

# NOTICE

## LS searching for new writers

Do you have a passion for writing? With a flair for fashion are you an earnest follower well aware of the current trends? Or are you one of those vocal individuals who like to speak out on social issues? Well if you have a way with words, we have good news for you!

Star Lifestyle is looking for a fresh group of contributors willing to write for this prestigious publication on a regular basis. The candidates should ideally be between the age of

20 and 30, and willing to test the waters of journalism. This will include reporting, interviewing, writing shop reviews and a wide range of related activities.

Interested individuals can send their resume along with a 300-word write-up (unedited) to raffat@thecitizenbd.net by 30 November, 2015. Please put "Sample Write-up" in the subject of the email. A good command over English and an interesting style of writing are expected from each applicant.

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**BOARDING PASS**  
BY SHEEMA HOSSAIN

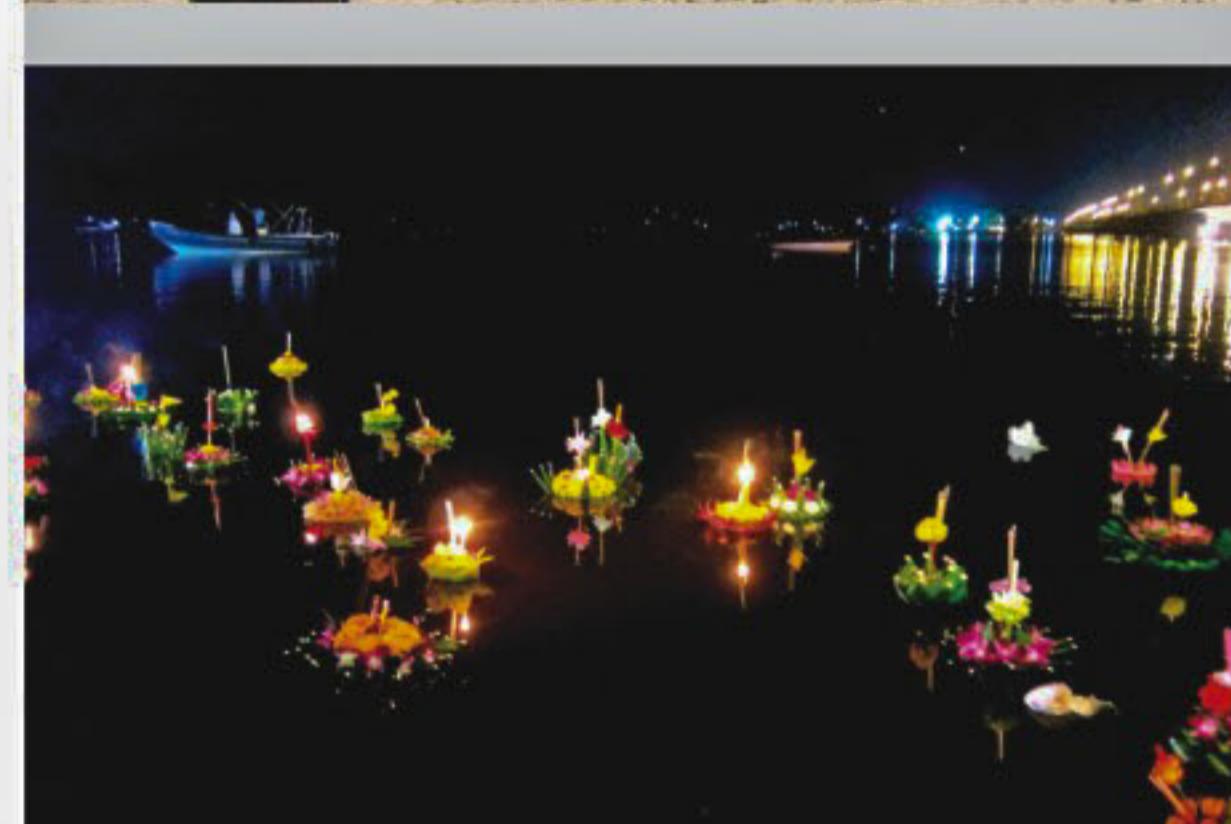


## A year in Thailand

Solitude is a remarkable thing; it can make a philosopher out of anyone. I spent a quiet year in the south of Thailand in a place called Songkhla. Language differences being a barrier to communication, for the first time in my life as a Bengali, I spent more time thinking and walking up and down hills than talking.

I had a Chinese friend who shared my love of food and every weekend we would get on a tuktuk and head to our next gastronomic adventure. A favourite was the beach where makeshift outdoor restaurants served fresh seafood steamed in lemon sauce with rice. It was here that I learnt to fly a kite.

One day I decided to learn to ride a bike. I never did as a child and I figured 28 years was a good age to start. There was a park next to a lake near my place and armed with a colleague and my friend, the lessons began. The next day, however, I was alone, or so I thought. An adult attempting to learn how to ride a bike by herself is bound to



attract the attention of most onlookers. It didn't seem to bother anyone that we did

not have a common language. People gestured wildly to explain to me what they thought of my way of trying (I was doing it wrong) and how I should do it (each person had their own method).

I did a lot of learning that one year. I learnt to live alone, to kayak, and to put together a wooden lamp frame with a hammer and nails. I taught myself to snorkel and nearly got carried too far into the sea. I learnt that I was wrong most of the time and that 'toilet' was a word universally understood.

Things, however, were never boring. While sitting next to the beach after dinner in the beautiful island of Koh Lipe, I started chatting with a Finnish guy. In the course of the conversation I asked him what he did. He smiled for longer than such a question would generally necessitate and said, 'I'm a poop driver'. The day before Loy Krathong, a Thai festival, my colleagues and students taught me how to make a krathong, a floating flower arrangement with a base

made from banana leaves and trunk. One of my fellow teachers explained to me, as she painstakingly sewed together banana leaves in a weave design that she was going to wish for a boyfriend. The next evening some of us drove to the park, krathongs in arms. As our car inched towards our destination through the traffic, I noticed something curious in the sky. What looked like thousands of blazing stars moving across the night sky turned out to be floating lanterns. As soon we had managed to float our krathongs into the lake, a sight in itself to behold, we joined the thousands of people in the park and soon watched our own giant floating lantern take off.

Towards the end of my stay, as I was leaving office one day, my fellow teacher caught up with me, 'Sheema, remember how I wished for a boyfriend? Well, it came true!' And she beamed.

**Photo: Sheema Hossain**



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