

PRESENTING

THE VOICES OF THE YOUTH

SARAH ANJUM BARI

It is that special time of the year. As winter mists descend over the glitter and chime of festivities, there is also the nostalgia of yet another year having gone by. "It has been an eventful year," we claim each time, and yet the end of 2016 feels especially different from the others. The past 12 months have been eventful, but not always in ways we wanted. As Bangladesh continued to weave itself ever more intricately into the goings-on across the world, we felt the burns of terrorism, violence, and racial discrimination plaguing the global community. Homebred evils of child abuse, sexual assault, and intolerance of diversity were thrown into harsh limelight, reminding us of how much more we still have to overcome. And yet, it was a year of victories in sports and advances in economic development and international affiliations. As both the highs and lows of the past year have shown, be it the horror of the Holey Artisan Bakery carnage or the discovery of the talented 19-year-old Mehedi Hasan Miraz, much of what happens to a nation is driven by its youth. In that spirit, The Daily Star asks young Bangladeshi adults from different social and educational backgrounds about the best and worst of the past year, what they hope the new year will bring and how they think the youth of this country can be more meaningfully engaged in building a nation that can fulfil their dreams.

