

THE DEFINITIVE
YOUTH
MAGAZINE
SHOUT

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MEN NEED TO TREAT
EACH OTHER BETTER

PG 3

ACCEPTING YOUR PARENTS
IS NOT THE SAME AS LOV-
ING YOUR PARENTS

PG 8

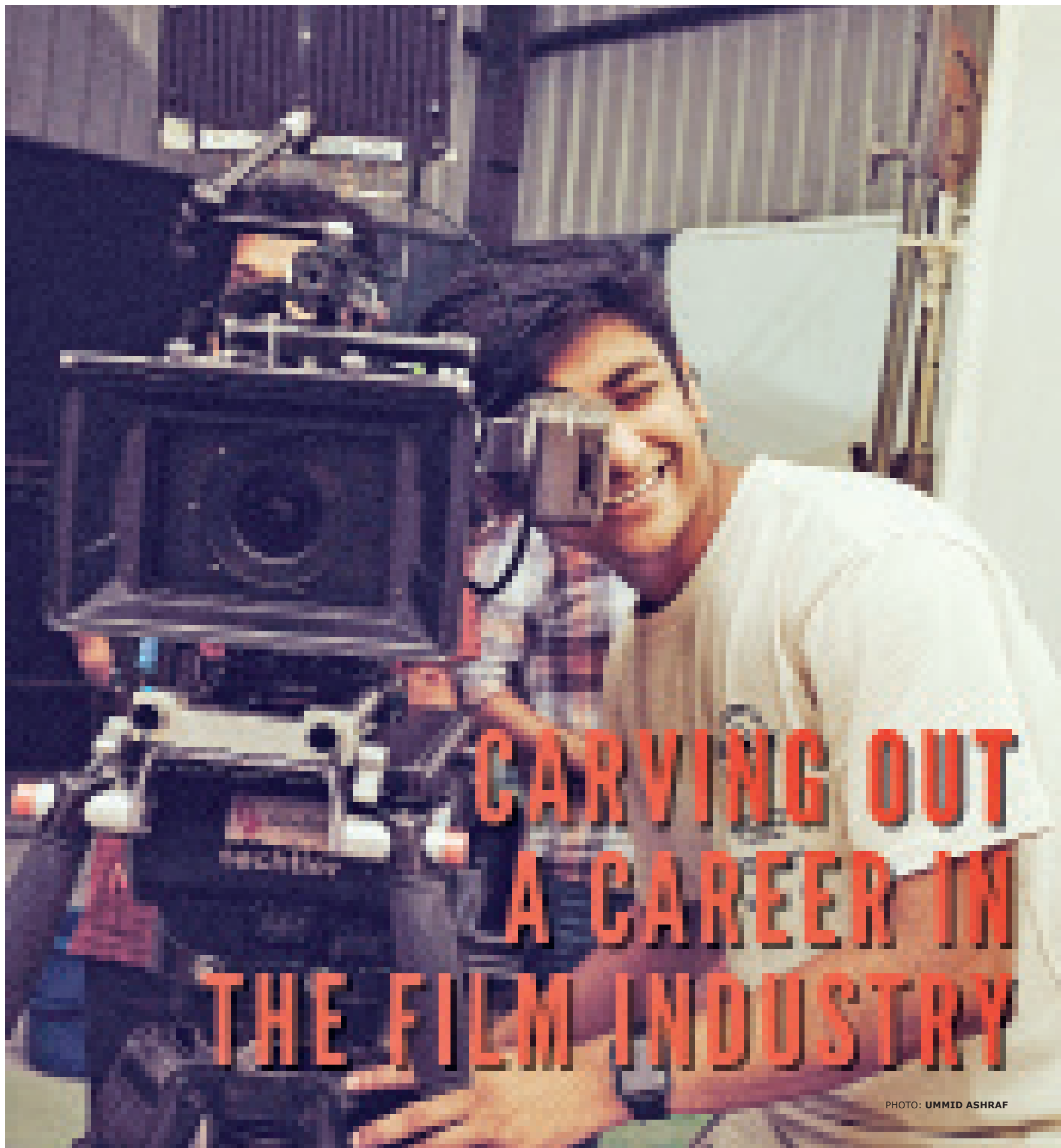


PHOTO: UMMID ASHRAF

EDITORIAL

I always thought that the question “What is your favourite movie?” was a little off-putting.

