

THE DEFINITIVE
YOUTH
MAGAZINE

SHOUT

DHAKA THURSDAY MAY 20, 2021, JAISHTHA 6, 1428 BS

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SHOUT QUIZ: MOVIES IN
QUARANTINO

PG 3

9 TIPS TO CURB ONLINE
SHOPPING ADDICTION

PG 6

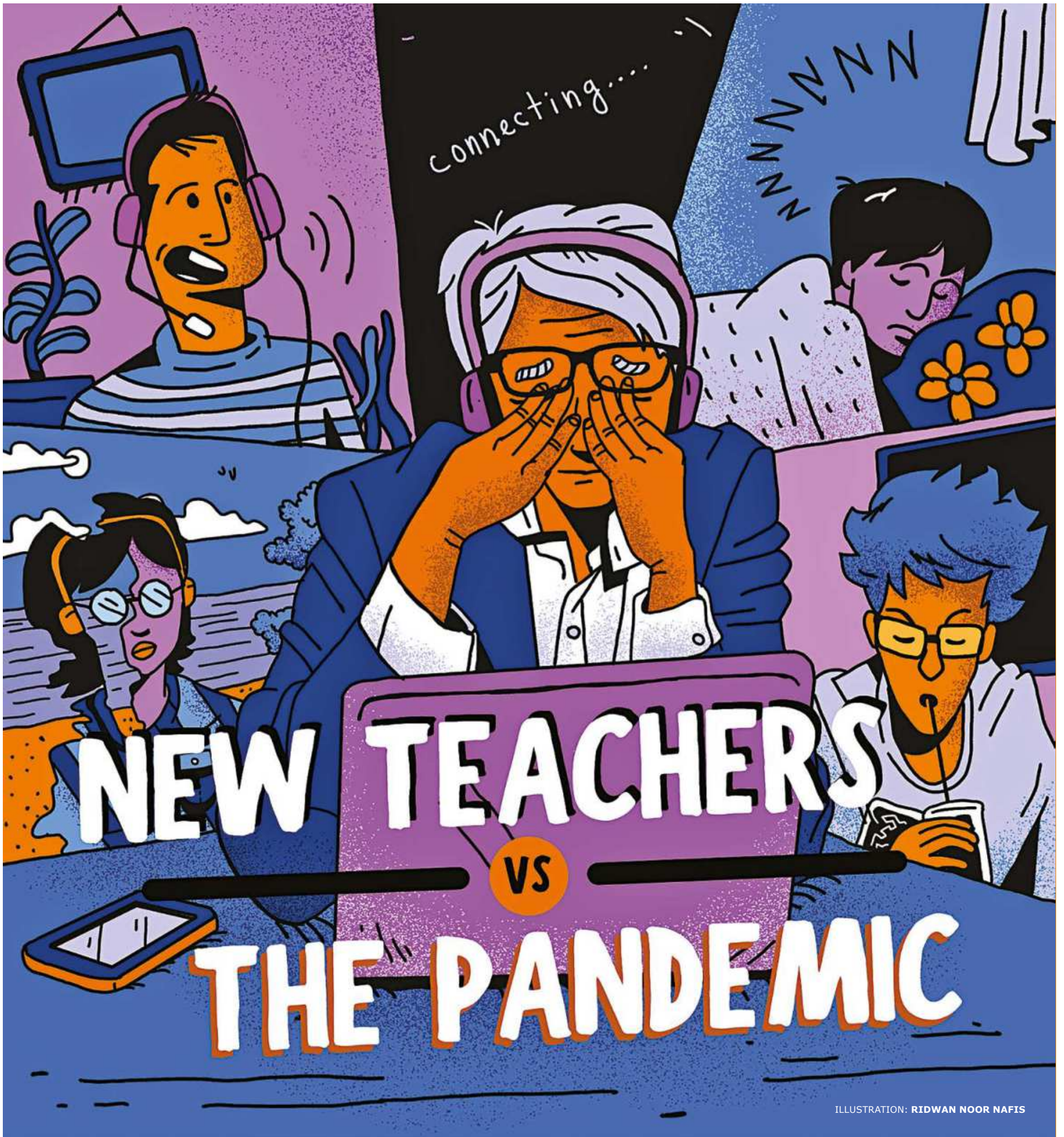


ILLUSTRATION: RIDWAN NOOR NAFIS

EDITORIAL

I often think of my time at school like a wildlife documentary. Students are the dominant species of course, owning the space, adapting to the terrain that they've grown up in, in complete control of the going ons and happenings of their primary social setting. Until, of course, the teachers appear. Old, experienced, commanding respect and obedience, teachers rule this jungle. Students fall in line when the senior teachers prow! It is the law.

