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# PICTORIAL PECULIARITIES

FARAH GHUZNAVI

Britain's National Gallery has become one of a growing number of museums to ban the use of selfie sticks on its premises, citing concerns over the possibility of damage to artworks (as well as the risk of injuring other visitors), as its reasons for doing so. The selfie has become a ubiquitous part of modern life. People can be seen everywhere recording for posterity images of themselves with potential objects of interest (e.g. flowering trees, statues, etc) as well as yet more pictures of themselves staring off moodily into space (preferably against the backdrop of a rice field or a stormy sky).

Many would argue, with some justification, that selfies are mostly harmless. But there are some darker sides to the picture (pun intended). For example, a recent US study found that men who posted more photos of themselves online tended to score higher in measures of narcissism and psychopathy. While posting more photos was found to be consistent with both those tendencies, editing photos before posting was only associated

PHOTO: STAR FILE



A RECENT US STUDY FOUND THAT MEN WHO POSTED MORE PHOTOS OF THEMSELVES ONLINE TENDED TO SCORE HIGHER IN MEASURES OF NARCISSISM AND PSYCHOPATHY.



PHOTO: ATA MOHAMMAD ADNAN

"Where flowers bloom, so does hope."  
— Lady Bird Johnson

**SNAPSHOT**

## MAILBOX

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### The Heinous Act

This Bengali New Year started with extreme horror and uncertainty for the women of our country. A series of sexual assaults in public places during Pahela Baishakh celebration has shown that the words called ethics, virtue, and morality have been erased from our dictionary. Through this letter, I would like to suggest that our religious leaders should address this issue during religious and community gatherings. Punishing the criminals is necessary but not the ultimate way of prevention. It is only the good practices which can remove the bad practices.  
Hasal Al Banna  
Mahakhali, Dhaka

### "The Aftermath"

I found this week's spotlight article (published on April 17, 2015) quite informative and thought provoking. I also liked the cover photo very much. It nicely depicts the hub of our buzzing economy. But I am not quite sure whether it goes with the cover title "In the Wake of Disaster". However, the article is well written and covered a wide range of professionals who have explained how hartals have destroyed our economy. However, now we are going to face another election. Can we be assured by the competing mayoral candidates that they will not call hartal if they are defeated by their opponents?  
Farhana Khan  
Dhanmondi, Dhaka



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

The opinions expressed in these letters do not necessarily represent the views of the Star Weekend.

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with narcissism i.e. inflated self-image (often motivated by deeper insecurities). It seems psychopathy involves impulsive behaviour, so those individuals just want to put the pictures online immediately, and don't bother with editing!

It should be clarified that this doesn't mean that men (or for that matter, women) who post selfies are actually narcissists or psychopaths. But they do score higher than others in terms of exhibiting these anti-social traits, even when they fall within the normal range of behaviour. And while this particular study focused on men, it is likely that findings would be similar if such research was undertaken with women.

On a much lighter note, in this selfie-plagued world, I was surprised to recently hear a twenty-something friend say that although she is quite happy to post the occasional picture of herself online, she doesn't like taking selfies. When I asked why, she said that she didn't like the angle from which most selfies were taken. "They make you look like those terrible villains in Bangla cinemas, where the bad guy is leering at the captive heroine, and saying 'Eibar tomakey peyechhi, shundori' (this time I finally have you trapped, my lovely)!" Anyway, after reading about the darker side of selfies, I decided not to tell her that a selfie stick would probably allow her to take that picture from any angle she wanted to...

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