (মেধা তালিকা পদ্ধতি থাকাকালীন) সারাদেশে এবং ঢাকা শিক্ষা বোর্ডের প্রাতিষ্ঠানিক মেধাতালিকায় মোট ১৩ বার স্থান লাভ করে।
- ব্যবস্থাপনা ও পরিচালনা : মাইলস্টোন স্কুল অ্যান্ড কলেজের বিভিন্ন ক্যাম্পাসে ৪১৫ জন অভিজ্ঞ ও সুদক্ষ শিক্ষক-কর্মকর্তা [ক্যাডেট কলেজের প্রাক্তন ২ জন অধ্যক্ষ, ১ জন উপাধ্যক্ষ, সরকারি কলেজের প্রাক্তন ৩ জন অধ্যক্ষ, ৩ জন কর্নেল (অব.), ৩ জন লে. কর্নেল (অব.), ৫ জন মেজর (অব.), ৯ জন সহযোগি অধ্যাপক, ৮৯ জন সহকারি অধ্যাপক এবং ৩০০ জন প্রভাষক ও সিনিয়র শিক্ষক] শিক্ষা ও প্রশাসনিক কার্যক্রম পরিচালনা করছেন।
- বিশেষ সুবিধা : মফস্বল এলাকার ছাত্র-ছাত্রীদের জন্য আলাদা হোস্টেল ও পরিবহনের ব্যবস্থা রয়েছে। ছেলে ও মেয়েদের এবং বাংলা ও ইংরেজি মাধ্যমের ক্লাস আলাদা আলাদা ভবনে অনুষ্ঠিত হয়।
- প্রতিম, দরিদ্র কিন্তু মেধাবী ছাত্র/ছাত্রীদের আর্থিক সহায়তা ও বৃত্তি প্রদান করা হয়।
- অতিরিক্ত ক্ষেত্রে শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়ের নির্দেশিত নীতিমালা অনুসরণ করা হবে।
- কলেজটি এমএনআরএস ট্রাস্ট কর্তৃক পরিচালিত একটি অলাভজনক শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান। নিজস্ব ক্যাম্পাস দিয়াবাড়িতে (উত্তরা) ৫০০ জন ছাত্র-ছাত্রী আবাসিক সুবিধাসহ শিক্ষাক্রম ও সার্বিক প্রশিক্ষণ গ্রহণ করছে।
- ঢাকার বাইরে গাজীপুর ব্যতীত মাইলস্টোন স্কুল অ্যান্ড কলেজের কোনো শাখা বা ক্যাম্পাস নেই।

<p><b>কর্নেল নূরুন নবী (অব.)</b> প্রবল পরিচালক ও উপদেষ্টা প্রাক্তন অধ্যক্ষ-ফৌজদারহাট ও কিনাইদহ ক্যাডেট কলেজ এবং প্রতিষ্ঠাতা অধ্যক্ষ- রাজউক উত্তরা মডেল কলেজ ও মাইলস্টোন কলেজ।</p>	<p><b>এম. কামালউদ্দিন ভূঁইয়া</b> লে. কর্নেল (অব.) অধ্যক্ষ- মাইলস্টোন কলেজ।</p>	<p><b>মিসেস রিফাত আলম</b> অধ্যক্ষ - মাইলস্টোন প্রিপারেটরি কে.জি স্কুল।</p>
---	---	--

২২, ৩০ ও ৪৪ গরিব-ই-নেওয়াজ এভিনিউ, সেক্টর-১১, উত্তরা মডেল টাউন, ঢাকা-১২৩০।  
ফোন: ৫৮৯৫৭৭৩৩, ৪৮৯৬৩৪৩৭। মোবাইল : ০১৭৭১৫৮১৬৫০, ০১৯১৩৮৪৩১৫৯, ০১৮১৫০৫৯৪০১, ০১৬২২১৪৬৮৮০, ০১৯৫৬৪২৩৪১২, ০১৬৭৬৯৯৭২২২, ০১৮১৯০৬১০৫৮; www.milestonecollege.com





ECHOES BY  
ASRAR CHOWDHURY

# 1971

## A story again made fresh

**“When the sun sinks in the west, die a million people of the Bangladesh”**

~ Joan Baez, *Song of Bangladesh* (1971)  
The two World Wars weakened European colonial powers and the Ottoman Empire. India’s independence from Britain was inevitable. What narrative would lead to independence was to be seen. The narrative came from the “two-nation theory”: a separate land for Hindus and Muslims.

Cyril Radcliffe “partitioned” India along such religious lines. However, he strategically divided only two provinces of British India that were part of a delta civilisation: Punjab in the west (the Sindh delta), and Bengal in the east (the Brahmaputra-Ganges delta). The rest of British India was left undivided.

Thus at midnight, first Pakistan, and then today’s India was born.