But every king was once a prince, or even a princeling. When the new teacher shows up, young and fresh faced, students smell that inexperience. A new teacher is nervous, and students feed on that nervousness. Destroying their best laid study plans, students make sure every new teacher is initiated with a trial of fire.

In hindsight, I have a lot of sympathy for new teachers. And I really can't imagine how difficult it must be to go through all of that now that classes are online. As a new teacher, it used to be difficult enough to exert control over a classroom in person. Over Zoom, with network issues and background noises? I can't even.

-- Azmin Azran, Sub-editor, SHOUT



PLAYWATCH

YOUTUBE



I Watched Wilderness Survival Videos for a Week

ADHORA AHMED

All my friends have been raving over a certain niche category in YouTube for a while, spamming me with links to various videos of this kind. On the surface, they seem like your typical clickbait fodder; the thumbnails claim to show the building of houses and pools in a random forest with astonishing, unbelievable speed. I didn't see the appeal at first, but I gave in to the constant recommendations and chose to watch wilderness survival videos for a week.

Now, I have too many questions for one article, hence I have to compromise and make do with a few.

Why are they made?

Building a home in a jungle seems like what someone would do to go off grid, taking only the bare essentials with them. However, the structures shown in these videos are far from ordinary. The YouTube channels dedicated to wilderness survival show the building process of grand mansions, pools, villas, temples — you name it. With such attention to detail in these structures, you might ask why these are built at all. To show off architectural feats? To leave them behind for future archaeologists to stumble upon? Who knows?

Who lives there?

If you're going to build luxurious pools and houses in the middle of nowhere, there *has* to be a purpose. You're either going to live in the house yourself, or you're building them for someone else. Either way, these houses are meant to be lived in. Yet, it is never clear if these houses, temples, pools, etc. are used by anyone. If all of it is just for show, then refer to the first question.

Do they have permission to use forest land?

In the era of climate emergency, forests

are being depleted at a drastic rate. On top of that, wilderness survival videos start with a few people gathering at a clearing and, without exchanging any words, start digging at the earth, from which an elaborate mansion will eventually arise. As someone concerned about the environment, I wonder if wilderness survival channels have permission to use forest land at random for the sake of making content. Our remaining forests are too vital for this, don't you think?

Are the labourers paid fairly?

Building houses and pools from scratch is more hard work than you and I can ever imagine. Yet, this gigantic task is carried out by one or two labourers, unless there are more people at work behind the scenes. The editing makes it seem like these few labourers build the whole structure all by themselves, barely taking any breaks. But, are they getting enough rest? Are they paid fairly? The ad revenue better be put to good use.

How do they build these without consulting a blueprint?

The buildings are way too intricately designed to not have any blueprint behind them. However, there is no indication of any engineers or architects being involved with the projects. One of the videos even began with a person drawing an extremely crude plan of the house he was going to build on a wooden slate, then building the house singlehandedly with utmost precision. Are the labourers themselves the engineers and architects? If so, mad respect.

Adhora Ahmed tries to make her two cats befriend each other, but in vain. Tell her to give up at adhora.ahmed@gmail.com



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SHOUT Quiz: Movies in Quarantino

Your daily life decides which movie you should watch right now

NASHRAH HAQUE & AYSHA ZAHEN

Locked down and bored? Worry not, take a look at your daily habits in the pandemic and let this quiz tell you what movie you should watch to kill more time. Points in parentheses; accumulate as you go.

1. *What does your morning routine look like?*

- A. Time is an illusion; mornings are a myth. (5)
- B. Straight to work/class, out of bed. I have got to earn that bread. (10)
- C. I'm surprised if I'm up by 2 PM. (5)
- D. I have no routine. Every day is a new adventure. (0)

2. *What have you been doing the most lately?*

- A. Sleeping is the new doing. (0)
- B. Studying... Just, studying. (10)
- C. Working out. Need to lose that pre-lockdown weight. (5)
- D. Busy launching my own business, on my way to taking over the world. (5)

3. *What is your go-to snack these days?*

- A. Potato Crackers and its deshi/international variants. (0)
- B. Healthy and fresh home-cooked food. I love you, Mom. (10)
- C. "FoodPanda dichhe darun shob offers! Aaj e download korun amader mobile app!! AH!!!!" (5)
- D. I don't snack, I feast. (0)

4. *What new skill have you been learning since quarantine began?*

- A. People are acquiring new skills now? (0)
- B. Baking/cooking/doing the dishes with minimal soap. (5)
- C. Is trying to keep my life together a skill? (10)
- D. 50% music, 50% art, 100% talent doing my part. (5)

