

TOGGLE

WEEKEND LIVING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

A publication of *The Daily Star*



ILLUSTRATION:
ZARIF FAIAZ



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YouTube tests hiding dislike count on selected videos

YouTube is experimenting with hiding the dislike count from public view on selected videos.

In a Twitter post announcing the test, the company claimed the change is based upon “creator feedback.”

“We’ve heard from creators that the public dislike counts can impact their well-being and may motivate a targeted campaign of dislikes on a creator’s video,” the tweet reads. “So, we’re testing designs that don’t include the visible like or dislike count in an effort to balance improving the creator experience, while still making sure viewer feedback is accounted for and shared with the creator.”

YouTube stated that the creators will still be able to see the like and dislike count from YouTube Studio and the ratio will still affect the platform’s recommendation algorithms.



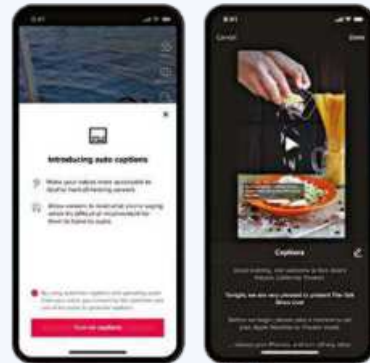
TikTok adds an auto-captions feature

TikTok rolled out a new auto-captions feature for their app.

The feature—which right now supports American English and Japanese—will automatically transcribe the speech from a video.

The company says the new feature will make the app accessible to people who want to watch TikTok videos without sound. The feature will also allow people with hearing loss or hearing impairment to enjoy the app.

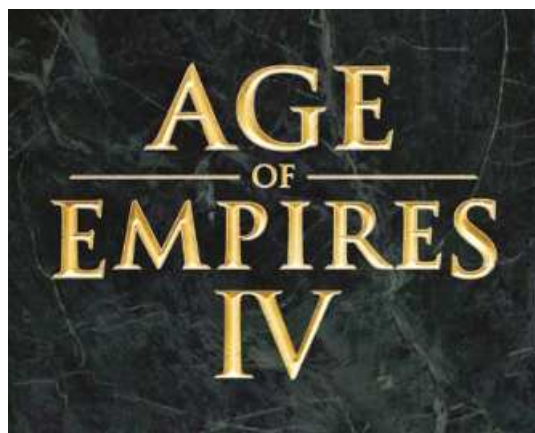
To enable auto caption, creators



need to select the option on the editing page after uploading a video. They can also edit the auto-generated text to correct any mistakes before publishing.

Although on by default, viewers can turn off auto caption through an option found at the share panel.

Age of Empires IV on its way



The Age of Empires games have always been set in a historical setting, but with Age of Empires IV, Microsoft and Relic Entertainment want to go even further. Throughout the campaigns, the game will feature narrated documentaries, period-correct language and music, as well as art and game design that draws influence from both real-world and the game’s history.

EDITOR’S NOTE

Ah, here we go again

Another lockdown, another day of working from home. While it may get tiring for many, there are those who have embraced this lifestyle even before the pandemic hit. Freelancers, we’re looking at you. This week, we explore the myths of the work from home convenience that freelancers supposedly ‘enjoy’. Hint: it’s not easy.

We talk about a beautiful Honda FD2 Type R in Shift. We list out some weight loss tips in page 7, in case you gain a few as we brace for another god-knows-how-long days of sitting at home.

Lastly, check out the last page. It’s as colourful as they come.

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TOGGLE

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Symphony debuts the Z40, an entry-level gaming phone

Symphony has rolled out their new Z40 flagship in Bangladesh, a phone with minimal gaming capability.

It features a 6.55-inch display, Android 10.0 operating system, and the entry-level MediaTek’s G35 2.3 GHz Octacore processor, designed for “mainstream” gaming. The processor is backed up by

an IMG Power VR GE8320 680 MHz GPU, 3GB of DDR4 RAM and 32GB of internal storage.

A variant with 4GB RAM and 64GB ROM will be available soon, the press release said.