**“Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet”**  
~ Rudyard Kipling, *The Ballad of East and West* (1889)

The carving out of Pakistan wasn’t viable. The west wing had four provinces: Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, North West Frontier Province; and an independently administered Azad Kashmir. The east wing was East Bengal till 1956, and then renamed East Pakistan. In the middle there was a thousand miles of India. From its birth, the east and the west were destined not to meet.

In March 1948, Muhammad Ali Jinnah declared at today’s Suhrawardy Udyan that “Urdu, and only Urdu” will be the state language of Pakistan. Surprisingly, Urdu wasn’t the native language of any province of Pakistan. The Bengalis were hurt. The first spark came on February 21, 1952, when blood was spilled demanding recognition of Bangla

as the state language of a majority.

As time wore on, Bengalis were neglected more and more. Their cause was being pushed towards an independence movement.

**“The more things change, the more they stay the same.”**

~ Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr, *Les Guêpes* (July 1848)

In 1948, there were 11 textile factories in the east, and 6 in the west. In 1971, the east had 26 and the west 150 textile factories. Between 1948 and 1960, the east earned 70% of total exports, yet enjoyed only 25% imports. An estimated US\$ 2.6 billion (in 1971 exchange rates) was transferred from the east to the west.

The eastern wing of Pakistan effectively became a colony of the west. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman’s six point movement in 1966 addressed the economic and political exploitation of the west towards the east. No amicable solution was found. The beginning of the end was looming.

**“The end is where we start from.”**

~ T.S. Eliot, *Little Gidding* (1942)

November 11, 1970. A cyclone hit Bhola in the southern part of the country. It was one of the most devastating cyclones in history. It took the lives of at least 300,000 people according to conservative estimates. The east was left to fend for itself. Help from the centre in the west was either slow to come or the west wasn’t interested in helping. Either way, the Bengalis were once again offended.

December 7, 1970. Pakistan held its first parliament elections. There were 300 seats. 162 seats were in East Pakistan; 138 in West Pakistan. The two main parties were the Awami League



led by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman; and the Pakistan Peoples’ Party (PPP) led by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. The Awami League won 160 seats -- more than half, and the majority. The PPP won 81 seats. Again, dark clouds were looming.

Yahya Khan and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto didn’t want the Awami League to form the government. They were biding time by holding talks. Meanwhile, the Pakistan military in East Pakistan was being armed for a possible onslaught on the Bengalis. This created unrest. On March 7, 1971, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, in his finest hour, told the world the inevitable.

On the night of March 25, 1971, Operation Searchlight started. And with it a systematic genocide. The wheels of history were set in motion. The cause was just. Bangladesh was set to script the world’s first liberation war that started with establishing language as the just cause for liberation.

*“The story of Bangladesh is an ancient one,*

*again made fresh”*

~ Joan Baez, *Song of Bangladesh* (1971)

An independence war is always a war of just against unjust. Very few nations have had the privilege of fighting a liberation war. Bangladesh is one of those lucky nations. Bangladesh paid a huge price. In 266 days, 3 million lives were sacrificed. That is more than seven lives every minute. Ten million became refugees, and were dislocated in neighbouring India. Unknown and countless women were raped. This was just the human price of freedom.

And yet, Bangladesh didn’t give up its pride. A nation and nationhood thrives on pride. The generation of 1971 instilled that pride for the generation of 2021 to lead Bangladesh forward in the 21st century.

Asrar Chowdhury teaches Economics in classrooms. Outside, he watches Test cricket, plays the flute and listens to music and radio podcasts. Email: asrarul@juniv.edu or asrarul@gmail.com

# A Study on Learning History

FARIHA S. KHAN

One of the most fundamental aspects of our education entails learning about the history of our country -- learning about how Bangladesh came to be, about how we gained independence, and the people who fought so valiantly to give us the right to speak in our own language. It’s crucial that we know where our roots lie and learn about the people who made it possible for us to be our true selves.

Yet, as we learn about these parts of our history, we need to wonder whether they are taught right. We are lucky enough to live during an age where information is always one click away from us, and there are a thousand different ways in which we can absorb that information, but do our teachers know that? And more importantly, do they take full advantage of these resources to teach us about our history in the best possible way that they can?

The internet gives us access to a wide range of resources that can give more depth to our education than our history books can. In the 49 years since the Liberation War, thousands of different resources have been produced that can help us get a better understanding of 1971. Spanning over different areas of the war, from the international dimensions of the violence to the aftermath of the war, the wide variety of resources on the internet can provide us with a perspective of the war that differs from traditional ones. Perhaps most importantly, getting access to these resources allows us to draw conclusions about the war ourselves and lets us ask the important questions: What was the domestic political climate like at that time? What international context contributed to the violence and accelerated it? What kind of pre-conditions contributed to the violence and what were its ramifications?

Traditionally, we are taught only enough for us to know our history, but not enough to question the events that led up to the war, and in order for us to understand the history of our country better and think

critically, it’s important for us to know that these resources are at our disposal. Instead of reiterating what we are taught by our teachers, these resources can allow us to draw our own conclusions based on facts, and ultimately, understand the Liberation War better.