5. *Pick a skill/talent you'd like to have.*

- A. Be able to know when this pandemic will end. (10)
- B. Be SUPER good at Maths. (0)
- C. Speak every language, *minha amiga*. (5)
- D. Online shopping without having to see



ads for that product in my newsfeed later on. (10)

6. *What do you spend most of your time binging?*

- A. My 94th rerun of Friends. (0)
- B. TikTok, all around the clock. (5)
- C. True crime documentaries/Conspiracy theory shows on Netflix. (0)
- D. MasterChef Australia. (10)

7. *Any silver linings in this pandemic for you?*

- A. Finally getting back to that to-be-read list. (0)
- B. Working on myself and my mental health. (10)
- C. Getting to discover the full extent of my patience. (5)
- D. Absolutely none. (0)

8. *If you could have wings, what would you want them to be made of?*

- A. Feathers? (10)
- B. My hopes and dreams. (0)
- C. Vibranium. (5)
- D. You mean, chicken wings? (0)

9. *Is daydreaming a big part of your quarantine routine?*

- A. I don't need to be in quarantine to

daydream. (5)

- B. Just the right amount, after 2 AM. (0)
- C. I only grind #hustle. (10)
- D. What's daydreaming? (10)

10. *If you could ever be a part of a movie crew, what would you want your work to be?*

- A. The mic guy. (0)
- B. I am nothing if not a thespian. The actor. (10)
- C. Christopher Nolan. (5)
- D. Props manager. (5)

11. *What kind of books have you been reading in quarantine?*

- A. Critically acclaimed novels. (10)
- B. I only read e-books. (0)
- C. Precalculus: Concepts Through Functions, 4th Edition, Michael Sullivan. (0)
- D. Do audiobooks count as reading? (5)

12. *If you had to go anywhere after the pandemic, where would it be?*

- A. Jamuna Future Park. (0)
- B. The mountains or the beach. (10)
- C. Literally anywhere as long as it's a trip with my family and/or friends. (5)
- D. Need to see what vacation package 20 taka in savings will buy me. (0)

13. *How many TV shows have you watched since the lockdown?*

- A. Was too busy watching to be counting. (10)
- B. Between 30 and 40. (10)
- C. Exactly six seasons of a show, and a movie. (5)
- D. Not patient enough to watch TV. (0)

14. *Which film genre do you relate your quarantine experience to?*

- A. Thriller. (10)
- B. Romance. (0)
- C. Drama. (5)
- D. Post-apocalyptic fiction. (10)

15. *Which one of your quarantine habits would you like to carry post-pandemic?*

- A. Working out. (10)
- B. Baking/cooking/helping in household chores. (10)
- C. Reading books/watching stuff more. (5)
- D. You guys picked up habits? (0)

Based on your total score, if you get...

Less than 50

Thriller/Horror: Hopefully unlike the future. Watch *The Lighthouse* (2019) and Jordan Peele's *Get Out* (2017) or *Us* (2019). We also recommend *Rebecca* but the one by Alfred Hitchcock.

Between 50 and 100

Drama: Life's all about the drama. *Kramer vs. Kramer* (1979) is a classic you can't miss. Check out the Japanese drama *Shoplifters* (2018), and this year's Academy Award for Best Picture winner *Nomadland* (2020).

More than 100

Rom com/Feel good: Awesome! You've earned it. Get your snacks ready, Google "feel good movies" and pick any. We do, however, highly recommend Studio Ghibli movies and *Shrek* (2001).

All Nashrah cares about is smashing the patriarchy. Help her at nashrah.haque01@gmail.com

Aysha thinks good things take time, at least a year and a half. Tell her all about how your good things took time, too, at zaheenaysha10@gmail.com

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Congratulations! You have been rejected.

