



Bonhishikha - Unlearn Gender



SYEDA SAMARA MORTADA

"Issh lal lipstick, rastar meye shajte chachho naki?"
"Tumi radhte parona, jamaike khawaba ta ki?"

There are different ways in which the term "gender" is interpreted, often confused with concepts around feminism or women empowerment. The simplest way of explaining gender might be that, while "sex" refers to one's biological being, "gender" is socially, culturally and contextually constructed. Modernists symbolise gender as being fluid—a state of being that is in transition, and anything but fixed. However, in societies by and large, gender is used to explain what it means to be a woman, or a man (concepts around femininity and masculinity), to define their roles, that ultimately gives rise to stereotypes, prejudices and gender-based notions. Bonhishikha is a non-profit, voluntary Bangladeshi organisation that creates a platform where the youth can have dialogues about gender and sexuality, topics that are hush-hush in the context of Bangladesh. Tasaffy Hossain, Founder of Bonhishikha says, "It urges the youth to share their stories, stereotypes and prejudices that constrict them and to unlearn

gender in the process". Based on Eve Ensler's The Vagina Monologues, Bonhishikha produced its first show "It's a SHE Thing" in the year 2015 that featured stories around abuse and everyday violence that urban women in Dhaka face and how they overcome these challenges. In 2016, a second production titled "Men don't TALK" was put to stage, that demonstrated issues around masculinity, and how it is to grow up to be a "man" in urban Dhaka. Starting from stories on domestic violence, to sex workers, social adherence and LGBT rights, the productions feature multiple narratives, in its story-telling styled stage performances. This year, for the first time, "It's a SHE Thing" was held in Bangla, titled নারীক্ষত্র (Nari Nokkhotro), aiming to bring in a wider spectrum of audiences. In the future, the organisation aims to bring people together through different platforms, facilitate discussions, raise awareness, and promote an impetus for positive change and improvement – towards a society in which who you look like, how you are treated and what role you play is not determined by the sex organ that you were born with. The author is the Coordinator of Bonhishikha.

PHOTO CREDIT: BLACK-TRON STUDIO



YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

1. ADB Internship Programme in Philippines
Asian Development Bank (ADB) is looking for graduate students. ADB provides a stipend of 69 USD per day.
Deadline: October 15, 2017 | Paid Internship

2. Mexican Government Scholarships for International Students 2018
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID) invites applications for the 2018 Mexican Government Scholarship Programme for International Students.
Deadline: September 28, 2017 | Full Scholarship

3. Become a Commonwealth Student Association Correspondent or Writer
CSA is providing opportunity for your article to get wider readership among thousands of students, youth, and leaders within and outside the Commonwealth.
Deadline: Ongoing

4. International Conference on Islamic Youth Education 2017, Indonesia
The State Ministry of Youth and Sports of Indonesia are inviting 56 OIC selected young leaders to participate in The International Conference on Islamic Youth Education 2017.
Deadline: September 28, 2017 | Partially Funded

5. Creative Irrigation Idea Challenge 2017 - Win 25 Lac BDT
If you have any creative idea of using the water on the surface to cultivate the country's agriculture, submit it today. If you qualify for practical implementation, you can win 25 Lac Taka. Do not be late, submit before the deadline!
Deadline: September 30, 2017 | Partially Funded

PRIYANKA CHOWDHURY

Antor Akhand is a young entrepreneur in a rather strange sector for his age. He is the Director of a Cinema Hall in Shahzadpur, Sirajganj. When most of the Business Graduates are dreaming of a lucrative job, this soon-to-be Business Graduate from North South University aims to carry on with his 40 years old forefather's business. He is also helping the local youths by creating a job market through his business. In a brief interview with the Star Youth, Antor shares his business story. When asked how it all started, Antor replies, "It was my grandfather who started the business. He was well acquainted with some of the businessmen from Mumbai. He brought a projection machine from Mumbai and started the business in our hometown, 40 years back. My father took charge