Utilising these resources to understand this historical event better can go a long way in helping us develop critical thinking skills, which is why it is important that schools slowly start integrating them into their curriculums. It is also important that we use these resources to help overcome the differences in Bangladeshi History education in English medium and NCTB curriculums.

While NCTB students are well-versed in the history of our country, English medium students often lack that education. “My brother, who attended a renowned English medium school in Dhaka, could not tell the difference between Victory Day and Independence Day and could seldom tell me any concrete facts about the Liberation War,” remarks Samrin Huq\*, a student at Brac University. “Studying in an English medium school should never be an excuse for not knowing the basics of our history.”

Perhaps stark differences such as these can be attributed to our curriculums, or perhaps it can be attributed to the fact that English medium students often get a free pass for not knowing their own history. “My sixth grade Bangla teacher would often tell me that not knowing much about the Liberation War was alright because I went to an English medium school,” Samrin recalls. In order to overcome these differences, it’s crucial that we hold schools accountable for not doing enough to teach us about our history.

When asked, most students from English medium backgrounds reported that they felt their history lessons were inadequate. “I wanted to learn more, but our history books never taught us more than we needed to know. Most of the things I know about our Liberation War, I learned out of my

own research after spending hours on the internet. I learned more about the War from my Bangla teacher rather than a History teacher. This is not how it should be,” says Sabahun Salam, a high school senior in Dhaka.

Others have a slightly different perception. “The magnitude of the Liberation War was always present, but we were seldom taught more than important dates and events. History lessons sometimes made us read things that fit into the grand scheme of things, but not the events you could think of independently. I remember thinking about why the March 25 crackdown happened all of a sudden and the conditions that led to it. The answer I was given barely covered the surface of things, telling me that it happened simply because of Bangabandhu’s March 7 speech. It didn’t make sense,” says Amrin Haider\*, an undergraduate student studying in Canada.

Most English medium students also noted that much of their education on the Liberation War was invested during their younger years, which is why their teachings are lost to them now that a good decade has elapsed since they were taught. On the other end of the spectrum, NCTB students feel that their teachings are more than adequate but that much of it is attributed to the fact that they have to sit for exams regarding the topic.

However adequately students feel they know about their own history, there is no disregarding the fact that our methods of teaching history can be improved. We have at our disposal thousands of resources that can help students understand the violence of 1971 better and schools should reasonably put in more effort to integrate them into our curriculums so that we can gain a better understanding of the events. Almost 50 years after we claimed our victory from our oppressors, there are thousands of films, stories, music, poetry, witness reports and freedom fighter testimonies that students can study. In order to understand our history better, it is crucial that we take

a step away from our traditional textbooks and observe the events through the various other resources that we can easily access.

Looking at the testimonies of freedom fighters, eye-witness testimonies and perhaps even the perpetrators of violence can give students such meaningful insights into how the violence occurred, and perhaps begin to understand what culmination of events lead to our liberation. Furthermore, dissecting the various films and music at our disposal can give students new perspectives into the lives of the freedom fighters as well as survivors of violence. Songs like *Maa Go Bhabna Keno* sing of the emotional background of war. *Salam Salam Hajar Salam* is a song about the lives lost to the language movement of 1952, but it went on to inspire everyone in 1971 and beyond. These evoke emotions like no other medium can and it is vital that students get access to these extraordinary accounts to try to understand the events that led to the birth of Bangladesh.

Other resources should also be reasonably a part of curriculums, such as field trips to the Liberation War Museum, and the National Museum. First-hand engagements with the material can provide more insight into the events than reading from a textbook can.

Aside from learning our ABCs and 123s, learning about our history is one of the most crucial aspects of our education, yet sometimes it isn’t treated as such. Many schools not only fail to integrate adequate teachings about the Liberation War into our curriculums, but also fail to include the different methods of teaching history.

As we enter yet another year where we may have to rely entirely on the internet for our education, it is vital for us to remind ourselves of the things it can give us that stray from our traditional approach to education and make the best use of those resources to keep learning about the events and the people that have allowed for us to be who we are today.

\*Names have been changed for privacy.



THE DEFINITIVE YOUTH MAGAZINE  
**SHOUT**





# Start-ups that empower women

## KAZI AKIB BIN ASAD

One can define the term “women empowerment” in many ways, using many examples. Educating women, providing them with necessary resources, helping them set up their own businesses, teaching them self-defence – all this and more empowers women. In the process, it challenges inequalities in society and contributes to the sustainable development of a nation.

The best way to empower, perhaps, is when a woman works to look after their own. Such is the story of Begum.co, founded by Rakhshanda Rukham, which provides a “360-degree support system” for women in their careers, lifestyles, health, safety, etc.