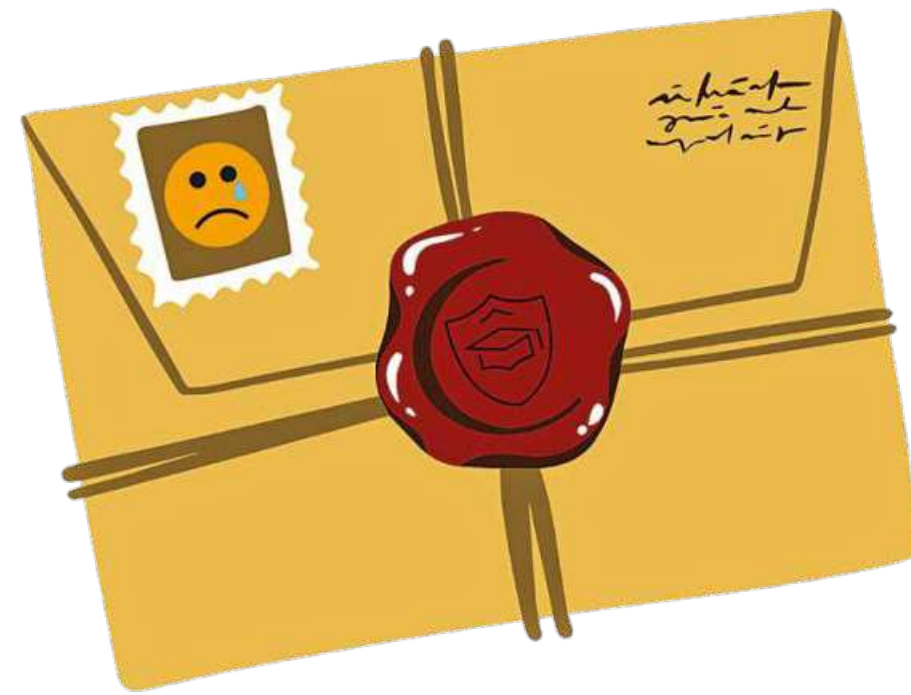
ROSHNI SHAMIM

Dear applicant,
Firstly, thank you so much for applying to our program. We have had a particularly rigorous year of the toughest pool of applications received and we were thoroughly impressed with your application. For real.

Now, if you have reached this far, then I have more or less convinced you that you have most likely been accepted. Alas, I must bring out the small needle pin that I keep handy in the admissions committee's desk, and proceed to burst your happy and optimistic bubble. While we were thoroughly taken with your credentials, we unfortunately cannot accept you into our final batch of students for this year. We, however, encourage you with feigned positivity to try again next year and if we may so please, to "surprise" you once again with an uneasy plot twist in the end.

We wish you all the very best in your future endeavours, because of course, we really do pretend to care.

For most students, the first half of the new year brings forth a charged atmosphere of motivation and determination. The months of March and April in particular emit many emotions in hopeful candidates who apply with big dreams and defined future plans. However, not all great stories start with a great bang. For many of us who applied late last year and even early this year for undergraduate and graduate admis-



DESIGN: KAZI AKIB BIN ASAD

sions abroad, it has not necessarily brought forward the best of news.

In the pandemic era, there seems to be enough gloom being passed around to feel deflated and morose over where life's upcoming course will take us. Top it with a little sprinkle of rejected applications and you have a well-rounded session of moping

joining your nights soon. Like other candidates in the same boat, I too, felt the same tightening in my chest while going through letter after letter of rejection. The irony of it all is that even when I was submitting these applications, I made sure to mentally brace myself up ahead (forgive the mind of an overthinker here) that regardless of what-

ever decisions these grad schools give me, I will not let it deter my future plans. Despite all the mantras, I still felt the rejection letters settle deep within me.

If you too have been rejected by the school of your dreams, I can accurately assess how fast the current abyss of unease must be spiralling around you. Although you have probably already tried to convince yourself by now about life's greater plans and that everything has its own reasons, it is completely okay to still feel the full weight of how much this obstacle has left you unsettled.

Perhaps in many ways, it is very critical for you to allow yourself to feel the full impact of this blow and process it within you. The greatest advice I can provide is the same one I am trying to desperately cling to everyday; if Plan A hasn't worked out, try for the 25 other letters. Maybe venture into something so unknown that you never dreamed you would gather the courage to do it.

Most importantly, throw away the atypical social media quotes about "figuring life out by 25" and building a business empire even before you hit your thirties. In the end, you are, and should be, the only one allowed to change the strings as you please.

Roshni spends her time dreaming about cakes and scenic waterfalls. Send her your thoughts at roshni.shamim@gmail.com

NEW TEACHERS VS THE PANDEMIC

BUSHRA ZAMAN

As a student myself, I often think of and sympathise with new students joining university, and how different such a crucial part of their lives are compared to what was the norm, on account of the pandemic. What I failed to realise up until recently was how this also held true for teachers and faculty members, especially those who recently began a career in academia. How has the wave of online education treated them?

Online classes/exams were a first for many teachers in our country, since previously almost all educational activities were conducted in person. To adapt to such circumstances and learn how to teach effectively online despite struggling themselves during the pandemic is a feat in itself. To further do so at the beginning of their teaching career with the added anxiety of taking classes for the first time perhaps requires one to summon up even more mental strength.

