

# HOW TO BE A PAGRI

## ZOHEB MASHIUR

In an age of globalisation we are at risk of having our own home-grown culture swamped by foreign imports. While we shouldn't shut out the world, it's important we try to be more active in celebrating the things that are undoubtedly ours, lest they fade away. The turban is an ancient and integral part of Bangladeshi culture [No, it isn't – sub-editor] and I can't think of anything more representative and worth preserving [Nokshikatha, boatmen's songs, indigenous traditions... you really haven't thought this through – sub-ed].

So without any more preamble, let's talk about how you can go about repping Bangladeshi culture on an international stage by becoming a turban. [Haha, what? – sub-ed]

Oh, wait, silly me, I misspoke [You probably did – sub-ed]. If we're making a stand against cultural imperialism we should start with our language. It's not a turban, it's a pagri [Uh, sure, but that's not the problem here – sub-ed].

[Hey, guys, did any of you ask Zoheb to write "How to Be a Pagri"? A Pagri. Yeah, the thing you wear on your head when you get married. What do you mean, "What the \*\*\*\*?" Don't ask me. Ask him! – sub-ed]

While it's not currently possible, scientifically, to transform the human body into a bolt of cloth, there are many viable processes that can turn you into an effective substitute. [Look, call Zoheb and see if he's OK, if he needs help, whatever. Reader, just hold on, we'll figure this out. Don't panic – sub-ed] If you'd rather just become the fabric instead, I know of several more magical solutions to your problem that I can't write here because of SHOUT's pro-science agenda; email me. [We STRONGLY advise you not to contact the writer until we have established what's going on. We certainly don't advise you to let him show you the magic – sub-ed]

First thing you have to do is get thin. Really, really thin. Like, .5 millimetres thin. Ditch that special diet and anorexic body anxiety: nothing beats some good old exercise. Specifically, you need to do stretches. As you stretch out the current volume of your body will remain constant; so if length and breadth are increasing then width must decrease. The human form is highly plastic and will retain the shape you force it to attain. [Neither exercise nor anatomy work this way. Stop reading this please, we're very sorry – sub-ed]. Do an hour of uninterrupted stretching and your body's dimensions will begin to alter. Within a mere five years you can achieve a kombol-like thickness. [Oh, dear God – sub-ed]

The issue then is of motor control

in your new form. As you can imagine a lot of effort has to go into making your muscles work while they're stretched out like noodles. To maintain proper muscle tone you have to do regular strength exercises – though be careful not to do it to the point where you bulk up because then you'll just have more body mass to thin out. A couple of hours a week should do it, if you are regular. [So you got Zoheb to pick up the phone? What does he have to say for himself? Eh? He doesn't know what you're talking about? He never wrote "How to be a Pagri"? Then who did?]

With your muscles still strong enough to take you to the next stage another three years should get you to a katha-like thickness and – depending on how well your muscles are holding together at this point – another year should be enough for the final bout of stretcharoo that has you at the ideal thickness for turbanhood. [Why are you guys looking at me like that? Yeah, of course my hands are on the keyboard,

I'm writing these editor's notes, aren't I? Someone has to do some real work around here – sub-ed]

Now's the time for the real trick: tuck, fold and twist just right – YouTube the technique – and voila! You're a pagri! Tada! Get yourself a friend to sew you up a nice jewel or two and you're ready to be the crowning glory of any wedding. [Eh? What do you mean "That's not all you seem to be writing?" If I wrote any more I'd – oh Dear God you're right! It's me! I'm the one who's been writing this all along! – sub-ed]

[Help me, please, I can't stop! – sub-ed] Having become the best turban you can be, you will stand eternal as a living

embodiment of everything that is true and brave about Bangladeshi culture. Because you are now also immortal. That wasn't part of the plan, but it just happened – isn't it great? [Just take my hands away from this keyboard! I can't control them, it's like they have a mind of their own and that mind is really weird! – sub-ed]

*The author of this article is a sub-editor who masqueraded as the writer Zoheb Mashiur in order to – actually, we never found out. It was all really odd. The sub-ed is with his family now and we're assured that with some rest he'll be as good as new. You can complain to us at shoutds@gmail.com and for a change we have to admit we deserve it.*