of the business after him and now I, along with my uncles, run the business. We used to have three cinema halls, two in Shahzadpur and one in Ullahpara. Now we have one in Shahzadpur. The others will be made into shopping malls with Cineplex." Antor wanted to study film-making, but, his father did not encourage him towards it. The next plan was to learn how to market for this sector. Antor is currently majoring in Marketing and International Business from North South University. Antor not only took charge of the family business, but also, he took steps towards involving the local youths into his business. "Most of the elder family members of these youths worked with our business for years. These young members are now educated. So, I thought recruiting them would be a good idea. They all are

trust worthy. Since trust is a big issue in this business, it is also a strategic move from my end," expresses Antor. Youngsters as old as 20 years are running the business in Shahzadpur quite professionally. "They handle local issues very well, which the non-local professionals would not be able to control. It is important to recognise their strengths and channel it accordingly." Antor wishes to pursue his Masters abroad. However, he wants to come back and continue with the business. He would like to be a producer someday, and have a production and distribution house of his own. A bright entrepreneur like Antor Akhand is much needed to inspire more film makers and young investors towards the cinema making sector and we can be hopeful about the revival of the cinema industry of Bangladesh.



Antor Akhand

AN ODE TO GO-GETTER

Five popular hangout zones

RASMIA RAHMAN AMREEN

We often complain how Dhaka does not have enough recreational places. However, amidst the scarcity of such spots where one could 'chillout', here is a list of five popular coffee shops and burger joints in Dhaka, where the youths love to hangout:

1. CHILLOX
Popular mostly amongst the students, Chillox offers a variety of burgers, shakes and fries. The Managing Partner of Chillox, Mr. Pranto, says "Our most popular item is the 'Beef Burger with Sausage', costing 210/Tk."

The Dhanmondi branch of Chillox operates from 12 p.m. to 11 p.m. while the Mohakhali branch remains open from 10:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. You can try Chillox burgers, ranging from 140/Tk. to 210/Tk. Also, the shakes are priced between 100/Tk. to 140/Tk.

2. TAKEOUT
Mr. Ruhul Amin, the Banani Branch Manager of this popular eating house says, "Takeout has three branches located in Banani, Dhanmondi and Uttara. We operate between 11:30 a.m. to 10:45 p.m."

Takeout burgers range from 160/Tk. to 410/Tk. "Beef Cheese Delight is the most loved item on our menu. It consists of double beef patty stuffed with cheddar cheese in between, ensuring the juiciest combination of beef & melted cheese," adds Mr. Amin. If you're planning on visiting Takeout, do not forget to try their milk shakes and fries.



3. MADCHEF

This sandwich and burger haven has four outlets located in Dhanmondi, Mirpur, Banani, and Uttara. Mr. Palen, the

Manager of Madchef, confirms that Grilled cheese with Pepperoni and Naga Blast subs are the two most popular items on their menu.

The burgers range from 220/Tk. to 410/Tk. You can also try out their appetisers priced between 80/Tk. to 250/Tk. Madchef operates between 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.
4. TABAQ COFFEE
If you hope to unwind after a hectic day of work, Tabaq Coffee is one of your best options. The three outlets of Tabaq Coffee are located in the Gulshan Avenue (operating between 10 a.m. to 11 p.m.), Jamuna Future Park (12 p.m. to 9 p.m.) and Anannya Shopping Complex, DOHS Baridhara (12 p.m. to 9 p.m.). Mr. Mubarak Shamim, the Managing Director of Tabaq Coffee, says, "Our Cappuccino, Hazelnut Latte, Cheesecake Brownie, Chicken Tikka Sandwich and Roast Beef Sandwich are the best-sellers." The sandwiches range from 220/Tk. to 360/Tk. You can also try their popular Fudge Brownie, costing 60/Tk. each.
5. METRO KITCHENS
Also known as the 'Container Food Court', Metro Kitchens is located in Bashundhara Residential Area, operating between 12 p.m. and 11 p.m. The most popular item, Fish BBQ, ranges between 300/Tk. to 1000/Tk. The owner of Metro Kitchens, Mr. Tushar, says, "We offer special 15% discount on all food items, every weekend." With a 'Kids Zone' and a safe car parking facility, Metro Kitchens is a highly popular meeting spot for youths.