Mahnaz Ahmed, English Literature teacher at Adroit International School, recalls her online teaching experience with different age groups of children, "I never knew my first day at work would be sitting on my desk at home. The first time I logged into the classroom, all the students greeted me with a big smile and were extremely supportive. I could sense the student's eagerness to learn although it was through a screen. I was nervous but extremely happy as I was doing something I absolutely love. The whiteboard was replaced with a Zoom screen, diaries were replaced by Google Classroom, and books were replaced by PDFs as we went along with the flow of the pandemic."

"I teach from kindergarten to Class 7 and it is a whole different experience dealing with various age groups. We study and have fun learning new things. It feels as if children have become used to the new normal of online teaching," she adds.

Mahnaz discusses how she attempted to capture students' attention during class, "For classwork, we provide them worksheets for the month which are completed and submitted at the end of the month. We take regular class tests and oral tests to ensure complete learning, and teach via both books and video for visual learning which enhance the children's knowledge."



PHOTOS: ORCHID CHAKMA

As for the challenges, Mahnaz states, "One of the biggest difficulties we come across is for the junior kids. It's difficult to ensure whether they have written or understood what we have tried to convey. At times, the internet connection is also a matter of concern and many students keep getting disconnected but I ask them to hold their copy in front of the camera to check their regular classwork. The parents sometimes assist in taking out the worksheet and logging into class."

Newly appointed private university lecturer in Dhaka, Abu Taher*, expresses his thoughts on how online classes posed difficulties for him. He says, "For someone like me who is only starting their teaching career, online classes can be a big obstacle to falling in love with this profession. Online classes take away the joy of in-person interactions and make it quite difficult for

teachers to assess the quality of their delivery. A teacher needs to ensure that every student is properly comprehending the entire lecture. Particularly, in an online setting, this task becomes extremely difficult. Firstly, the teacher cannot be sure if the lecture material is clear enough for all students to understand. Students who are having trouble understanding the lecture rarely respond in online classes. Secondly, the teacher has no way of knowing if the delivery is interesting enough to hold everyone's attention. So, the teachers do not get the opportunity to adjust and improve their delivery."

*Fabiha Khan, lecturer at Daffodil International University, also comments on the challenges faced in terms of interaction in online classes, "Adapting to online teaching wasn't as hard for me, since I didn't have prior experience that I needed to forget. However, connecting with students has been especially difficult since I can't read their body language and adapt my teaching to keep their attention. Despite using every interactive platform and methods under the sun, it's a good day if I get a student to say 'yes' or 'no' to any question I ask. I don't necessarily blame them since they don't really have a relationship with me beyond a face on the screen. I've tried building a good mentor/mentee relationship with students during one-on-one sessions, and those have been very successful, but not everyone is eager to attend those sessions."

As indicated by those who shared their experiences, online classes generate few responses from students, making it difficult for faculties/teachers to judge how well the lecture has been understood. Continuously staring at a screen and

speaking with no response potentially generates a feeling of speaking to yourself without being heard by anyone else, not to mention the physical problems that arise due to staring at a screen for lengthy periods of time and the network issues, all of which can be even more trying if your teaching career begins with such experiences.

However, all is not doom and gloom. Challenges are there only to be faced, and sometimes a little bit of gratitude towards a profession born out of passion goes a long way, like how Mahnaz describes the joy in teaching.

"It's delightful being a teacher. My time spent with the children is something I cherish and look forward to every day. When my KG 2 students tell me 'Miss, you're the best, we love you!', it's truly heartwarming and keeps me motivated. Although I started my journey during the pandemic, not for a single moment did I feel as if the kids were far away from me. The teacher-student bond is one of the best relationships and I'm glad that it's a big part of my life," she shares.

Given how class attendance is usually recommended unless legitimate excuses are present, the perseverance of good teachers and faculty members in attempting to effectively deliver academic information against all odds makes attending classes more doable for students during these difficult times. And for that, to our teachers, including the new ones who are only just adjusting themselves, thank you.

*Names have been changed upon request

Bushra Zaman likes books, art, and only being contacted by email. Find her at bushra-zaman31@yahoo.com

DIAL BACK ON THE POSITIVITY

DURDANA KAMAL

Turns out, 24/7 good vibes aren't so great after all.

In an internet-driven world where you can get lost in the sea of new words, references and "cancel culture", it is easy to rule yourself out as an unproblematic individual. To be honest, social media is exhausting and a good option is to just avoid everything that is going wrong with the world. Ignorance is bliss, as the saying goes. One might try to give their mental health a break by distancing themselves from negative situations and surrounding themselves with positivity, which is always a great way to relieve stress.

So, if positivity is a good thing, why does a term like "toxic positivity" exist?

