

**The Power of Love**

I find it shocking that CRP is the only rehabilitation centre in Bangladesh for victims of spinal cord injury. The question that comes to my mind is this: What would have happened if Valerie Taylor wasn't there to provide care and training to these people? I cannot imagine how the state and the society can be so indifferent to these people. I hope the government and the private sector will open facilities where victims of SCI can

receive treatment, therapies and vocational training. God bless Valerie Taylor and all the people are working so hard to rehabilitate patients who would otherwise have no hope.

*Mohammad Ishaq Dhanmondi, Dhaka*

**True Champions**

Two days after reading the deeply moving cover story, I went to visit a patient at CRP, Savar. Another patient told me that our basketball team became the cham-

panion. Congratulations to Valerie, the team and the trainers at CRP. I saw humanity at its best during my visit. The affection and love with which paralysed patients are being treated by the nurses is nothing like what we usually see in most other places. The most amazing thing is each patient I talked to had a smile on their face. I think Valerie Taylor's best achievement lies not in treating their paralysed body but healing their wounded soul. Valerie is indeed the light that

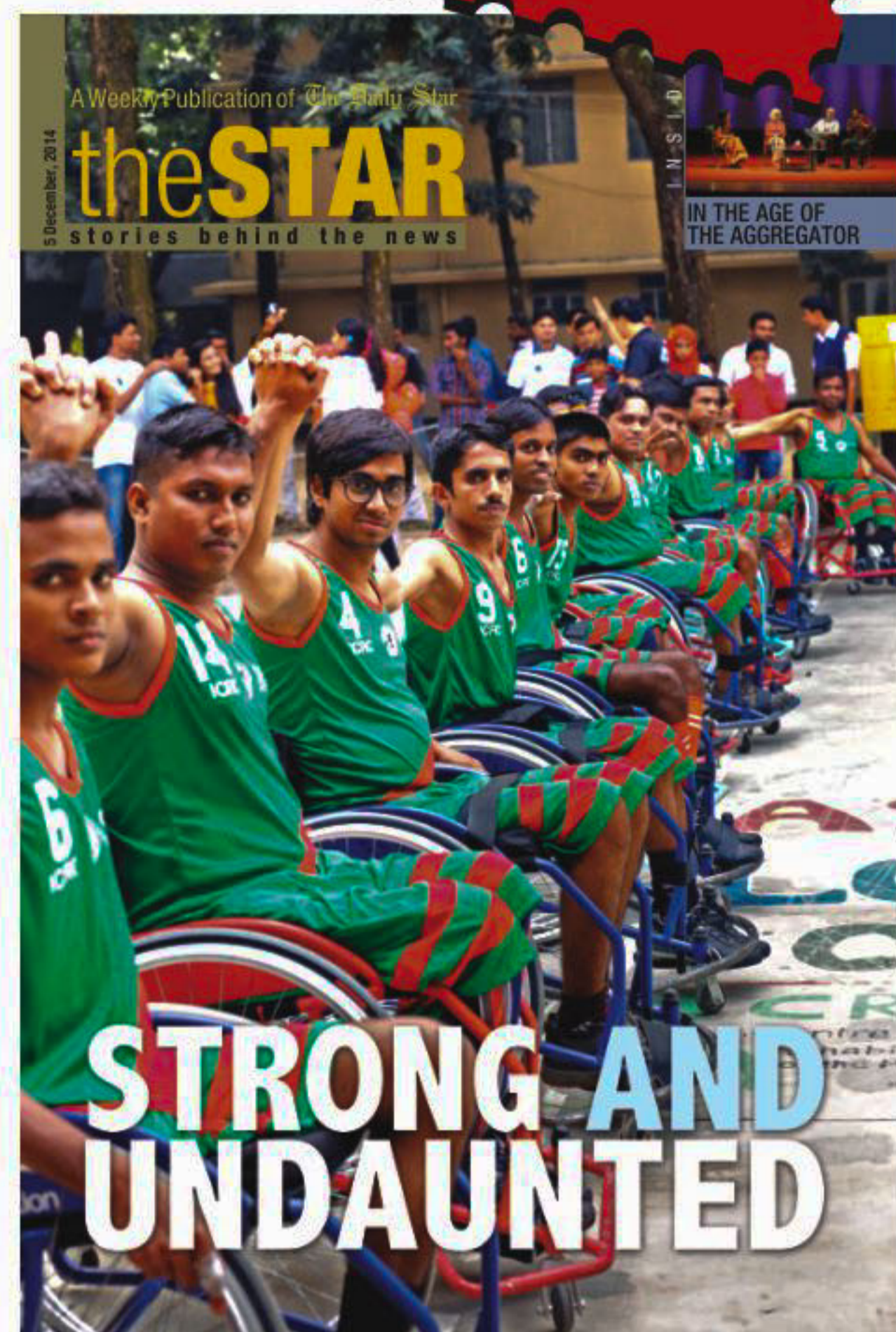


PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

**Kashmir in My Heart**

I am very happy to see the letter from Sumona Haq on the interview (published on December 5, 2014) of Kashmir-born British writer Mirza Waheed. It is very true that Kashmiris are perfectly capable of choosing their own future. Both India and Pakistan agreed to solve the Kashmir issue through diplomatic channels and they even fought three wars. That didn't solve any problem. Neither country kept their promises. All Kashmiris must be united and try to solve their domestic problems all by themselves. Let there be peace in the valley that has often been described as a "heaven on earth" by writers and poets.

*Jamshaid Taher*

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>

**Disregard for law**

The government's recent move to punish jaywalkers where foot bridges are available have been met with a lot of criticism by the media. Footbridges were built so people could cross the roads safely. They are a little hard to climb but they are safer for sure. But we are lazy. We prefer the shortcuts even it means putting our own lives at risk. It is true that every junction in the city does not have a foot bridge. But people do not use it wherever there is one. There is a footbridge at Shamoli and College gate. At any given hour of the day you will see hardly anyone on them. It is a very busy and dangerous road. But people do not seem to care. They cross the road while talking on their cell phones. A lot of people have been killed in this manner at these two critical points of the city. What's wrong with telling people to use the foot bridge where there is one? One can argue that the laws are not being implemented properly and oftentimes law enforcement agencies are harassing the ordinary people. Not every criminal gets punished for their crime. That does not mean laws should not be there.

**On the Hay Festival Issue**

I want to thank *the Star* for covering Hay Festival in its issue on 28 November, 2014. I cannot sum up my experience during the Festival in words. I was in the midst of 150 Bangladeshi authors and performers and over 60

international scholars and thinkers from 13 countries. It was indeed an enlightening experience for me. I attended several sessions on poetry, history and science. I am sure Hay Festival will be more successful in future and attract more audience.

*Anika Tasneem  
Dhaka University*

**Sinking Dhaka**

Dhaka is a sinking city. The traffic congestion, the pollution, lack of playgrounds, crime and the extremely high population density--all have made this city almost unlivable. Most of the public transports seen on the streets of Dhaka are unfit. No one follows the traffic rules. All the pave-

PHOTO: STAR FILE

