

Wasfia's Everest

All Bangladeshis are proud of Wasfia's achievement. She proves that if you have a dream and if you work hard to pursue that dream, you will find a way to realise it. We all can draw strength from her character which is made of determination, humility and patriotism. We salute Wasfia for her gift to the country and thank *the Star* for this inspirational cover story on her.

Sabrina Akhter
 Gulshan, Dhaka

★★★

I am deeply moved by Wasfia's compassion and humility. The concluding quote: "Mount Everest and all the other great mountains gave me the opportunity to scale them. And for that, I'll forever be grateful to them." She truly has a beautiful mind.

Riaz Rahman
 Savar, Dhaka

Islam Is Peace

I felt truly proud and happy reading Eresh Jamal's article 'Rediscovering Islam' published

on November 14. The struggle and persistence of this young man in discovering the true Islam, learning, practicing and spreading the knowledge as every sincere Muslim should, is admirable. My prayers are with you Eresh, we need more people like you in Bangladesh.

Fatima Karim
 Gulshan, Dhaka

A Social Problem

I was shocked to read in a newspaper that a girl named Zohra was tortured by her husband because she was unable to pay dowry. When will such immorality acts be stopped? Dowry is one of the shameful social norms of our country. It is practiced by people from all walks of life regardless of their economic status. Poor people openly demand it at the time of the wedding. The 'upper class' people demand dowry in a different way often calling it a gift. Many Zohras are being tortured and even murdered in every corner of the country in the name



of dowry. The law enforcement agencies and the judiciary must see to it that people who commit such crimes are awarded the highest punishment under law.
 Md Al-Amin Jony
 School of Business, Asian University



The opinions expressed in these letters do not necessarily represent the views held by *the Star*.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINE:

Letters to the Editor, Star Diary and Write to Mita, with the writer's name and address, should be within 200 words. All articles should be within 1,200 words. A cover letter is not necessary, but every write-up should include the writer's name, phone number and email address (if any). While The Star

welcomes unsolicited articles and photographs, it cannot accept the responsibility of their loss or damage. The Star does not return unsolicited articles and photos. Response time for unsolicited write-ups ranges from three weeks to two months. All articles submitted are subject to editing for reasons of space and clarity.

All materials should be sent to: The Star magazine, 64-65, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215, Fax: 880-2-8125155 or emailed to: <thestarmagazine@gmail.com> It is recommended that those submitting work for the first time to The Star take a look at a sample copy beforehand. Our website is: <http://www.thedailystar.net/magazine>

The Colour of My Skin

In Bangladesh, we do not have any specific laws to control discriminatory and racist ads. Colour discrimination always discourages the youth to nourish their talent and self-esteem. We all have to realise that our skin, no matter what the shade, is always beautiful. And what makes beauty lasting is not how we look but what we do with our lives. We cannot expect foreigners to respect us and our dark skin if we do not respect ourselves. From our birth we are taught that everyone is equal and everyone deserves the same chance. But we soon find out that we do not practise what we preach. We highly appreciate the inspiring campaign 'Dark is Beautiful' of Nandita Das and wish her all the success.

Naznin Sultana Niti
 Dhaka University

Corporal punishment: expression of suicidal tendencies

If children are the future of Bangladesh, why damage them?

The question was posed by a long-time friend of Bangladesh, Sir Frank Peters in his wake-up-Bangladesh-and-take-notice report about the horrors and cruelty to our children in schools through the outlawed practices of corporal punishment. His provocative report made me really think about what effects corporal punishment could have on the child receiving it and those who witness it. What message does corporal punishment teach to our children? Is it one of violence? Might is right? Violence is the solution to all problems?

To find the answer, all a person needs do is to look at the present-day sick society. The youth members of political parties only know how to communicate with violence of the worst kind. They demonstrate their ignorance, disregard and contempt for people and public property openly in the streets, clutching



Nandita Das



What Time is it?

Since childhood, we have been taught to respect the value of time. Our entire lives are based on punctuality. Everyone knows that time is valuable and we cannot afford to waste it. I believe time is there and we must learn how to use it more efficiently.

Aisha Akhter
 Dhanmondi, Dhaka

bamboos and machetes menacingly. Even Hitler's brown shirts didn't behave so badly.

While one can almost accept that the present society is beyond repair, surely it is the duty of all concerned citizens, teachers and politicians to put a stop to the present rot and sow the seeds of a new Bangladesh in which future generations, at least, can live in harmony and express their political indifferences in a peaceful and respectful manner. Sir Frank provocatively posed the question 'if children are the future of Bangladesh, why damage them?' and now I ask the same. It makes no sense to promote a future for Bangladesh styled on the sick present. He also said, "any nation that promotes corporal punishment is a clear outward expression of its suicidal tendencies" and I fully agree.

Ann Annis
 On Email

Confessions of a reader

I love the content and presentation of the articles of *the Star* magazine. It is everything a reader can expect from a weekend magazine.

Aysa Alam Pinky
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