Imagine a scenario where you are confiding in your friend about your depression, about how it is decreasing your productivity or some other similar situation about which it is not easy to open up, and your friend's immediate response is, "Stop being so sad. You have it better than most people. Others are suffering way more than you but they are not complaining about it. You should appreciate what you have and count your blessings."

While that might be a true statement, a factual declaration actually causes more harm than good. This is

an example of toxic positivity, which can make people feel a certain pressure to be happy and push their sorrows deep down within themselves.

One can also impose this on themselves. For example, a lot of people might try to deal with grief by burying it down, rather than deal with it. They might avoid facing their own realities because of societal pressure, self-conflict and a desire to not seem vulnerable in front of anybody. It is often as simple as trying too hard to set a "happy" image of yourself, to be known as the jolly person and trying too hard to present a version of yourself that is inauthentic.

Some examples of toxic positivity include saying things such as "Everything happens for a reason", "Just focus on the bright side", "Try to forget what happened" and many more. These are all variations of different words but have the same effect on a person - it isolates them with their thoughts, makes them feel guilty for feeling sad, and essentially deters them from opening up to anyone again.

Not only does toxic positivity facilitate isolation, create communication issues and make someone feel worse about their own feelings, it can also backfire in incomprehensible ways. Constantly assuring someone that everything is okay and there is nothing

wrong with their current situation, might give that person a false sense of security, which might worsen the state of their mental health in the long run due to lack of treatment. Additionally, it might enable a person to continue to stay in toxic and abusive relationships where the person has a great chance of being severely harmed.

It is important to realise that experiencing negative emotions, while unpleasant, is a part of being human. Stifling them only creates more harm to

the mental state. As humans, it is very natural to not always be perfect. We are all guilty of imposing toxic positivity to ourselves or to others, at some point or another. Instead of having a positive response to every problem, it is better to learn how to be a better listener and let someone be free with their feelings.

Durdana Kamal likes to engage in activities which mostly do not serve any purpose whatsoever. Contact me through kamal.durdana@gmail.com



THE DEFINITIVE YOUTH MAGAZINE SHOUT



9 Tips to Curb Online Shopping Addiction

ZIBA MAHDI

Online shopping was already taking off before the pandemic but now, its popularity has inevitably skyrocketed. Getting hooked to online shopping is even easier than regular shopping. Anything you want is just a click away and the search bar saves you the countless hours you would have spent browsing at the mall.

There's nothing wrong with indulging yourself occasionally, but if you always find yourself feeling guilty afterwards, it might be time to rethink your hobby. Here is what you can do.

1. Soul searching

Compulsive habits usually have some underlying reasons. Try to find a pattern in your past behaviour. Some people shop as a way of fighting boredom, some get a temporary high after making a purchase, some just do it because it's plain fun. Whatever the cause is, identifying these triggers will help you be self-aware on your journey to be financially responsible.

2. Get a parent/friend involved

If there's anyone who can convince you that you don't really need a Pikachu LED desk lamp, it's your mom. Or maybe a very strict friend. Going over your potential purchases with someone else might provide some insight on whether you really need an item or not.

3. Limit the amount of easily available cash

Aside from some emergency cash, try to keep your money where it's not easily accessible to you. It could be a savings account or with a parent. That way, even if you get the urge to binge-shop, you won't have the resources to pull it off.

4. Target the source

Both iOS and Android devices have specific settings to stop the targeted advertisements that pop up in our social media. If you use

a laptop, try deleting cookies to prevent seeing personalised ads. It might also be time to leave a Facebook shopping group or two.

5. Make a budget

It's important to be realistic here. There's no point in depriving yourself completely. Effective financial management always starts with a good budget. Keep a specific amount of "fun money" for shopping each month. Once it's gone, it's gone. Wait until the next month to buy something from your wishlist.

6. Maintain a log

Keep a list of all the things you buy, along with their prices. If maintaining a diary is too much of a hassle, there are budgeting apps like Mint or Wally to keep track of expenses. These personal finance tools will not only help with tracking purchases, but also present feedback on your spending.

7. Don't impulse-buy

That's it. That's the tip. But we'll reiterate. Read on.

8. "SALE! BUY IN THE NEXT 3 DAYS AND GET 40% OFF"

These tactics are usually employed to prey on people's impulsiveness. Take at least two days to assess if the item is worth it. This waiting period alone will make you realise you were about to make a frivolous purchase just to get free shipping.

9. Do a shop-free challenge

Going into full cold turkey mode rarely works. Building a habit is more dependable in the long run. Try to go 15 days without making an unnecessary purchase, and then gradually increase that number, until the tendency to overspend abates.

Developing these habits might be painful in the short term, but they will definitely transform you into a financially responsible adult in the future.

