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2016**

Looking back into the year that was, is a ritual that cannot be missed as it provides priceless insight into what we have achieved, how we have gained strength and where we have failed. It provides us with a path we should follow as we step into a brand new year. There have been harsh lessons learnt at home and globally. We cannot but remember the July 1 carnage in Gulshan that brought an entire nation to its knees psychologically and economically but also made us see the reality of homegrown terror. It also strengthened our resolve to fight back with the true spirit of our cultural identity. We have been benumbed with the constant bombardment of death and destruction in the Middle East, with the plight of Syrian refugees accepted and rejected by a West that had created their crisis in the first place. We have been taken by surprise at unexpected political occurrences such as Brexit and the

astounding victory of Donald Trump followed by many others like him all over the world. We have been confronted by the growing Rohingya crisis that seems to have reached a dead end. The year has shown us the world's most brutal, intolerant and non-inclusive side, something that we must examine and ponder upon as we enter a new year. But there have been moments of sheer joy and pride for us Bangladeshis in the sparks of excellence shown by our sports men and women, the resilience of our economy, our steady exports and remittances, the bountiful crops our farmers have given us, our vibrant music festivals, our artistes and performers as well as those rare individuals who quietly devote their lives to making positive change to society.

This issue is our gift to our valuable readers and gives glimpses of 2016 – the stories that drove the news, the unsung heroes of our

society, how our young people have seen last year and what their aspirations are for the future, the recognitions we have attained, the books some of our intellectuals have read, the global trends in politics that will shape our future and the luminaries we have lost forever but who have left their legacy of wisdom behind for posterity.

It is a time for introspection and reality checks, recognition and acknowledgement. As we start a New Year let us try to heal the wounds of the past and make sure that they may not reopen. Let us celebrate the brave, the adventurous and the determined who constantly inspire us to fight all odds and never give up on trying to do what is right, noble and just.

Happy New Year dearest readers and patrons!

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