Despite being a “gaming” phone, the display is of a mediocre 720 * 1600 resolution with 20:9 aspect ratio, slightly obstructed by a 13-megapixel punch-hole front camera. The rear main camera is also 13-megapixel, with an aperture of f1.9. A 5-megapixel

120-degree ultra-wide-angle lens and a 2-megapixel depth sensor round out the rear camera cluster.

Powering the entire device is a 5000 mAh li-polymer battery, which Symphony claims is good for two days of normal use.

Other features include a multifunction fingerprint sensor, reverse charging, face unlock, AI, etc.

The 3GB variant is offered in three colour options, with an asking price of Tk. 10,490/.



Building a future-proof company

MONSURUL AZIZ

The past decade has enabled the world and its inhabitants to witness some of the most significant global transformations. To keep up with the booming population and its ever-growing demands, economies across the globe are expanding, and so are organizations and employment opportunities. However, as much as this boom translates optimistically to a growth that is both holistic and wholesome, it also means that the world around us is becoming increasingly complex and volatile.

Especially viewing things from a more recent perspective further enable us to see how the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has left the majority of the world in shambles and at a standstill. As we now enter the unprecedented and still unpredictable 'New Normal', **how do we future-proof our organizations to survive the worst times?**

There are four crucial foundations or founding pillars of any business that need to be restructured, especially now in the face of this pandemic.

CAUSE

The primary foundation of any business begins with a **cause**. This is the centre of a business; it is the core reason why any organization exists or continues to exist. It can be moulded into its mission and, consequently, its vision.



CONNECTIVITY

The start of any business, after identifying its cause of existence, is formed with a concept that connects to the market. Every business organization comes to existence with an idea or concept, and it has to be real in the context of the market. The concept must be integrated with prolonged efforts that push through to incorporate multiple models, processes and unify them under one singular frame. That is the very essence of connecting.

CAPACITY

To run any business or organization smoothly, it is crucial to form its **capacity** or ability to fulfil its purpose through a combination of effective and efficient employees, operation, management, governance, and a strong persistence to assessing and achieving results.

CULTURE

The final yet just as a fundamental foundation - **culture** - is the set of values, beliefs, and norms that are continuously practised by the people, processes, and the organization itself. To put it more simply, the culture of an organization revolves around people and innovation and keeps changing with changing times.

All in all, when you assemble these four pillars, you form **the four foundations or Four Cs of Future-Proofing, an organization**.

It is at all times vital to remember that among all the four foundations, 'cause' is always the anchoring philosophy; it is timeless and stands tall against the odds of nature. As long as an organization is true to its core purpose of existence, it continues to exist, even when the other three foundations (connectivity, capacity, and culture) transform with passing time or fade away.



ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ

Four effective ways to maintain motivation during team meetings

SAMILA SOBHAN

You are finishing with your day when your supervisor abruptly announces there will be a "brief" meeting. After a tiresome day of crunching numbers, dealing with varying clients, and concluding the day by a whisker is enough to drain you out vehemently. Diverging from grasping the contents of the meeting is therefore only plausible. That is why, to make meetings slightly more endurable, here are a few ways to maintain motivation during team meetings.

HOLD INTERACTIVE SESSIONS

The best way to initiate any meeting is to make room for the participants to share a bit about their day, especially during this dreadful pandemic, when daily experiences are somewhat overwhelming. This helps make the participants feel at home and thus concentrate throughout the meeting and present their ideas without friction.

Inquiring about their mental health always has a good, lasting effect on the participants. In addition to that, interactive sessions act as captivating icebreakers among new members, familiarising them with the remainder of the team.

Note that it is also vital to appreciate your employees and recognise their utmost contribution and efforts. Give them space, hear their valuable opinions out, make them feel heard. Content and satisfied employees are worthy of motivating themselves.

MAKE MEETINGS BUOYANT

This is predominantly targeted at the primary spokesperson of the meeting. The person hosting the meeting is parallel to a conductor at the orchestra. Just how a conductor brings together a beautiful orchestra, the host can use

his/her words and expressions to make the meeting coherent.

A tried and tested method is to use encouraging words that spark optimism and change the tone of conduction as to not speak monotonously.

AVOID LENGTHY SESSIONS

Time-consuming meetings are mundane and severely digresses from the main concept. Experts have stated that a maximum of twenty minutes is enough for an average person to lose track.