Ziba Mahdi is your resident pessimist. Cheer her up at facebook.com/ziba.mahdi.735



DESIGN: KAZI AKIB BIN ASAD

Here's Why You Should Own a Punching Bag



AMRIN TASNIM RAFA

Next time you feel a burst of motivation where you're convinced that a certain piece of exercise equipment is all you need to turn your life around, buy a punching bag. It's versatile, and once you lose motivation to work out after about a week or so, a world of possibilities opens up.

Stress Relief

I know. Pretty obvious, right? You punch it over and over and let out whatever pent-up emotion you had building up inside. However, some days you just don't want to move. The punching bag is your buddy now, and arguably a better listener than your other friends. As you rant, your buddy Punchie will listen supportively and never divert the topic toward itself. It won't judge you for complaining/being upset about something seemingly minor, nor will you feel guilty for troubling it with your silly problems.

Snack Sanctuary

If you're tired of your drawers eating your snacks as your siblings claim they didn't know you even had them, you're in luck. Most punching bags come with a zipper. Open it, take a little of the filling out, and stuff your snacks inside before zipping it back up. I guarantee you, Punchie will never let you down and eat your snacks. Or maybe when you can't find a big enough container for the popcorn you intend to eat while binge-watching all night, you could stuff the whole punching bag with popcorn and eat out of it. However, I personally haven't tried this one out yet, for fear that Punchie might never be the same again.

Guardian Angel

The looming, ominous figure in your room has no purpose in mind but your protection. Feel free to feel invincible. It's over for the demons under your bed; you no longer need to run to your bed after switching the lights off for the night. Now that you have company, you can watch horror movies at night and still be able to sleep. Strong and sturdy Punchie will be right there, ready for a fight in the event that the demons in the movie select you as their next victim. This you know they will.

Keeping Up Appearances

Are you tired of feeling left out as all your friends become fitness gurus? Fret not, for Punchie is here to save you. For every mirror selfie your gym bro friend posts from, well, the gym, post two yourself with your punching bag clearly visible in the background. Whenever your friends come over, make sure Punchie is present where they'll see it, and leave a few boxing gloves lying around nearby. Do everything you can to bring up your commitment to boxing training at least once in every conversation you engage in. And congratulations, you're officially a part of the trendy fitness community.

If you're still not convinced, a punching bag is a deeply subjective experience. At the end of the day, there is much to learn from a punching bag, such as when life hits hard, you don't put up with it and hit back harder.

Amrin Tasnim Rafa is always confused, it's literally her dominant personality trait. She challenges you to find something she won't think is confusing. Try your luck at amrinrafa@gmail.com

FABLE FACTORY

GHOST OF BAD TIMES

TASFIA NISAT

The hollow passage of my womanhood.
I did not know; I was not aware.
My doomed womanhood questioned the prejudices,
A lingering poignant feeling drying my mouth.
I'm not a dime's worth, with my typical point of view.
Today, I ran back and forth in the forest.
The murmurs of the dry leaves, synchronised with the sound of oppression.
I bled between my legs.
I plead guilty in a world, egalitarianism is pedantic; philanthropy is for fame.
I felt like a worm waiting to be beheaded,
Whilst building a grave for the earth I smelled my happy thoughts.
A hot brewed cup of coffee and laughing till I gasp for breath.
Joy must smell of petrichor, a smell I yearn for.
I struggle to understand the way you think, lend me a parasite of your brain.
I'm not a saviour, I'm not a hero.
But why must a whale from the brave ocean be slaughtered for your entitlement?
And your illusion.
I'm craven.
I am waiting for the bureaucracy to sink whilst losing my mind.
Perhaps then, I'll take a bus to hell; God will serve fascism for breakfast.
And I'll throw a fit.

The writer is a grade 12 student at Bangladesh International School and College.



