

How to cope with a friend's vacation as a broke person

TAASEEN MOHAMMED ISLAM

Do you ever open social media to see your friends eating tapas in Barcelona, swimming in the Maldives, or riding the tram in San Francisco while you sip instant coffee and not a 400-taka brownie mocha? You're not alone.

Travel envy is a leading cause of breaking up friendships, pent up anger, and hostility amongst young people. Here's some tips on handle your emotions the next time you see a friend on an exotic vacation.

WRITE A BACKHANDED COMPLIMENT

There's nothing more satisfying than raining on someone's parade. Unleash your toxic self on them by consistently commenting on what they post. A photo caption with only emojis? Comment on how articulate they are. Did they just post a picture of a delicious seafood feast? Please let them know children in Africa are starving.

If you are feeling bold, DM that their outfit isn't flattering enough to make a grid post on. However, the border between backhanded and malicious can be thin, and I don't take any responsibility if this destroys your friendship.

WATCH A MOVIE

Please remember that we live in the streaming era. A library of countless movies, TV shows, and media exists practically at your fingertips, allowing us to vacation vicariously through Hollywood's eyes.

While your friend sweats bullets in Greek islands, you can watch *Mamma Mia!* from the air-conditioned comfort of your home. Similarly, you can visit almost any major American and European city without suffering from awful weather and spending an arm and a leg on airfare and accommodation.

MAKE (IMAGINARY) PLANS

So what if you can't afford to jet off to Istanbul

at a moment's notice? Making plans costs nothing as long as they aren't implemented. Plan galore, book a first-class flight to Marrakesh, book the room Anna Delvey conned her way into (about BDT 760K per night, by the way), and plan an itinerary around the best Morocco has to offer, from the Atlas Mountains to the lush Majorelle Gardens. Just don't authenticate the payment at the end.

SWITCH YOUR PHONE OFF

As your mother once said, all you do is scroll that phone all day. The endless stream of Cox's Bazar content your friends are mass-manufacturing can only hurt you if you spend all day looking at it. So rather than giving Instagram power over you, switch off your phone. Go out and explore your local area, read a book, and maybe actually study for once.

PLACATE YOURSELF

Reality appears much more skewed on social media, and while the pictures look perfect, it doesn't guarantee that their trip was. After all, thousands of Europeans visit Southeast Asia for a "spiritual" experience and leave with mosquito bites and typhoid. How are you so sure your friend had such an amazing trip?

Turns out Taaseen Mohammed Islam can write semi-decently at the expense of being able to do basic math. Send him pointers at taaseen.2001@gmail.com



satire.

Man faces existential crisis as internet brawls fall to zero

ABIR HOSSAIN

The grass is green on both sides. The birds chirp in unison and there appears to be no traffic jam in Bijoy Sarani. For others, however, hell has spawned right before their eyes. They see the smear of dirt even when they touch the grass. Their cacophony only induces pain.

"And there they were, just agreeing with each other," says Toukir.

A survey conducted by the Department of Hatred over Technology (DHET) revealed a ground-breaking discovery. By surfing through the profiles of Elon Musk fanboys, holocaust deniers, and those who comment "Messi OR Ronaldo" on your posts regardless of what it's about, the researchers caught no sight of disagreement. The phenomenon was thought to be extinct.

Keyboards no longer appear to be the source of mass inconsequential consequences. Instead, they have become the tools to spark Socratic dialogue. People are more interested in others' points of view without immediately deeming them invalid.

"We thought we missed something during research. In the initial stages, the study seemed like a complete waste of time but after accumulating enough data by means that might or might not be classified as a breach of privacy, there was some hope," said the Head of Conflict Specialist at DHET.

Misinformed moral policing, petty fights about sports



PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

and even personal attacks on strangers have come to a halt. While the sky appears to be blue on the World Wide Web, it isn't so bright for others.

"I have this hilarious GIF of a man feasting on popcorn, snickering at a monitor. I can't even look at the GIF anymore because everyone managed to invent the correct way to pronounce 'GIF'. Either way, they're all wrong. It's pronounced GIF," he continued.

When inquired about how else he would contribute to a conversation apart from laughing at both sides and

spamming GIFs, Toukir appeared bewildered.

"Contributing? To a conversation? By developing points of my own?" Toukir asked. He almost stumbled upon an important epiphany before losing his train of thought, quickly shaking his head to snap out of it.

Toukir now spends his days reading old comments, pondering about the misery of life and what it means, and occasionally disagreeing with people on the internet. His efforts are futile.

Toukir is not the only one who has been affected. An entire industry has started to face the effects of internet brawls ceasing to exist. With reported losses over the past two quarters, and revenue unlikely to pick up anytime soon, popcorn producers are afraid it is time to close up shop.

"I understand that a group of sadists kept me and my family afloat but people losing jobs isn't funny. Sure, those employees have moved on to better positions with more fulfilling roles but what about me?" says Bisho F Rahman, CEO of Bibad Industries.

Toukir wails. He affirms that people need to channel their true primitive selves and truly encapsulate Diogenes' spirit.

"Step into the spotlight with a plucked chicken and claim that it is a man. What's stopping you?"

Abir Hossain is a failed SoundCloud Rapper. Tell him you too can't find anything to rhyme oranges with at: fb/abir.hossain.19