“When I was in university, there were no platforms connecting women with similar interests, or women-centric platform and local language content for women. I realised that women of our country need assistance through life stages to support their careers. This is why I founded Begum.co in 2015,” says Rukham. From a need for women mentors who could lead and inspire young girls from rural areas, Begum.co now works across cities with over 4000 women access mentors, offering career tips, leadership training and content besides being part of various special initiatives.

Begum.co aims to improve the social status of women in Bangladesh. Its ecosystem supports a woman in her journey through life. With education, mentorship and a growing community, it creates jobs for women and helps them become self-dependent.

This year, however, has been especially difficult for women around the country.



Rukham states, “We have identified that many women have lost their jobs during this pandemic, and experienced violence at homes. They need support to get back to their normal lives and we are focused on helping those women. Begum wants to create more income opportunities for women and reduce gender-based violence.”

Similarly, it was a woman thinking about other women that gave life to Karigor.

“Years ago, I had bought a shawl in Bandarban for 250 taka only. In Dhaka, I found the same shawl in a renowned brand store going for 1700 taka. I asked myself, if the local craftspeople’s products are worth so much, why do they struggle to survive? It’s because they don’t get the value of their work because of middlemen and the current market structure,” Saraban Tahura Turin, co-founder of

Karigor, tells us.

Karigor connects the dots for craftspeople and consumers. Here, creative entrepreneurs can open shop and get maximum product value. Through the digital platform, artisans are brought under one roof and using the technology and modern solutions, able to revive and their businesses. The target is to promote the tradition and heritage of Bangladeshi handicrafts as part of the global economy in the long run.

Turin describes, “With UNDP’s help, we turned Karigor into a social enterprise. We focused on social impacts and SDGs and after the incubation program, we modified our idea from scratch and turned it into an ecosystem.”

Shuttle, on the other hand, was digital and urban-focused from the start. And founded by three men.

Reyasat Chowdhury, co-founder and

CEO of the female-only transport service, explains, “Upon observing and sharing our concerns regarding problems women face during commute, we realised this needed a customised solution. It was a key finding for us. We launched Shuttle in July 2018 with just two vehicles and after the positive response from initial users, we kept expanding and introducing new routes.”

Shuttle’s primary goal is a noble thought: To ensure that each and every woman in Bangladesh has the freedom to commute wherever and whenever they want to.

“We envision to redefine public transport in Bangladesh so that safe and comfortable transportation is inclusive and affordable for mass people,” Reyasat adds. “We are still operating in Dhaka and Chittagong, however, we believe we’re on the right path.” A new service, Shuttle for Business, was launched this year, which enables organisations to support their employees on the move.

UNDP and Youth Co:Lab has been an integral part in the growth of these start-ups, especially in the early stages. Through its mentorship programs, guidance and networking opportunities, the enterprises have learned how to bring about positive impacts on the society that can be measured and developed.

*An extended version of this article is available online. Read it on The Daily Star website, or on SHOUT on Facebook and @shoutds on Instagram.*

*Kazi Akib Bin Asad is the editor in-charge of SHOUT. Write to him at akib.asad@thedailystar.net*

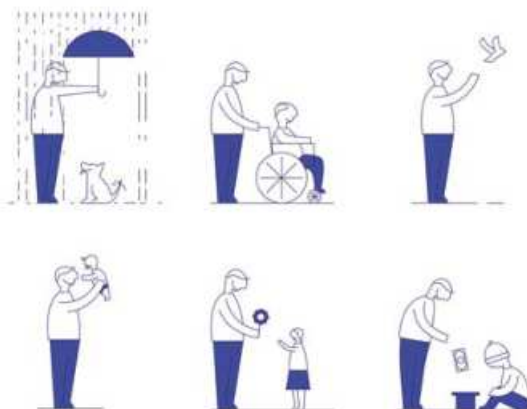
# THE MISINTERPRETATION OF KINDNESS

## BUSHRA ZAMAN

Kindness, politeness and good manners are capable of changing any person’s day for the better. However, if subject to misinterpretation, they are equally capable of making a day turn for the worse.

How exactly does this happen? The aforementioned attributes are subjective terms, capable of varying even in people of the same culture. They relate to your morals and how you were brought up, therefore their manifestations as actions can easily be misinterpreted by others with different mindsets. There are a variety of different mindsets distributed among human beings, and therefore, a large probability of the misinterpretation of actions occurring.

Suppose you were incredibly hungry but were in a meeting with someone. You asked if they wanted to grab lunch with you because it would be rude to end a meeting abruptly, and offered to pay for them when you realised the person forgot his/her wallet. The concerned individual may mistake your good manners for attraction if they are not fully aware of your nature. Even the littlest things such as holding open a door for someone, stopping to help somebody who fell, and lending stationary to the person sitting next to you in an exam



can be mistaken for your interest in the individual you are assisting due to differences in manners and a lack of understanding.

Things can get more complicated; your politeness may be confused with negative personality traits if you are seen helping an individual you are on bad terms with. Hurtful terms such as “two-faced” may come to the minds of people who themselves believe politeness does

not apply to anyone they are not fond of. If they continue to ponder over why you’re being polite, the negativity of assumptions can quickly escalate. You may even find yourself being accused of trying to use the person you are not fond of for your own personal gain.