How can you even settle on one film? Wouldn't you need to watch every single movie ever made to make a decision? Is it even possible to watch every movie ever made in one lifetime? If it isn't possible in one lifetime, are you then reincarnated and forced to watch the remainder of the movies? But what if in your new lifetime, there are newer movies that have been made that you're required to watch? Does it then become a loop where you keep being reincarnated until you have finished this never-ending task? However, what happens when you do accomplish it? Is your existence rendered obsolete right after you finish watching the last movie? Or are you given time to choose an answer? But, what about the person who asked you the question in the first place? Do they still exist in this new life you have been reincarnated in?

Either way, one must imagine Sisyphus happy.

– Abir Hossain, Sub-Editor, SHOUT



PLAYWATCH

ANIME



Monster is an unmatched piece of philosophy in the field of anime

MYNUL KARIM

Certain anime stand the test of time and stick with us for their enthralling stories or the messages they convey. *Monster* is definitely one of them, but it goes a step further by presenting one of the most thought-provoking clashes of philosophical ideologies, one that bears a frightening resemblance to real life and can question the viewer's moral compass.

Written and illustrated by Naoki Urasawa, *Monster* is a Japanese manga series that received an anime adaptation in 2004 and quickly gained a dedicated following for its complex plot, well-developed characters, and realistic animation.

The anime has a sizeable cast who bear major significance in the storytelling, and each character provides a unique perspective. However, the most important cogs of the wheel in the story are undoubtedly the morally obligated optimistic protagonist Dr Kenzo Tenma and the tragic embodiment of evil, antagonist Johan Liebert.

Liebert and Tenma are often depicted as foils for each other, with their actions and motivations serving as counterpoints to each other. Liebert is a highly-intelligent and manipulative character with a tendency towards violence and a lack of empathy, while Tenma is a compassionate and idealistic doctor driven by a desire to do good and save lives. Despite their differences, Liebert and Tenma are also deeply connected, with their paths intersecting and influencing each other throughout the series.

One of the key reasons why *Monster* remains relevant today is its exploration of complex moral issues. The story deals with themes such as the nature of good and evil, the corrupting influence of power, and the consequences of personal choices. Throughout the series, it is con-

veyed that the line between good and evil is not always clear and that even well-intentioned actions can have disastrous consequences.

Throughout the series, *Monster* asks one of the oldest yet decisive questions about the value of life and humanity by magnificently presenting it as a philosophical dilemma. On one side, it is argued that all human life is equally important and holds value, while the other argument is professed as humanity holds no value if all humans are equal and humans are equal only in death.

To a lesser extent, *Monster* also touches on the grim side of the medical profession, painting the harsh realities of pressure to prioritise the interests of wealthy and powerful patients over those of ordinary people.

The animation in *Monster* is reminiscent of the style of its era, but it has certainly stood the test of time. Expressive character designs, a realistic stylistic approach, and the use of colour and lighting are particularly effective, which add to the mood and atmosphere of the series, thus helping to elevate the story to even greater heights.

In conclusion, *Monster* is a complex and thought-provoking anime series that explores a wide range of moral and psychological issues. Its portrayal of ethical dilemmas and exploration of the nature of good and evil makes it relevant and fascinating even today.

The 74-episode span may feel like a slog at times, and the dark themes might not be digestible for many. However, *Monster* remains a must-watch for anyone eager to witness one of the best protagonist-antagonist duos in anime and does not mind engaging in philosophical contemplation that draws parallels to our everyday lives.

TITLE OF YOUR MIXTAPE



A

ZOOM

Jessi

Photograph

Arcade Fire

Polaroid

Imagine Dragons

Nirbhau Nirvair

Shahid Mallya

B

Paparazzi

Lady Gaga

Girls On Film

Duran Duran

Polaroid

ENHYPEN

Photograph

Nickelback

Email us at shoutds@gmail.com with feedback, comments, and reader submissions within 500 words.