Therefore, to extract complete productivity and cut the meeting short, send prior emails containing necessary guidelines and detailed agendas. Objectives to be discussed, goals to achieve and problems to address can all be listed out beforehand to make the meeting succinct.

CONVENE BRAINSTORMING SESSIONS

Brainstorming generally refers to collectively converse and scrutinise, giving rise to innovative and pragmatic ideas. In addition to that, brainstorming unravels existing problems giving forth solutions that benefit the company.

An effective brainstorming session in a meeting engages the participants constructively, making it interesting and certifying the meeting fruitful. Team building activities are also noteworthy in bringing about sustainable solutions to critical problems.

Arrange for such team building activities that bridge the gap between contemporaries, eventually leading to more substantial teams, such as office trivia, workshops, decipher riddles and puzzles, work out case studies, among many others.

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PHOTOS: AHBAAR MOHAMMAD

WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING

Honda FD2 Type R

AHBAAR MOHAMMAD

Honda has always been an unconventional marque; Their first car was a maniacal chain-driven roadster with a threshold exceeding the redline of 9500 rpm. It was a car made by enthusiasts for enthusiasts.

What won on a Sunday sold on Monday, as Honda went on to cash in on their formula one triumphs through dealerships and the telly back in Japan (google Honda Prelude Ayrton Senna ad).

While you're at it, look for a video of Senna testing (read: thrashing) an N1 spec EF9 civic equipped with a then newly christened VTEC engine, a technology we all know and (some) love. The stripped-



out civic, screaming past the conventional redline for a commuter car for the masses while being thrown around Suzuka, at the helm of an instrument of precision driving that is Senna.

And thus kindled subconsciously relating the humble civic to an almost derogative pedigree of "Boy racer". Lone kanjo civic tribes ticking off the police through a behaviour of driving—that can be only described as antisocial—through Osaka's highways definitely didn't help either. Meanwhile, Honda figured out the marketing aspect: Type R, an array of thoroughbred sports cars. Starting with the NSX-R, followed by the Integra Type R, a cult classic in its own right. The civic



received the red-blooded and badged Type R treatment eventually, and the rest is automotive history.

It took two generations of the Civic Type R to metamorphose into a fully grown sedan, from the nimble EK9 hatchback to the FD2 Type R. Type R's being wolves in sheep's clothing were never easy to spot to the untrained eye, contrary to the extroverted, outgoing Civic Type R. The FD2 Type R hints ever



so slightly to its athletic prowess; starting with the subtly integrated aero clad front bumper and rear diffuser. The biggest red-badged flags, perhaps, are the rear wing and the red Brembos. The interior coyly hints to the Type R DNA through the Recaro bucket seats, the tachometer and

the aluminium gear knob, along with an individual production-specific numbered plaque out of 13,000 approximate units.

Sajeed Bin Sulaiman's 2010 FD2 Civic Type R is 1 of just 3 FD2R's in Bangladesh; the 11,862nd unit draped in Premium White Pearl, a mellower shade of white as opposed to the bright and flat quintessential Type R Championship White. Truth be told, the FD2R was my first foray into the world of Type R through another friend's (small world, huh?) FD2R. A sensory experience that left me in shock and awe. Sensory deprived onboard videos aren't enough to convey the visceral acceleration and sense of speed, leaving me longing for another encounter.

One fateful night long before 2020, on a ride-along with Shaker Bin Sulaiman, Sajeed's younger brother answered my prayers. The civic adheres to the road with levels of adhesion, akin to my fingers accidentally super-glued together. The K20A mated to a six-speed close-ratio gearbox is a match made in automotive heaven as the engine purrs through the stock exhaust with the rowing of gears, all the way to redline.

There's a best motoring youtube video of an FD2 defeating its homogenous sibling, the DC5 Integra Type R, despite being 10 hp deficit around Tsukuba. The stock suspension behaves like an expensive set of bespoke coilovers, which obliges the sport sedan to corner like it's on rails, confidence-inspiring, to say the least, although the drawbacks of coilovers are persistent on Dhaka's roads translating to a harsher ride.

