



PHOTO: KAZI TAHSIN AGAZ APURBO

"You have to find what sparks a light in you so that you in your own way can illuminate the world."
— Oprah Winfrey

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Mad Genius

I am an avid reader of the *Star Weekend*. I would like to thank the *Star Weekend* for publishing (Published on May 15, 2015) about Kazi Abul Kasem in its regular Mad Genius Column. Kazi Abul Kasem is a pioneer in the art of cartoon drawing and journalism in Bangladesh. However, it is very unfortunate that we could not recognize his contribution properly. I hope that the *Star Weekend* will publish a good, elaborate and informative feature article one day so that we can know more about his life and contribution.

Manaz Khan
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Bridging the Gap

It is very hopeful that a constructive approach has been started to bridge the gap between gender-justice and religion. It is quite a popular practice to interpret religion as an institution against gender justice. It is really appreciable that scholars from different countries have come to Bangladesh to talk about an inclusive approach to prevent gender discrimination within religious framework. These kinds of initiatives should also include the religious leaders from different religious communities to make an impact in the society.

Abraar Sakib
Uttara, Dhaka



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

LIFESTYLE

MEN IN APRONS

OSAMA RAHMAN

PHOTOS: SHAHREAR KABIR HEEMEL

To say that the currently airing Rupchanda-The Daily Star Super Chef was making some strides in shattering stereotypes would be a simplistic statement. In reality, the show isn't breaking stereotypes but rather serving quite a powerful statement about how silly the stereotypes we conform to really are. Crucially, the prevailing belief that men do not cook for enjoyment but only do so professionally was a notion the show has managed to change completely.

Many of the male participants had joined not only to win or because they had worked in the culinary field professionally, but rather because they genuinely loved to cook. This was a refreshing sight, while at the same time was an interesting take on the biased social constructs we accept as being the hard truth. Most of the male participants actually learned to cook because they wanted to or rather because it became their passion at one point.

The male participants themselves add to the intrigue of the show, with their story serving as excellent commentaries on how wrong we perceive a man in an apron to be. Abdullah Al Bari, one of the participants from the audition rounds joined the competition, having learned to cook while pursuing his PhD in the United States. While he started because it was a necessity, Bari soon fell in love with the culinary world, experimenting and learning on his own. In a few years time only, he had become quite a good cook and now had another skill set to boast of apart from his PhD. SM Sakib, another popular contestant in show, explained his own love for cooking: "I love cooking. I have served as a professional chef for years but no one taught me. I taught myself, seeing others, because I actually enjoyed cooking



myself," Sakib said when asked how he came into this field. Sakib took his love for cooking a step further when he had forgone the traditional "jamai ador" on his wedding day by actually cooking the entire wedding feast.

Navid, yet another participant, was not only an adept Italian cuisine master before he joined the show, but he actually taught his wife, another participant, how to

master the arts too. "We both love eating and now we both love cooking. My mother and I helped my wife to learn how to make Italian cuisine, along with a few others," Navid, beaming with pride at how well his significant other had done.

Interestingly though, one mustn't need to look too far into Rupchanda-The Daily Star Super Chef to see how redundant the ideas associated with men cooking out of

hobby are. The programme's judge and Executive Chef of Watercress, Chef Tazammul Huq Tareq alone can shatter all assumptions. He separates the men from the boys with a fork, spoon and a hard stare and he cooks like a dream. Stereotypes? Not here. Tune into to NTV to catch the latest episodes of Rupchanda-The Daily Star Super Chef every Fridays and Sundays at 9:00 pm!

From A Fading Era

I liked the topic of this week's (published on May 22, 2015) 'Spotlight' of the *Star Weekend* (From A Fading Era). However, the article could include more people belonging to different kinds of odd and extinct professions. For example, soothsayers in Dhaka city, monkey trainers of old Dhaka, rattan weavers and many more. Dhaka, in fact, is a city full of people from different background and culture. Also the story has suddenly ended without revealing the day to day struggle of these sellers of oddities.
Samia Alam
Uttar Badda, Dhaka

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