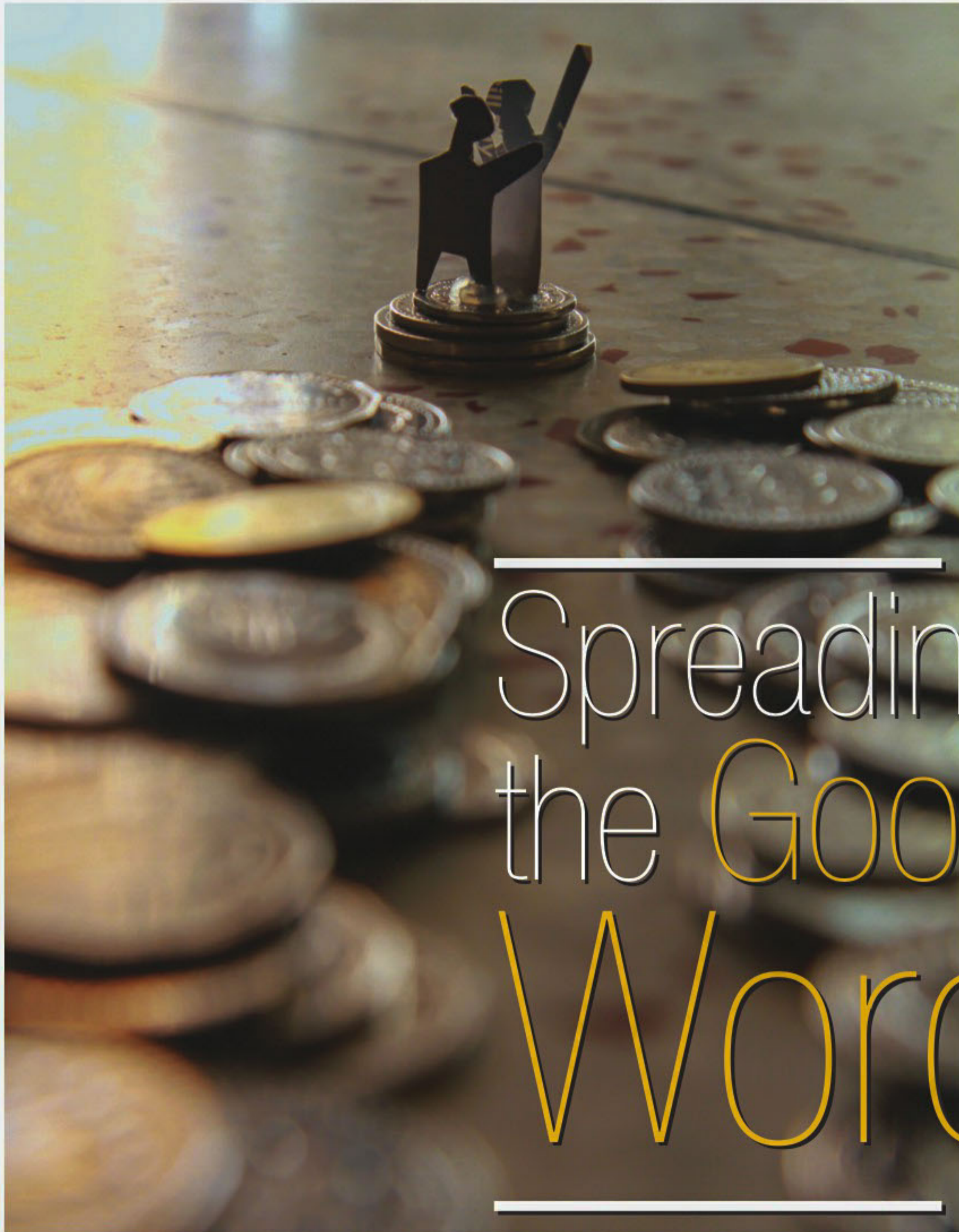


MUSINGS I

A few days back, a Facebook post shared by Marina Mahathir, the renowned Malaysian socio-political activist and daughter of the fourth Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Mahathir Mohammad, was re-posted by many others. Many of my friends shared the story of the Bangladeshi man, Mehedee, who returned Marina's iPad, which she had left behind in the kebab stall where he worked.