Shaker, being an avid motorsport enthusiast, was always a fan of Honda, as he tells me. Even more so of the FD2R, as he tells me that its reputation has preceded it in his eyes. He relishes the fact that it doesn't garner as much attention as any other flashy sports car; Sans the wing, there really isn't any way for an average joe to deduce the wolf in sheep's clothing in a field of sheep. For now, the civic is bone stock, just as it was intended to be enjoyed from the factory (although I wouldn't be surprised if it was conceived in a lab). Future plans might see the FD2 roaring through a full intake and exhaust upgrade with a standalone ECU, coupled with a lightweight flywheel and a full clutch kit.

Struggles of being a freelancer in Bangladesh

The absurd cost of the so-called comfort

ABDUS SALAM SHAWN

Freelancing is an exciting and growing career path that is gaining more and more popularity in Bangladesh. The term means lending your talents, skills and time in exchange for a payment.

It is a work environment where you are your boss; you work as much or as little as you like, and you work from where you feel comfortable. But it is not all coffee and cakes, especially for freelancers living in a third-world country like Bangladesh.

SOCIAL PERCEPTIONS

A freelancer's pursuit of success meets with an unsupportive family, society's erroneous attitude, discouraging financial conditions, frauds, unendurable working conditions, risks of physical, mental afflictions and much more.

Hardships begin the moment a person decides to become a freelancer and the struggle follows them throughout their career. There is an ill-founded belief in the Bangladeshi society that working from a computer and earning from it is no more than a hoax. The society's favouritism for 9-5 jobs has always been an obstacle for freelancers who are just starting. "My father did not believe it was possible to work from a computer and earn money until I gave him 8 thousand takas from one of my very early freelance jobs," says Khaled Saif, a freelance graphic designer and instructor.

Kashim Uddin Masum, a graphic designer and founder of Sofol Freelancer, a popular digital skills learning platform, says that people around freelancers often make it harder for them to go on. "My neighbours would tell my dad that I watched pornography on my computer all night but when the wheels turned and I started making good money, they became my admirers," he said.

BECOMING A FREELANCER

The first thing a freelancer has to decide is what skills he has to learn and that puzzles almost everybody venturing in the freelancing world. There are multitudes of opportunities such as writing/editing, graphic design, web design and development, video editing, marketing, legal consultation and almost anything one might need help with. A freelancer has to choose one or just a few from these available options.

Masum found himself jumping from course to course as he did not know which course suited him best. In his words, "I'd have never taken up graphic design at the beginning if I knew about the steep hardware requirements. I could not afford a powerful pc back then". This lack of knowledge and guidance can be a career killer.

To learn his desired skills, a freelancer has to get into a training institution or purchase online courses. Most

institutional and online courses that are of good quality are priced very highly. Besides, countless fraudulent training institutions make false claims and lure students in only to suck money from them.

Masum once got himself admitted into a web development course. After a few days in, the institution asked him to buy a domain and hosting services to continue the classes that were not mentioned before. He became frustrated and left the course. He added, "There are very few training institutions outside

at Upwork who works three jobs but tries to manage them well so that he can sleep at night. He says, "I know many freelancers who work 24/7". This, consequently, may lead to long-term health problems.

A freelancer has to stay active and respond quickly to clients' messages if he wants to keep a top search result ranking once he establishes a good position in freelancing marketplaces. This leaves little to no time for personal care and jumbles up eating and sleeping schedules.

According to Mr Ahan, giving time to



of Dhaka, and they are not that good". These frauds need to be stopped to preserve freelancers' motivation.

A DIFFICULT PATH

Joining the workforce is just the beginning of the sufferings that lay ahead. A freelancer might need to wait for months to land his first job. When he does, he might need to work according to his client's time zone, who lives on the other side of the world. In Bangladesh's context, the better-paying jobs are mostly from western countries such as the USA, UK, Canada, etc. Most freelancers here have to decide between getting a good night's sleep and working for less money or sacrificing eyesight and earn more along with headache and numbness.

Freelancing is often more demanding than a 9-5 job. Ahamed Nobil Ahan is a top-rated Virtual Support Representative

the family is even more challenging. This can lead to depression and cause severe harm both mentally and physically. He suggests freelancers use the "Vacation" feature that many marketplaces offer, allowing freelancers to have some free time.

LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE

Two major problems that cripple a freelancer's workflow in Bangladesh are its painfully slow internet connection and frequent power cuts. Masum currently lives in Qatar, and to continue working when he visited Bangladesh, he has spent a fortune to get a broadband internet connection. He is still not satisfied with the connection speed. Although load-shedding almost a thing of the past in the major cities, it is still a concern in the rural areas.

The unavailability of Paypal, the

most prominent global online payment service provider, is another significant disadvantage for freelancers. Mr Masum is a regular user of Paypal, and he cannot use it while in Bangladesh. Paypal is so crucial in the online payment sector that it has become a need, not a privilege. All of whom we interviewed for this article, urged the Government and Bangladesh Bank to try and strike up a deal with Paypal, making it much easier for the freelancers and the general people to make global payments.

EMPLOYERS' PERCEPTIONS

At the other end of the spectrum, working with freelancers from Bangladesh has been a mixed experience for Asikur Rahman, Creative Officer at Ad Hostage, who hires freelancers for digital needs. He often encounters freelancers who lack the skills they boast, cannot meet deadlines and cannot communicate very well. He says, "We now look at their portfolios carefully and try to find the best match for our needs".

According to the ICT Division of the Bangladesh Government, There are 650,000 freelancers in Bangladesh, of which 500,000 are actively working. Bangladesh also ranked 8th in the 2019 Global Gig-Economy Index published by Payoneer. Freelancers in the country are bringing in 850 crore takas annually, and still, freelancing is not given its due respect and attention.

In Ahan's words, "A government job with a BDT 20,000-30,00 salary is worth more to the people of our country than a freelancing job with earnings up to 2-3 lakhs. We even have to go to lengths to verify our earnings when dealing with banks".

THE WAY FORWARD

The government has expressed its will to provide more facilities for freelancers and recently started issuing freelancer ID cards. These cards are meant for helping them get bank loans quickly and solve the identity crisis problem, but there are reports of incidents where these ID cards were not being valued at all.

Being a freelancer in Bangladesh is not easy and the ones doing it are brilliant and valuable people. The government and concerned bodies should get to the bottom of the problems they face, and our society should be more open and accepting of new forms of work and technologies.



ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ

Bite-sized internet packages empowering freelancers in remote villages

ZAMAN KHAN

Like many industries and communities, the freelancing community in Bangladesh has also been hit hard by the pandemic. When the pandemic and the lockdown forced many job-seekers, students and freelancers to move to their homes in remote parts of the country, finding seamless connectivity posed to be a major threat in moving forward with internet-based works.

Ruman of Jhenidah is one such freelancer who wanted to learn graphic designing. But the lockdown forced him to move to his village where broadband internet was not available. He had to learn. And the mobile internet was slow and costly. Ruman was in trouble. Until he came to know about WiFi Haat.

WiFi Haat is an initiative by Carnival Internet where local brick and mortar shops in villages are supplied with internet package cards starting from only BDT 7, which users can use according to their needs. There are other packages available as well. For example, for BDT 15, one can use unlimited high-speed broadband internet for the entire day.

WiFi Haat is a part of Carnival Internet's ongoing commitment to empower the remote parts of the country with seamless internet connectivity, in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals. Internet cards from WiFi Haat enable users to seamlessly use high-speed internet at a low cost, enabling freelancers, students and job-seekers in remote villages to empower themselves by learning new skills and putting them to good use by freelancing and earning.

Before, people would spend time for the purchase of only tea-biscuits or small daily necessities or maybe a cup of tea at a grocery or tong, but now the tables have

turned wherewith the establishment of Wi-Fi haat allows them to enjoy 2 hours of unlimited internet for only 7 Tk. So, people are spending more time in the store buying cards than before.

Due to the pandemic, many educational institutions in Bangladesh have not been able to run regular classes for a long time. Many educational institutions are now taking classes online. At present a large part of the students are living in villages, there are many areas in the villages where it is difficult to get an internet connection. Even if there is a broadband connection in the village, in addition to the monthly fee, the router and the connection cost up to 3,000 Tk at a time, which is quite difficult for most families to afford.

Carnival aims to solve problems like these. Carnival Internet has already reached 11,500 villages in 182 Upazilas of 48 districts of the country. And is committed to reaching 20,000 more villages by 2021.