Your Name

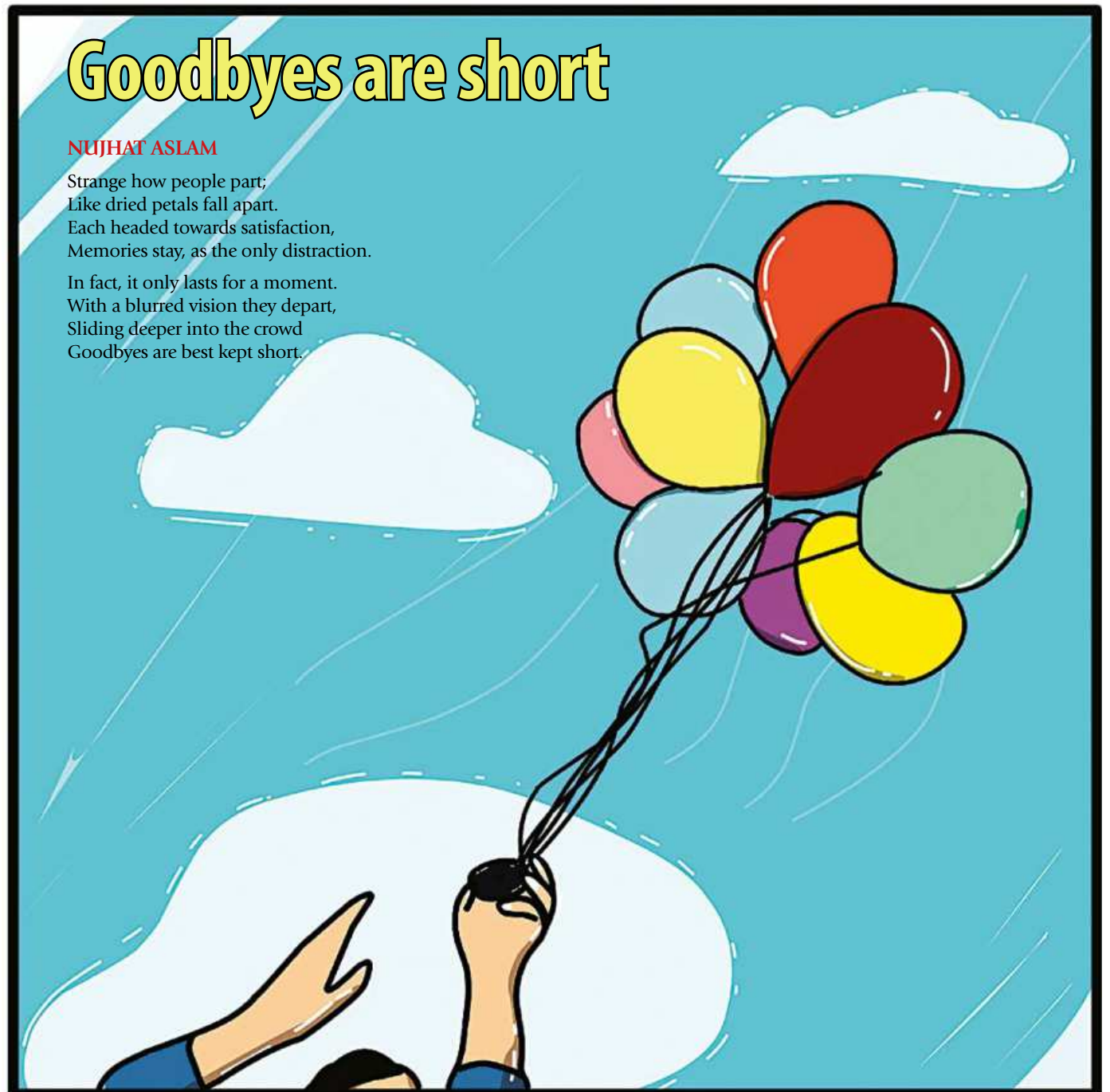
SYEDA ERUM NOOR

Your name rolls right off my tongue
Like it belonged there before I knew you.
Sugar topped with honey rolls
Like the aftertaste of adolescence.
Motions turn to blurrings passing by.
Day in, day out, all but white noise.
Your name however chimes and rings
Like quarter bells in outer space.
When chaos strikes and sorrow falls,
When crows pick on hollowed skulls,
And nothing will get rid of them,
Your name rolls right off my tongue.
It forms in slow and hallowed breaths
Like a silent prayer to a mortal sin.
And when silence follows wickedly
Chaos strikes and sorrow falls.
Sensual and intimate,
Like secrets that should have been kept.
Your name rolls right off my tongue
In whispers and infidelity.
Sounds and letters meaningless,
When strung together the right way.
Break time and space continuum
Leaving blissed oblivion in its place.
"What's in a name?" said scholars great,
Never having tasted yours,
Or heard the symphony of melodies as
Your name rolls right off my tongue.

Goodbyes are short

NUJHAT ASLAM

Strange how people part;
Like dried petals fall apart.
Each headed towards satisfaction,
Memories stay, as the only distraction.
In fact, it only lasts for a moment.
With a blurred vision they depart,
Sliding deeper into the crowd
Goodbyes are best kept short.





WHO AM I?

I often wonder, who am I?
I try to find the answer everywhere I go. In the shadows,
and in the light that cast those shadows.
I try seeking myself in every mirror, in every reflection I
come across.
In some, I find light. In others, only darkness.

PHOTO: AFRA ANAN SABA
WORDS: ATANU