26 year-old Mehedee is currently living in Malaysia after completing his graduation in Accounting and Information Systems from Jagannath University in Dhaka. As Marina offered him a reward for his honesty, Mehedee refused, adding, "All I want is your prayer." Marina praised this Bangladeshi young man's honesty, his rightful upbringing and put an end to her post by wishing him good luck.

These are a few incidents that I learnt about from the media. I am sure there are hundred other stories that go unreported and unappreciated. In a world where we keep reading and hearing stories of dishonesty and fraud, where we know for a fact that our country ranks 14th in the list of most corrupt nations, where we need to pay double the money for a train ticket to travel anywhere, where we need to keep some extra money in the other pocket for bribing officials and getting our work done, these occasions re-install our belief in ourselves.



Spreading the Good Word

FAYEKA ZABEEN SIDDIQA

PHOTO: KAZI TAHSIN AGAZ APURBO

Like many others I was enthralled by the post when I read it first. I was happy by the praise received by a Bangladeshi but what made me happier was that honesty, a rare trait in today's world still prevails among us.

This is good news.

Remember the Bangladeshi taxi driver who returned Dh1.2 million in lost diamonds and cash left by his customer? 31 year-old Abdul Halim Mohammed Manu was highly honored not only by the Dubai Taxi Corporation but also by the international media when he returned the property to its rightful owner after finding it in his taxi.

The fact that Manu returned this large amount of unattended money on his own initiative through reporting to the police amazed the world.

I consider that a good news as well.

Last year one of my colleagues from *the Star*, the former weekend Magazine of *The Daily Star* reported a story on a poor rickshaw puller who refused to take a hefty bundle of Tk 500 notes from his drunk passenger who kept forcing him to take it. Instead of taking the money, Abdul Gafur, the self-content, honest rickshaw puller drove the half-conscious passenger to his home, tucking all the money in his pocket.

StraightTalk

IN DEFENCE OF CARBOHYDRATES

NADIA KABIR BARB

My name is Nadia Kabir Barb and I am a carbaholic. There I said it, it's official. I have known for a while that I have an unnatural love of all things carb filled. If I had my way, biriyani would be considered a balanced diet. Come on, if you think about it, on top of the carbohydrates you get from the rice, you also get your protein from the meat, the ghee constitutes the fats and the potatoes can double up as vegetables. I can tell that the nutritionists and health conscious of you out there are not buying into this theory.

I did once try to cut out carbs from my diet but found that all it did was turn me into a grumpy, irritable and rather hungry person. Needless to say my resolution was very short lived. In my defence some research has suggested that eating carbohydrates can raise the serotonin level in the brain which is a feel good hormone.

Nowadays the word 'carb' or carbohydrate has, rather unfairly in my opinion, earned a bad reputation. What we can forget in a world where proteins have become the good guys, is that carbohydrates are our primary source of energy.

People often assume that carbs are bad for us but this would be an incorrect assumption. There are two

refer to the glycemic index of a food. This tells us how quickly and how high our blood sugar will rise after eating the carbohydrate contained in a particular food item. Foods with a lower glycemic index are considered healthier for us, and make us feel full longer after eating them. Most, but not all, complex carbs fall into the low glycemic index category.

Obviously this is a very simplified explanation but I just felt the need to defend the often maligned reputation of carbohydrates across the world. For my fellow carbaholics, we don't need to strip carbs from our life, as long as we maintain a balanced diet which, unfortunately, biriyani does not qualify as.



PHOTO: INTERNET

types of carbohydrates, simple and complex. Simple carbohydrates are easy to digest, release energy quickly and though they may fill you up immediately, do not keep you feeling full for long. Quite frequently the foods that are considered simple carbs are high in sugar and low in fibre. The well-known culprits are white rice, white bread, white pasta, cakes, biscuits and even fizzy drinks and yes, even I can admit that they are bad for you especially if consumed frequently or in large quantities.

Although fruits and vegetables are simple carbohydrates, as they contain natural sugars, our body processes the sugars in them differently and effectively treats them as complex carbohydrates.

Complex carbohydrates are foods that take longer to break down in our body and release energy slowly and more consistently. Brown rice, whole-grain pasta, beans, whole wheat bread, whole oats, etc. are foods that fall into the category of complex carbs.

These days instead of talking about good or bad carbohydrates which can be misleading, dieticians