Carnival hopes that internet connectivity will reach the remotest corners of the country and the entire country will be connected to the world so that in an age of globalisation, no one from Bangladesh is left behind.

*The author is the Director of Carnival Internet
Illustration-Zarif Faiaz*

Mixed Reality and users' mixed feelings surrounding it

SAIM AHMED SHIFAT

For many years now, Virtual Reality (VR) has been a buzzword among tech communities. Over the years, it has led the way for Augmented Reality (AR), a new technology that enhances users' reality by introducing digital objects to it. Based on the possibilities both AR and VR can unleash, tech moguls see these as indispensable parts of the future. A combination of these gives us Mixed Reality (MR), where one can play a video game virtually, grab his/her coffee in real life, and throw that coffee on someone in that virtual game. The world saw this technology at play in February when Microsoft hosted their Ignite digital conference through holoportation, a technology that uses 3D technology to create lifelike images of everything into a virtual world.

WHAT IS MIXED REALITY (MR)?

MR is a step ahead of Augmented Reality. It creates a world where one can see the physical and virtual worlds interact. According to Microsoft, MR can leverage two mechanisms. Holographic instruments can create digital projections and place them in a real environment. Holographic headsets can have features like see-through displays containing digital content. Immersive devices, on the contrary, can take objects from the real world and replace them with their digital counterparts. Immersive headsets or VR glasses can modify a person's view of the physical world and put only the digital one in his/her view.

APPLE'S UPCOMING MR HEADSET GETS THE INDUSTRY BUZZING

Although holographic and immersive devices use two different technologies, companies like Apple are working on devices that can leverage a mixture of both these technologies. Based on a research note by Ming-Chi Kuo, an Apple analyst, the company's awaited MR headset could weigh less than 150 grams. This weight makes the device lighter than its competitors like Oculus Quest 2 (503 grams), Microsoft HoloLens (645 grams), and Valve Index (809 grams). However, users have to wait for the headsets to hit the market until 2022 at least, as reported by Bloomberg.

THE REALITY

As promising as everything sounds so far, the reality in 2021 is that consumers are still not quite interested in MR. Some of it has to do with the need for a massive transition from mobile or reinventing being mobile altogether. Giants like Facebook and Apple have been working on getting MR products into the real world. However, problems persist in introducing MR as hardware, existing platforms, and developer skills are not ready, and users are still not sure yet if they want it.

WEIGHT LOSS DIETS 101: four techniques to follow

ARIFF AHMED

Over the last decade, people in Bangladesh and all over the world have become more health-conscious. Our minds have finally woken up to the unhealthy side effect of inadequate exercise and not watching our food intake. To counter this, a movement towards healthy eating and exercise has risen, leading to a resurgence of specially designed diets to cut down our belly fats. It is not only a matter of being fit, eating healthy also leads to increased stamina and an increase in productivity in our professional lives. Out of the myriad of diets that have popped up these days, here are four that are very popular.

KETO

Keto or ketogenic diet has been the clear winner in the 'diet wars'. Originally designed to treat epilepsy in children, it reduces weight by forcing the body to burn fats rather than carbohydrates. Keto is a low carbohydrate and high fat with an adequate protein diet. Usually, the body receives glucose from carbohydrates which give us energy. By eliminating carbohydrates, the body is forced to break down fat and protein for energy, which causes weight loss. Keto diet can have short-term adverse side effects such as constipation and malnutrition to long term ones which may cause kidney and heart damage. Ruslan Hossain, who runs Ruslan's Studio, attributed keto's success to the fact that it is easier to prepare. Keto usually consists of eating lots of meat and eggs along with cheese and butter. It avoids fruits, vegetables and grains.

PLANT-BASED DIETS

Certain communities have practised a diet based only on plants for a long time. It involves eliminating all kinds of meat, poultry and fish. Some versions extend further by avoiding all types of animal products such as dairy and eggs. Plant-based diets help reduce weight because the rich fibre food makes us feel fuller. Plants are also low in high-calorie fat. Plant-based diets are also beneficial for

people suffering from heart disease, cancer and diabetes. However, people who practice these diets might lose out on important nutrients that are usually derived from animals.

