

A visual (Af)fair

The cover story about Chobimela was very encouraging for an aspiring photographer like me. Now in its eighth year, Chobimela has become a platform for talented photographers of the world to showcase their works. It is a great achievement for our country. I hope Chobimela will grow into an even bigger international event and draw the attention from more photographers from around the globe. I want to thank the writer for such a visually-rich feature.

Jasmine Akter

Baridhara, Dhaka

Democracy Vs Political Parties

According to the constitution, Bangladesh is a democratic country. But no political party exercises democracy within their parties. Politics seem to be determined by a handful of leaders who are corrupt and incompetent. There is no reflection of the sentiment of the common people

in these parties. Democracy is not about holding an election every five years. It is about establishing the rule of law and creating equal opportunities for all. We hope that the leaders of the main political parties will keep that in mind and start a dialogue immediately. The country is burning. It is our country. Let us not destroy it. Let us build it together.

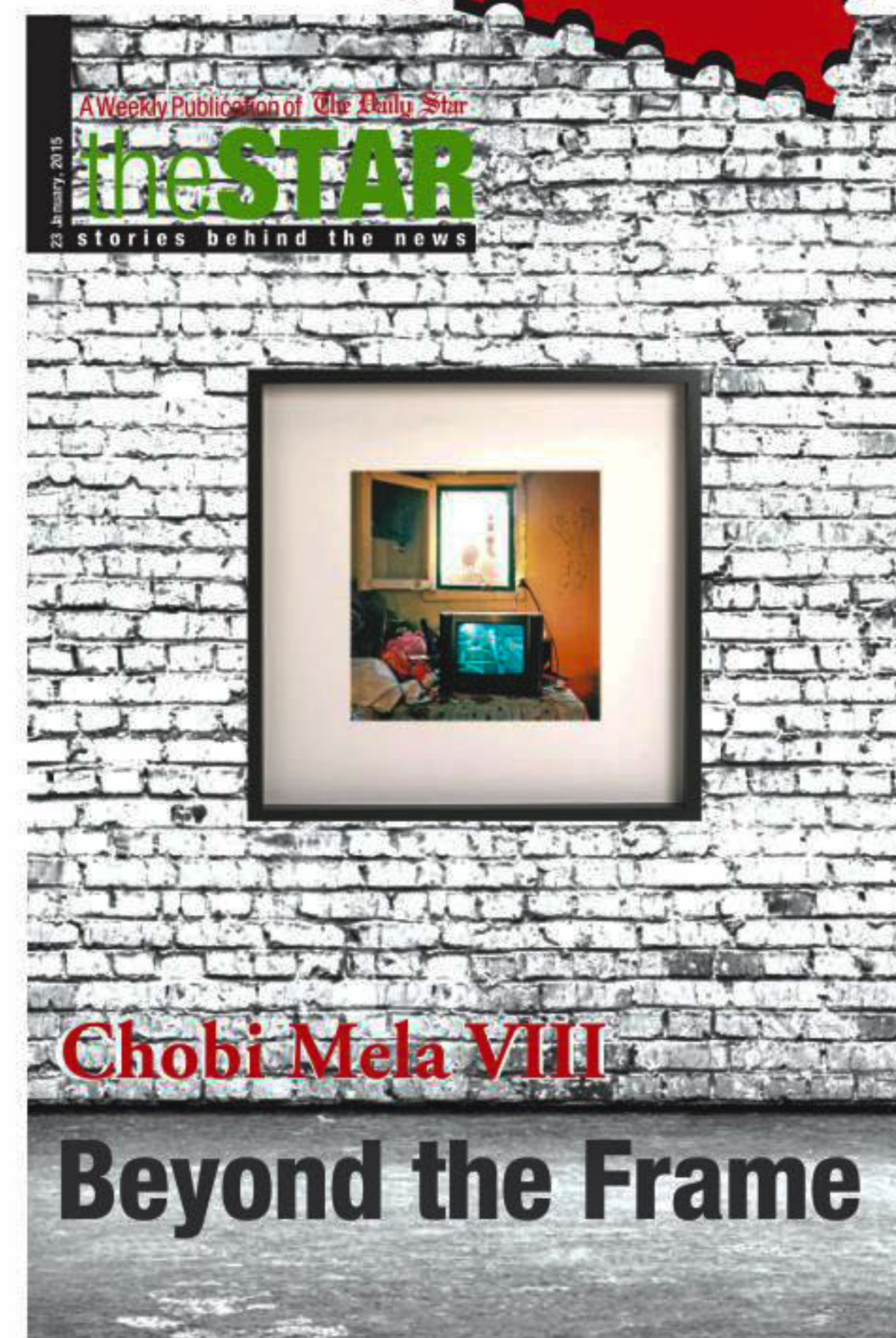
Rahim Uddin

Ultra, Dhaka

Be respectful

In 2011 the French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo defamed Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). I do not understand why they should insult someone's faith in the name of freedom of expression. The extremists took revenge by killing them. Islam does not support extremism. The Quran tells us to "Be tolerant, command what's right, and pay no attention to foolish people". But we hope the west will no more allow disrespecting religion in the name of freedom of expression. No

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magazine should agree to reprint the defamatory images of our beloved Prophet (PBUH).

Md Israfil Hossen

Bijoy Ekattor Hall

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Punish Them

I don't know who we should plead to. Every day miscreants are burning people by throwing petrol bombs or Molotov cocktails in the name of expressing their democratic demands. Who has given them the licence to kill innocent people? Ordinary people do not care about politics. They want peace. We urge the law enforcing agencies to capture these criminals. We also beseech the learned judiciary to hand the highest punishment to these miscreants.

Shazzad Khan

Gulshan, Dhaka



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 Quarter-life Crisis

I want to thank to the Star Magazine and the writer of the article entitled *The Quarter-life Crisis* [published on January 16, 2015] for addressing such an important and sensitive issue. Thousands of students graduate from universities every year with high hopes about their future. But soon they find out that without powerful relatives or family money it is really difficult to make it in our country. Good academic results are not enough. I recently graduated from a university and I feel like a fish out of water. I don't have relatives who are rich and powerful. Sometimes I think about starting my own business. But I am worried about where I will get the money. There are many young people like me who are confused about how to get to the next level in their lives. I hope the job market will be more fair and transparent.

Shah Alam Rajin

Madhabdi, Narsingdi

Justice for All

Girls face discrimination and inequality worldwide in areas such as right to education/access to education, nutrition, legal rights, medical care, and protection from discrimination, violence against women and child marriage. There are many people in the society who treat their sons and daughters differently. They do not understand that girls are equally capable. When a girl does something wrong, parents say, 'You are a disgrace to our society.' However, if the same mistake is done by a boy, he is forgiven. Many families in our country consider girls to be a burden. When a baby boy is born everyone celebrates the event. When a girl is born, the reaction is quite different. Some families consider it useless to invest in higher studies of women. Statistics show that the neglect continues as girls grow up. Young girls receive less food,

healthcare and fewer vaccinations than boys. Their status does not improve much when they become women. Tradition calls for women to eat last, often reduced to picking over the leftovers from the men and boys of the family. Nine million more girls than boys miss out on school every year, according to UNICEF. While their brothers continue to go to classes or pursue their hobbies and play, the girls do the bulk of the housework. Education is the tool that can help break this pattern of gender discrimination and bring lasting change in developing countries. When we educate a boy, we educate a person. When we educate a woman, we educate a family. Countries and societies that have created equal opportunities for women are more developed economically than those that haven't.

Tasfia Afroz Muntaha
Mastermind School