

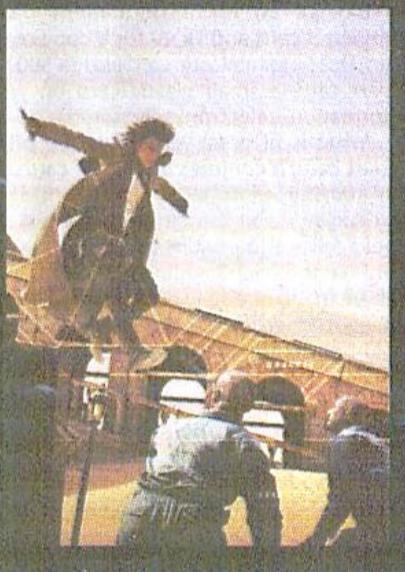
# RISING STARS

A publication of The Daily Star

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Thursday, October 25, 2007

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He traced the shape he desired, with a long finger. It had to be just right. He picked up the instrument, and began. He flinched and a tiny curl of smoke rose from the surface. Finished, he smiled, satisfied, as he popped the remainder of the cigarette between his lips, and surveyed his handiwork. Her name, bleeding, on his palm.

By Sabrina F. Ahmad

Fading Dusk

To the dying young man, the sun looked like hope fading away. The ball of fire went down and so did his will. He had the syringe in his right hand, a string tied tightly around his left forearm. As darkness fell, the syringe went in. Deep in his body, the liquid spread, sending waves of ecstasy through his mind...

By Emil

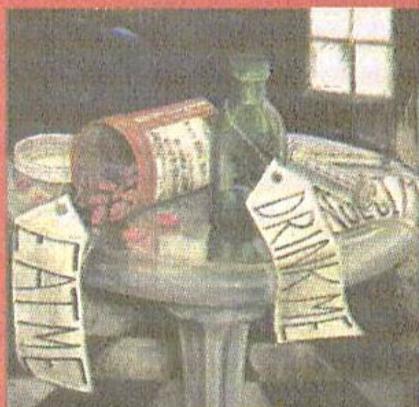
## Deadly Drugs

# What You Should Know

By Osama Rahman

### Deathtraps and BMW's

In recent times, local newspapers printed shocking stories about drug dealers apprehended with the possession of yaba, phenidyl and other narcotics. While this fact in itself was nothing new, what actually raised a lot of eyebrows was the fact that the criminals, who all seemed to hail from well-to-do families, admitted to the RAB officials that the majority of their clients were O level students. Lured by the flashy cars and flamboyant lifestyles that the dealers display, young people are falling into the nar-



cotics trap in increasing numbers. As stated in an article in the Prothom Alo on October 19, 2007, a victim, who requested to remain anonymous, explained how people who entered this deadly spiral of drugs were unable to get out even if they wanted to, because their dealers, or controllers, rather, kept them in check with threats of kidnapping or bodily harm. We at the Rising Stars decided to take a closer look at the drug problem plaguing our young people, and ways in which to deal with this menace.

"Until the point where I saw no way back, I didn't realize that I had destroyed my life. I had committed suicide in such a manner that though I could breath and eat I had no emotions left in me. I didn't see a future and I had no ear to confide in," 26 year old Salim\* recalls. "There was really no way out. I didn't have the courage to confess to my parents and I had no idea where to get help from." Salim continued. "Drugs were my door to a few moments of joy. I felt it freed me, but it trapped me in such a manner that I could see my life disappearing..." Salim broke off. It was an emotional day for Salim who had finally arrived back from Singapore after spending more than 2 and half years in a rehab over there. "I know what I have been through, I have lived through that. I am not going back there," Salim declared, grateful for a second chance at life. Nafees\*, a 23 year old has been addicted to cocaine since the age of 17, he claims. Coming from a well-off family, Nafees used to be a good student back in school, but his addiction brought his downfall. Expelled from school after repeated failures and then eventually being avoided by his one-time friends, Nafees gave in to a life of drugs. "It was the only way. I didn't have a second option; I didn't even have a life. I still don't, so tell me what the point is? At least I can get away from all the troubles when I am doing that." Nafees justified his decision. "Now everybody knows that I am an addict, it's out in the open. Do you think they would ever look at me in the right way? Do you think they'll send their daughters to marry with me or their sons to spend some time with me?" Nafees asks sarcastically. There were no positive answers to his questions and the fact that help is such a far cry for addicts in our society today, the increase in their numbers cannot be stopped without it.

### The Increasing Numbers

The above examples are just two from a 2.5 millions possible examples in our country. This staggering figure is all the more alarming when you know that the number does not contain all the drug addicts in our country. This figure only shows the number of substance abusers who have come out in the open. Therefore, it is understood that there are so much more people out there who haven't been counted yet and it is feared that the actual number is close to 3 millions.

Everybody talks about how it should be stopped and how it is crippling our society, more so when you consider that the new entrants in this Drug World are aged between 16-26, one can clearly see that the future looks somewhat bleak. But saying that drugs are bad and that it should be

controlled is clichéd. It's high time to do something about it, instead of sitting in your cozy couch, in front of the TV, and lamenting the lack of government control. In what many see as a very much narrow-minded society, people should really stop being "Oh, he takes drugs. Don't mix with him!" and think more in such a term as "He takes drugs. What can we do to help him?" Sentencing someone to a life of solitude isn't going to help that person, but offering him guidance and talking to him about it will encourage others to come forward and seek help without fearing rejection. Get the taboo concept out of your head and for the love of humanity, open your mind.

### Precautions To Take

Parents should see that their child does not get more money than needed. Once there is too much money and too little to spend on a child will naturally look for places where the money can be spent. Parents should also try to be friendly with their children, because always showing them that you are bigger and should be respected, tends to make them fear you and thus they may refuse to share. And when they do confess about something, talk it out with them, find out what happened and in the end be a good parent.

Once a person crosses 15, s/he should take responsibilities for their own actions. It is simple to say "No" when you know that your response is 100% correct. Drugs cannot make anyone cool but they can transform a person into a lifeless dummy and soon take away the person's life. Death due to drug abuse is very painful and not as easy as people think it is.

Parents should not avoid the topic of drugs, but should rather talk about it and give real life examples of people who have fallen prey to this poison. This would not only instill fear into the child's heart but also give him/her a reason to spite drugs. Practical examples work better than what you just hear. A picture is worth a thousand words and that is worth remembering. Schools should place a bit more priority on drugs and their harmful nature, than on

drugs and sports.

Teenagers should be involved in as much physical activities as possible. In most developed countries sports is the key to the door that leads away from drugs. Also, taking part in things that interest your child, such as writing or painting, can also lead them away from this deadly route, because sincere encouragement can help immensely.

### Availability of Drugs

The belief that drugs are sold behind locked doors and in dark corridors has been trashed many decades ago but still people wish to believe this. The reason for such a ludicrous belief is society's seemingly vague idea about today's world. The first step is not to say no, but it rather to accept the fact that there are drug-peddlers who live right outside our doors. Sure the law enforcers and the politicians have taken a strict stance against the consumption of drugs and there are numerous agencies and groups concerned about this matter, but none of that helps to decline the abuse of drugs. As hard to believe as it is, drugs are now being delivered to the customer's doorstep and all this is possible by just one phone call. Drugs can be about as cheap as 20 Taka for, say, weed and can also be as high as 1500. Plus the fact that everyone can be bribed diminishes the fear when purchasing drugs. Drugs are now sold as openly as pornography and accept the fact that our society's so-called moral values have failed to stop both.

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