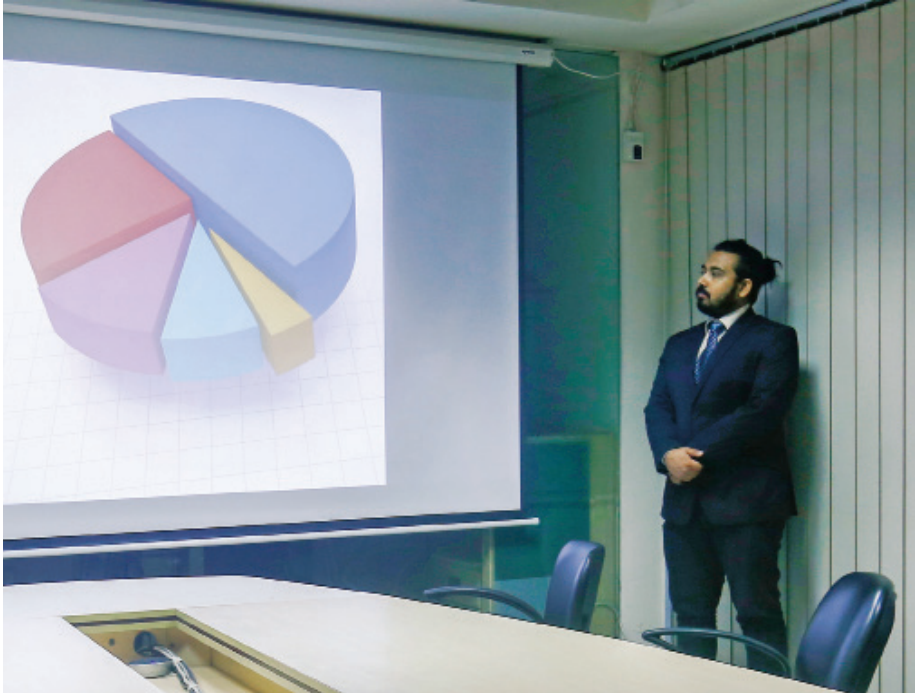


PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

Could university clubs be overrated?

TAASEEN MOHAMMED ISLAM

University clubs are the self-proclaimed best places on campus to meet like-minded people and net a couple of extracurriculars under your belt. While recruitment, club activities, and the whole “we’re more than a club, we’re a family” shtick gives the promise of a rose-tinted four-year tenure, university clubs come with their slew of pitfalls.

To begin with, there’s more than meets the eye regarding the whole “family” culture these clubs enshrine. Nepotism, biases, and animosity exist within most university clubs. Furthermore, the over-supply of members and intense competition that members go through can ultimately destroy a sense of community amongst the members the club set out to achieve in the first place.

Most university clubs require a significant time commitment to be a member. Clubs generally have events and activities happening all year-round, so active participation is expected from members. These commitments can be a major burden for students who are already stretched thin with classes, work, and other responsibilities. Club treasurers and others in-charge tend to forget members can have a life outside the club and will relentlessly grill them to do “club work” during exam season.

Additionally, certain clubs can be exclusionary and cliquish, making it difficult for new members to feel welcome and included. Some clubs are notorious for enforcing unreasonable requirements, going as far as mandating formal dress codes in the clubroom. Furthermore, many of these clubs have a whole Orwellian-style hierarchy between the members, where questioning higher-ups is greatly discouraged.

Getting involved in a university club provides students with networking and socialisation opportunities. It is not uncommon to see the average clubgoer send requests to people left and right on every possible social media platform, while attempting to double the number of people added to them in order to widen their network. However, these rarely grow into fruitful job opportunities down the line. Club experience does not equate to job experience, despite what the club may have you believe. Even though club experience can be used as a springboard to garner employment after graduation through networking and skills, there’s a fine line between exploitation and due work.

Additionally, many skills learned by participating in club activities and events are menial and may not be used in a corporate setting. During recruitment, clubs announce a slate of skills prospective members can learn, from writing to web development and Structured Query Language (SQL). But rather than teaching members these skills, clubs divert their attention to members with existing foundational skills and leave others in the dust, teaching them rudimentary copy and caption-writing.

University clubs are still a great way for students to get involved and explore who they are during their formative years. But sometimes, these organizations can overstate their benefits and underscore the numerous problems they are riddled with. When choosing to enroll in a club, it is imperative to remember that it should not dictate your whole experience at university, and it is crucial to discover yourself as an individual beyond these clubs.

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

Men need to treat each other better

HASIB UR RASHID IFTI

The idea of men not being allowed to cry has been a wildly propagated notion in society. Men’s mental health isn’t talked about enough, nor are men’s vulnerabilities prioritised by our society. The expectation of the patriarchy and the burden of masculinity steamroll us to the point that we unlearn the very necessity of sharing our vulnerabilities, insecurities and sorrows.

No matter how negligent the society around us might be, most men are aware of all of these complications deep inside, which gives rise to a burning question – if men are truly aware of the rough treatment they receive and the negligence that follows, why are most men so harsh with each other in a friendship?

How often have we been in a room packed with our friends, men like ourselves, and yet completely alone on the inside? Sure, the people around us might be entangled by the primordial narrative that men are supposed to be unresponsive to stress, unmoved by depression and endure physical or psychological traumas without displaying any vulnerability. However, in this day and age, if men are willing to acknowledge the negligence regarding mental health and admit that it’s okay to ask for emotional support, then they should also be willing to take that one step further and start reaching out to the men around them.