Also, oddly enough, kindness can be connected to being a pushover. This presumption is exceptionally queer on account of how completely unrelated the two personality traits are. The connection has little to do with a variation in morals and instead serves as an excuse to exploit the good nature of a kind-hearted human being, potentially having a detrimental effect on the self-confidence of anyone who considers themselves to be kind. Kindness towards others should never be correlated to being unkind to yourself and belittling your own opinions.

If a good nature without a hidden agenda is discouraged and misunderstood it could lead to its eradication as an adaptive measure, much like any other process of natural selection. Let’s just keep things simple by sticking to the true meaning of things instead of trying to find synonyms for it.

*Bushra Zaman likes books, art, and only being contacted by email. Contact her at bushrazaman31@yahoo.com*



# THE TEA STALL

**ANNAPURNA CHOWDHURY**

In the bustling action of the capital, the worker of a huge corporation stopped by a tea stall for a cup of tea. His name is Rafiq. He was wearing his normal attire of a blue shirt, black tie and held a briefcase by his side. He patiently waited as the head of the tea stall, a little boy, prepared his cup of tea. The boy was around eight to ten. He made the cup of tea and slowly took it to Rafiq. As he got his cup of tea, Rafiq smiled at him.

"What's your name, boy?" asked Rafiq.

"I don't have any in particular. People call me whatever they want to. But most of them call me Kamal."

Rafiq laughed with utter amusement as he said, "So I'll call you that too."

The little boy, now with a name, went away to work on the tea orders that were piling up. After all, it was quite a busy weekday. Rafiq continued sipping the cup of perfectly hot tea and munching on his heap of biscuits, while observing the little boy. Rafiq felt nothing but pity for Kamal, he thought to himself that the poor young soul should have been in school at that moment, but instead he is sweating himself off for strangers' tea. He felt sorry but could not do anything about it. With such thoughts, he looked at Kamal going



from one shop to another with a full crate of tea cups, still with a smile on his young malnourished face. Rafiq finished his tea, which he actually loved a lot. He got up with his cup of tea and his briefcase. He walked towards Kamal.

"How much do I owe you Kamal?" asked Rafiq.

"15 taka sir."

Rafiq handed him the money and told him, "The tea was really delicious. I'll come by here more often now, okay?" He walked away after squeezing the little boy's cheek as Kamal smiled back at him. As Rafiq walked further away, the thoughts of Kamal grew smaller and smaller. Just then, a voice behind him screamed with all the force in the word.

"Sir, Sir, Sir!" Kamal yelled his lungs out. Finally, that effort paid off when Rafiq looked over his shoulders to see him.

"What happened?" Rafiq asked in complete confusion.

"Sir, you left your... this... your file."

Kamal showed Rafiq's file to him and he knelt while trying to gather enough oxygen for himself. Rafiq was perplexed but more than anything he was amazed by the little boy's honesty as that file had money in it that was untouched.

Rafiq looked at the boy with a proud gleam and said, "Do you want to work at my office? It won't be a hard job. But it pays well." He said so while pointing at the building in front.

Kamal had nothing to say. With eyes full of tears, he nodded his head just to say, "Yes sir. This job doesn't pay me anything. Boss takes all the money away. I hardly have anything for food." That statement was obvious with the malnourished state of his body. He had been dirty, hungry and completely without hope. Now there was a chance of a new life. A chance he longed for.

"Thank you, sir. I'll try to work my best," Kamal said.

*The writer is a class VIII student at Sunbeams School.*

## Cabbage Soup

**WAMIAH AHMED**

At exactly five past twelve, on a rainy autumn night, an old woman was humming a sweet melody, putting on a pot of soup as she had done for her kids and grandkids in years past. You could hear faint strikes of thunder and bike bells as they zoomed by every once in a while. She takes the pot off the stove and gently ladles some into a bowl. You can hear the quiet clanking of the cutlery as the old woman takes out a soup spoon and a small glass from a cabinet. The tap turns on with a loud "fssssssh" and the old woman puts the half-filled glass beside her bowl of soup.

Now this soup was no ordinary soup. The whole neighbourhood knew of the famous granny down the road. She and her soup were beloved by all the neighbours, even the naughty little boy down the street who ran away every time his mom made carrot stew could not resist her cabbage soup. Her own grandkids were unable to visit, unfortunately, so she loved to spend time with the little boy.