INTERMITTENT FASTING

Intermittent fasting is the common term for a group of diets where fasting is practised for a certain number of hours per day. During this period, the body is deprived of food and water. Some people practice a form where a little food and water is consumed. The weight loss effects of intermittent fasting have not been scientifically proven. However, people practising intermittent fasting have said that they feel lighter, more energetic and productive after regularly following the diet plan. According to nutritionist and fitness consultant Ruslan Hossain, "Intermittent fasting reduces blood level insulin" and is thus great for diabetes patients. Popular forms include the 16/8 method, where food can be consumed only in eight-to-ten-hour windows, and alternate-day fasting, where the fast lasts for 24 hours on alternate days.

MEDITERRANEAN DIET

This diet is based on eating food that people in Italy and Greece used to eat. It consists of eating plenty of fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, whole grains, seafood and extra virgin olive oil. Processed meat, food with added sugar, refined grains and oils are avoided. Dairy items are taken in moderation. It was initially designed to lower heart disease risk, but it also aids in fat reduction. The emphasis on olive oil can be cumbersome to those not used to the taste.





Celebrating young local artists on WORLD ART DAY

JINAT JAHAN KHAN

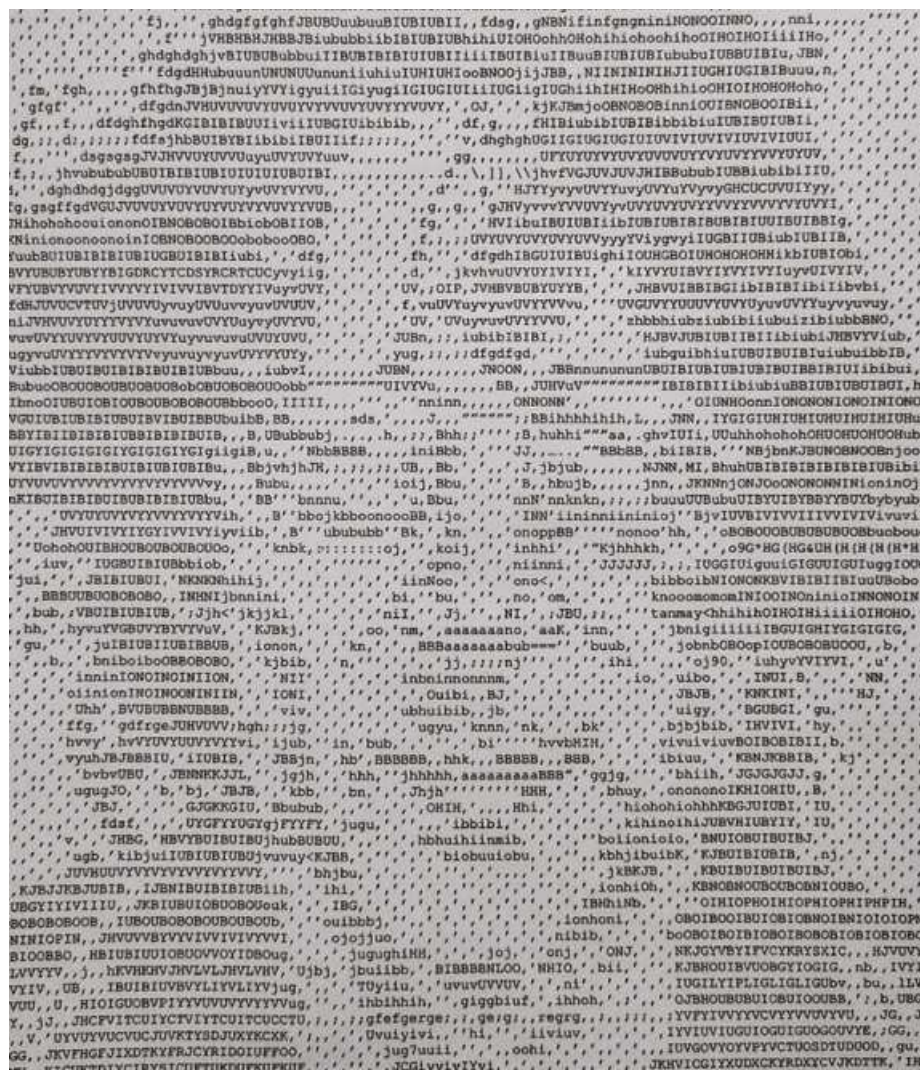
Art has no rulebook or status quo. It is transcendent as artists get the freedom of spirit and the opportunity to create their own enchanting world of contemporary arts and illustrations with their preferred art media. On the occasion of World Art Day, we present to you some young local artists who have challenged the perception regarding art media and the main essence of art through their art pieces.