It was raining even harder now, as you could hear the pitter-patter on the tin roof. The soup's aroma was starting to waft throughout the whole house overtaking the smell of the wet earth outside. She blew away the hot air and picked up her spoon to take a sip when –

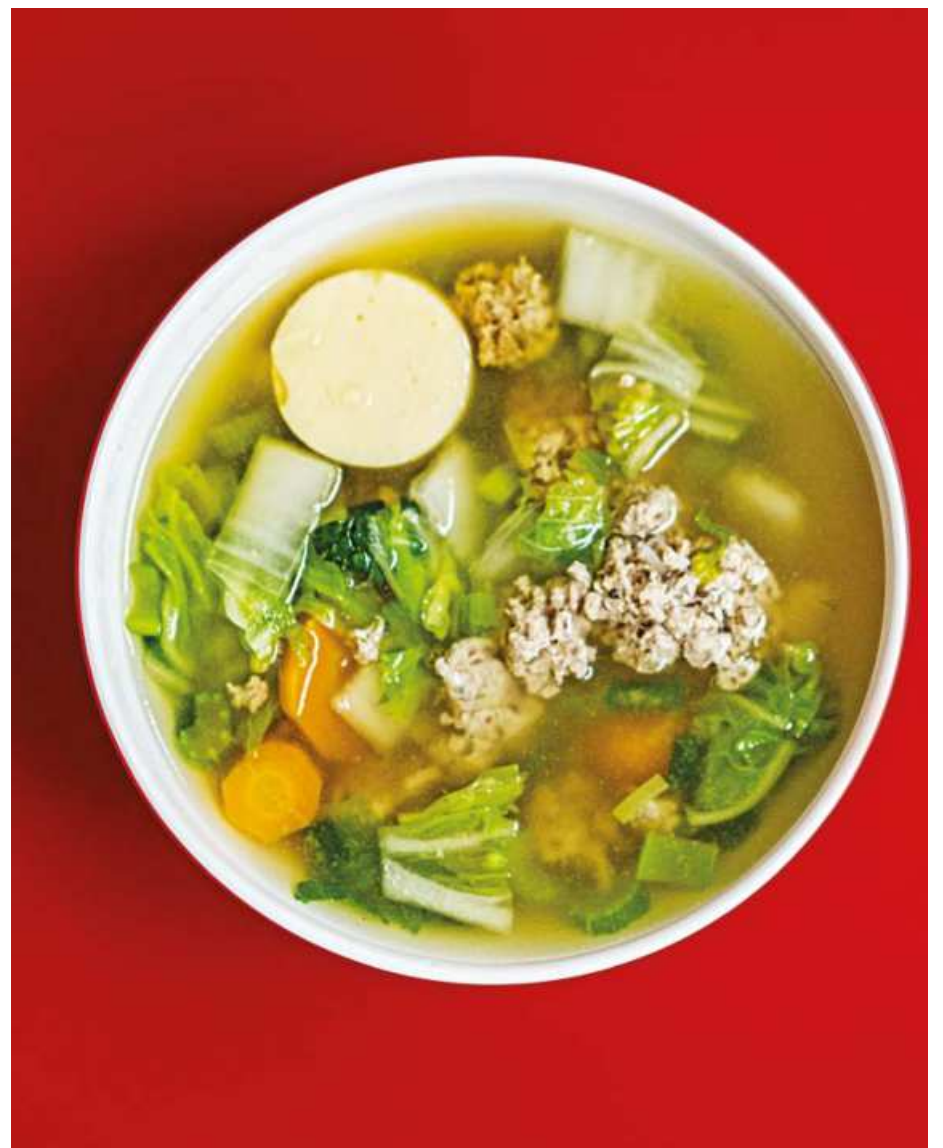
\*DING DONG\*

The doorbell rang repeatedly. The old woman smiled ear to ear. The boy from down the street had come to visit knowing that the old woman only made soup on days with rainy weather. The woman opened the door to find a grinning 7-year-old who was wet from head to toe from running in the rain. The boy quickly ran to sit down at the table and poured himself an overflowing bowl of soup. The old woman started making conversation with the boy as she sat down, and they began to eat.

On the wall behind the little boy's seat, there were two pictures framed on the wall. Her grandsons, who looked the same age as the boy (in the picture), who enjoyed the same soup as the boy. They would come over on rainy days just like the boy but one day the rain caused their car to skid and took them to the heavens. The woman's heart became heavy at the thought. They were no less adorable than him, the same toothy grin and the simple joy they brought to her.

"Hey!" the boy said happily, "Your soup's getting cold!" He gave a smile so big you could see all the gaps where his teeth had fallen. Her heart soared and she gave a nod. There were seconds all around.

*The writer is a middle school student at Jesse Ketchum Public School, Toronto, Canada.*





# A Love Letter to the Best Thing Ever

**RASHA JAMEEL**

My eyes first register the display of my phone as I turn off the alarm, and then immediately roll back inwards as my mind goes to its happy place: THOUGHTS OF FOOD.

The cerebral folds in my brain fight off the sleep gradually as images of warm flaky paratha, savoury beef nihari, and fried egg flood every corner of my mind. My nose gets imaginative with the smell of fresh

of *jhalmuri* with the help of someone's discarded business card, straight out of a paper cone. I can say the same about the mixture of mangoes, rice, and milk on a summer day -- *aam-doodh-bhaat* -- the true ambrosia, if there ever was one. And if you aren't spending your rainy days having *khichuri* and *begun bhaji*, you're missing out.

Speaking of *khichuri*, did you know that the dish itself has managed to connect cultures throughout the Indian subcontinent,

Asia, and have been heavily hybridised in our country to suit the Bengali palate. This demand for fusion food is a concept that can bring culturally different communities together and help them bond over conversations on the multicultural similarities that they share through food.

The presence of food on social media has only boosted the aforementioned phenomenon, with the introduction of food being perceived as either a mode of communication, or an art form. The former has fared well in our country, courtesy of popular local food bloggers such as Fahrin Zannat Faiza (@khudalage), couple Ridima Khan Ipsha and Rasif Shafique (@petukcouple), all of whom have taken to blogging about the eating scene in Dhaka. Bangladeshi food bloggers haven't just introduced their audiences to underrated eateries throughout the country, but have also taken them on an entire journey of how strong a significance food has in our Bangladeshi heritage, from the alleyways of Old Dhaka to the posh neighbourhoods of Gulshan and Banani.

Calcuttan food bloggers Saptarshi Chakraborty and Insiya Poonawala (@bongcats) upload recipes on their YouTube channel of all the traditional Bengali food that they have grown up eating, ranging from the classic "plastic er chutney" to the Tagore-family favourite "Chhana'r polao", with all the videos served with a side of soothing ASMR noises and a descriptive note highlighting the nostalgia surrounding each dish. To admire food as flawless works of art, look no further than the blogs of Sameera Wadood and Shababa Suzana Hossain (@fatduck21).

Food consultant and chef Sameera Wadood believes in the superiority of local

ingredients over imported ones, using the former to come up succulent fusion recipes termed SW Originals, such as the "Bilimbi Glazed sous vide Chicken Breast stuffed with spiced Binni Bhaat quenelle wrapped in Charred Kale" and "Pomelo Glazed confit Chicken served with sweet Beetroot Puree". For her blog's first anniversary, Wadood launched three new fusion recipes involving Bengali favourites Mymensingh black sticky rice, *chitai pitha*, *kalo jeera*, Koral fish, and *kalo jaam*. Food stylist, photographer and chef Shababa Hossain is an expert in food photography, giving her followers a brilliantly-captured look into the true beauty of food, which one seldom pauses to appreciate. The Fat Duck's blog discusses the history behind different foods alongside personal anecdotes connected to them.

Having reached the end of the article, I imagine you're thinking that my obsession with food is seemingly boundless.

You're not wrong. My YouTube recommendations are overcrowded with notifications from 50 different food channels from Food Insider to Banglar Rannaghor. The happiest dreams I've ever had were always about me all by myself in a land of *jilapi*, *roshmalai*, rocky road ice cream, and edible cookie dough. I have 19 secret stashes of potato chips and candy bars all over the house that my parents know nothing about.

I don't think I have a problem. There's nothing in the world that can keep you from obsessing over food, it's simply the best thing ever.

*The author meticulously plans out her 13 daily meals on a regular basis. Drop a 'good luck' note for her overworked digestive system at rasha.jameel@outlook.com*



PHOTO: KAZI AKIB BIN ASAD

ghee and spices, and my tongue salivates on cue.

Of course, the idea of breakfast isn't just about taste, smell, sight, touch, and sound, it's also about the contents. The food itself is of paramount importance in the celebration, with the rest being necessary additions. The first time I heard *Brooklyn Nine-Nine's* Charles Boyle discuss the 12 components of food satisfaction, I thought he was exaggerating. Then I came to realise firsthand that Boyle had a point, food can't just be enjoyed merely through the mechanical action of chewing and swallowing, there's a lot more to it.

I can always have some homemade *biryani* whenever I damn well please, but that won't even come close to having it piping hot straight out of a humongous "*dekchi*" at the legendary flagship outlet of Haji'r Biryani at Old Dhaka. Having homemade *fuchka*, *bhelpuri* and *jhalmuri* might be a more hygienic option according to public health surveys, but the satisfaction of consuming those snacks in your own house is meagre at best when compared to munching on them by the roadside. Nothing like shoving into your mouth that first scoop

even undergoing a British makeover during the colonial era as the Anglo-Indian "kedgeree". *Khichuri's* ingredient composition, flavourings, consistency, etcetera is known to vary from region to region. While we Bengalis serve the iconic dish as dry yellow rice, South Indians and Biharis prefer to turn the rice and lentils into a mushy paste, the British prepare their "kedgeree" with smoked haddock, boiled eggs and parsley, and Fiji Island inhabitants have their *khichuri* like porridge.