HA JA BA RA LA

Have you ever imagined that your commonly-used emojis can be an art medium to paint Chanchal Chowdhury? Or how about using MS Word to illustrate John Lennon? Tanmay Sarker Shuvo, known as Ha Ja Ba Ra La on social media is pursuing art in these unorthodox ways to challenge the common perception of drawing portraits. His artistic journey mainly started amid this pandemic when he was trying to deal with his mental breakdown. Tanmay has explored multifarious ways of creating portraits such as shadow art, emoji art, typewriting art, masking tape art, pixelated art, fingerprint art, paper folding art, halftone art, pareidolia art with water and many more. He also creates energetic black and white portraits just by scribbling which he loves to call 'organised chaos'. To him, art is therapy and keeps him going.

TEABAG STORIES

Have you ever thought that the teabag you just threw away could be your canvas while taking a zip from your tea? Md. Sadituzzaman, a self-taught artist inspired by Artist Ruby Silvious, is using this ordinary thing as his canvas for his extraordinary artworks. His 500+ teabag canvases depict a variety of his every day or random thoughts and visual delights such as natural beauties or essence of our country, portraits, popular book covers, social issues, special days or trending topics. With the thought of doing something that gives him a career as well as happiness, he started 'Teabag Stories'. Due to its uniqueness, his artworks have been used on the covers of 7 books published in this year's book fair.



Pelipaper, a Turkish tea bag filter paper-producing company's catalogue cover also has his artworks. His teabag stories have been displayed in Pencil's exhibition at Dhaka Shilpakala, Obscure Artists of Bangladesh and Renesa's exhibition.

BYRAWNAK.COM

When it comes to representation, South Asian art and culture have only been promoting women who fit a certain set of beauty standards and personality

traits for a long time. Rawnak Rahman, a 19-year old girl hailing from Dhaka addresses these issues with a hint of humour to show the utter ridiculousness of these standards through her digital art pieces. In her recent artworks, she has tackled colourism, body images and child marriages in South Asia in striking styles to hold the audience's attention, to make them think and question. Some of her artworks made with mixed media along

with digital art and traditional art have been displayed in Garrison Art Center, SKS Spring Art Weekend 2020 and SKS Spring Art Weekend 2021. When asked about the motivation behind her works, Rawnak said, "Belief in individuality and valuing where you are from but also standing up for what is right. And I want to create work that portrays the social barriers that prevent young women from excelling and being proud of themselves."

DHAKAYEAH

DhakaYeah, an anonymous entity is working to explore and bring out the quintessence of this colourful city. Blending the old and new Dhaka, the whimsical and quirky illustrations of DhakaYeah portray the mundane, romantic and bizarre aspects of it which are experienced by a very few people but most of us have only dreamt of. The main ingredients of DhakaYeah's contents are imagination and nostalgia. The artist or group of artists wish to anonymous and love to explore different and exciting digital art media such as Photoshop, Procreate, Tayasui to create their masterpieces. DhakaYeah believes, "Art may not always mean to be comfortable to the audience, but it has to be something quirky and thought-provoking to them."

MAHATAB RASHID

Cartooning, a satirical medium of art is one of the best ways to protest against injustice and wrong things non-violently. Mahatab Rashid, a professional cartoonist for around 6 years, loves to present a story or express a meaningful thought or message through his cartoons. He addresses different aspects of life and focuses on various significant political and social issues by brainstorming and his unique way of art. Currently, he is working on his very own graphic novel named Otolanto. To him, anything that has a coherent thought or message behind it is art. I take my inspiration from life, let it be an incident or a scene. And I love to work with digital art media because the possibilities are endless here", said Mahatab.