The Bengali *khichuri* isn't the only iconic dish known to us that has been subjected to multicultural hybridisation. Amongst rice dishes, there are also *biryani* and *polao* which have also received global attention, having attained popularity in countries beyond the Indian subcontinent, going over to the Philippines, the Middle East and the African continent as jollof rice, bringhe, and many other variations. Popular items such as the dumplings found all over Dhaka now that we know and love as "momos" are variations of the Chinese *jiaozi*, Korean *mandu*, and Japanese *gyoza*. Momos are believed to have originated from the Nepali and Tibetan communities in Southeast

## মাইলস্টোন স্কুল অ্যান্ড কলেজ

■ College Code: 1056 ■ School Code: 1098 ■ EHN: 108572.

ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি-২০২১

প্লে/নার্সারি থেকে ৯ম শ্রেণি

বাংলা ও ইংরেজি (জাতীয় শিক্ষাক্রম) মাধ্যম

- শ্রেষ্ঠত্বের স্বীকৃতি : ২০০৮ সালে ঢাকা বোর্ড কর্তৃক শ্রেষ্ঠ শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান হিসেবে স্বীকৃতিপ্রাপ্ত।
- ফলাফল : পিইসি, জেএসসি, এসএসসি ও এইচএসসি পরীক্ষায় (মেধা তালিকা পদ্ধতি থাকাকালীন) সারাদেশে এবং ঢাকা শিক্ষা বোর্ডের প্রাতিষ্ঠানিক মেধাতালিকায় মোট ১৩ বার স্থান লাভ করে।
- ব্যবস্থাপনা ও পরিচালনা : মাইলস্টোন স্কুল অ্যান্ড কলেজের বিভিন্ন ক্যাম্পাসে ৪১৫ জন অভিজ্ঞ ও সুদক্ষ শিক্ষক-কর্মকর্তা [ক্যাডেট কলেজের প্রাক্তন ২ জন অধ্যক্ষ, ১ জন উপাধ্যক্ষ, সরকারি কলেজের প্রাক্তন ৩ জন অধ্যক্ষ, ৩ জন কর্নেল (অব.), ৩ জন লে. কর্নেল (অব.), ৫ জন মেজর (অব.), ৯ জন সহযোগি অধ্যাপক, ৮৯ জন সহকারি অধ্যাপক এবং ৩০০ জন প্রভাষক ও সিনিয়র শিক্ষক] শিক্ষা ও প্রশাসনিক কার্যক্রম পরিচালনা করছেন।
- বিশেষ সুবিধা : মফস্বল এলাকার ছাত্র-ছাত্রীদের জন্য আলাদা হোস্টেল ও পরিবহনের ব্যবস্থা রয়েছে। ছেলে ও মেয়েদের এবং বাংলা ও ইংরেজি মাধ্যমের ক্লাস আলাদা আলাদা ভবনে অনুষ্ঠিত হয়।
- প্রতিম, দরিদ্র কিন্তু মেধাবী ছাত্র/ছাত্রীদের আর্থিক সহায়তা ও বৃত্তি প্রদান করা হয়।
- অতিরিক্ত ক্ষেত্রে শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়ের নির্দেশিত নীতিমালা অনুসরণ করা হবে।
- কলেজটি এমএনআরএস ট্রাস্ট কর্তৃক পরিচালিত একটি অলাভজনক শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান। নিজস্ব ক্যাম্পাস দিয়াবাড়িতে (উত্তরা) ৫০০ জন ছাত্র-ছাত্রী আবাসিক সুবিধাসহ শিক্ষাক্রম ও সার্বিক প্রশিক্ষণ গ্রহণ করছে।
- ঢাকার বাইরে গাজীপুর ব্যতীত মাইলস্টোন স্কুল অ্যান্ড কলেজের কোনো শাখা বা ক্যাম্পাস নেই।

কর্ণেল নূরন নবী (অব.)  
প্রবল পরিচালক ও উপদেষ্টা  
প্রাক্তন অধ্যক্ষ-ফৌজদারহাট ও কিনাইদহ ক্যাডেট কলেজ এবং প্রতিষ্ঠাতা অধ্যক্ষ- রাজউক উত্তরা মডেল কলেজ ও মাইলস্টোন কলেজ।

এম. কামালউদ্দিন ভূঁইয়া  
লে. কর্নেল (অব.)  
অধ্যক্ষ- মাইলস্টোন কলেজ।

মিসেস রিফাত আলম  
অধ্যক্ষ -  
মাইলস্টোন প্রিপারেটরি কে.জি স্কুল।

২২, ৩০ ও ৪৪ গরিব-ই-নেওয়াজ এভিনিউ, সেক্টর-১১, উত্তরা মডেল টাউন, ঢাকা-১২৩০।  
ফোন: ৫৮৯৫৭৭৩৩, ৪৮৯৬৩৪৩৭। মোবাইল : ০১৭৭১৫৮১৬৫০, ০১৯১৩৮৪৩১৫৯, ০১৮১৫০৫৯৪০১, ০১৬২২১৪৬৮৮০, ০১৯৫৬৪২৩৪১২, ০১৬৭৬৯৯৭২২২, ০১৮১৯০৬১০৫৮; www.milestonecollege.com