Male friendships mostly develop on the idea to impress. We feel the need to prove ourselves as humorous, witty, fun-loving and a good company in front of our male friends. As children, boys are taught that expressing vulnerability is a feminine trait and will cause them to be deemed unworthy of love, respect and admiration. While gender roles projected onto general human traits is a problematic notion, most boys carry the weight of the futile lesson through their adulthood and implement it in other relationships, pushing them to create an impenetrable shield of insensitivity.

As men get habituated to hiding their vulnerabilities, their natural response to others’ vulnerabilities also gets distorted. Often, their response comes out as insensitive and hurtful because they’ve never experienced the appropriate response themselves.

Consequently, the solutions suggested by male friends are simply to distract the person from the pain by hanging out, going on trips or doing things as a group while dodging the real issue. All of these are commendable ways of helping someone go through trauma, but displaying affection and talking about the incident are far more effective. Since most men aren’t used to sharing affection in a friendship, the entire conundrum becomes too awkward for them.

It is necessary to comprehend that admission of vulnerabilities and insecurities doesn’t make a person weaker than the other in the equations of a friendship. In fact, sharing each other’s weaknesses is one of the building blocks of any healthy relationship – romantic or platonic.

Sometimes all you need to do is listen, create a safe space in the process and slowly overcome the barrier of the fear of insult that lies within the friendship.

Remind Ifti to be quieter at hasiburrashidifti@gmail.com



PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

Carving out a career in the film industry

ABIR HOSSAIN

The practice of telling stories is ubiquitous. Tales as old as time, don't stick with us because they are mere recollections of events, they stay because they evoke emotions.

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Fables about kings, queens, and bishops have been retold a hundred times over but what makes each one distinct from the other is the storyteller itself. This urge to tell stories and to reimagine old worlds anew comes from a very intimate place and young people are beginning to find a space for their tall tales from behind a camera.

Ashfaque Nipun, writer and director, talks about the source of his inspiration.

"People are the best source of stories. Whether it is the failure of the system or crisis of the masses I am trying to portray, I find inspiration through random people," he said. "I think what makes a story resonate with the audience is when you leave your personal touch in it. When people see their stories being portrayed, they will connect to it."

In every nook and cranny lies a story waiting to be told and filmmakers in Bangladesh are making the most of it. To say, these tales have left an impression, would be an understatement.

Nuhash Humayun's *Moshari* won the Atlanta Film Festival Jury Prize - an Oscar Qualifying award - for Best Narrative Short. Elsewhere, Abdullah Mohamad Saad's *Rehana Maryam Noor* received a standing ovation at the Cannes Film Festival. Recognition of such magnitude is vital for an industry that is still developing. It encourages younger people to pursue their passion.

Talat Ahmed, an independent filmmaker talks about what brought him into the practice and the inspiration for his first film, *Dheu*.

"I went to film school in America and have wanted to make films since I was 17," he said. "For my first project, most people thought it was about mental health but I was intrigued by the procession of Islamic funerals and thought I could make an arthouse film out of it."

Ragheeb Faatih Moazzem, a street photographer turned filmmaker, talks about his beginnings.

"After practising street photography for almost a decade, I wanted to add more dimensions to my stories. That is where my journey with writing and filmmaking started," he said. "Everything started from photography and pivoted off to other projects with the goal to enjoy the experience. Somewhere along the line, people started taking my work seriously. One thing led to another and I decided that this was what I wanted to do."

For individuals like Ragheeb, filmmaking has been more than a career pursuit. It has allowed him to keep a vow to his younger self that he can work in a field that is always evolving and involves problem-solving. Nonetheless, for the jigsaw puzzle to take its final shape requires an entire group of committed people. From line managers to art directors to costume designers, each member contributes an important part of the final product.



"The DSA doesn't help anyone except for those who can exploit it. When I was charged for Mahanagar, what message did they intend to send out? What people celebrate about places is its art and culture. Yet, here we are censoring it," remarks Ashfaque.



PHOTOS: COURTESY

Ragheeb believes that the aftermath of vague censorship laws will eventually segregate us from the global platform. "When they shut down a film, not only are they barring the work of the director but also the work of the entire team," he said.

"Right now, censorship laws are difficult. Recently, a talk was organised by Film Alliance Bangladesh about the reform required in the current landscape. I remember Mostofa Sarwar Farooki talking about how he has spent nearly half a decade trying to release a feature film of his. It's hard enough to make movies, get funding and piece together every little aspect. Imagine then having to spend more time just running around censor boards," added Talat.

Making art is hard. However, the aspirations of young storytellers cannot be stifled. Through their own volition, they are determined to make their voices heard.

"Reach out to people who work in the industry and tell them why you want to do it. Send them cold messages. It might just work out," Ragheeb said.

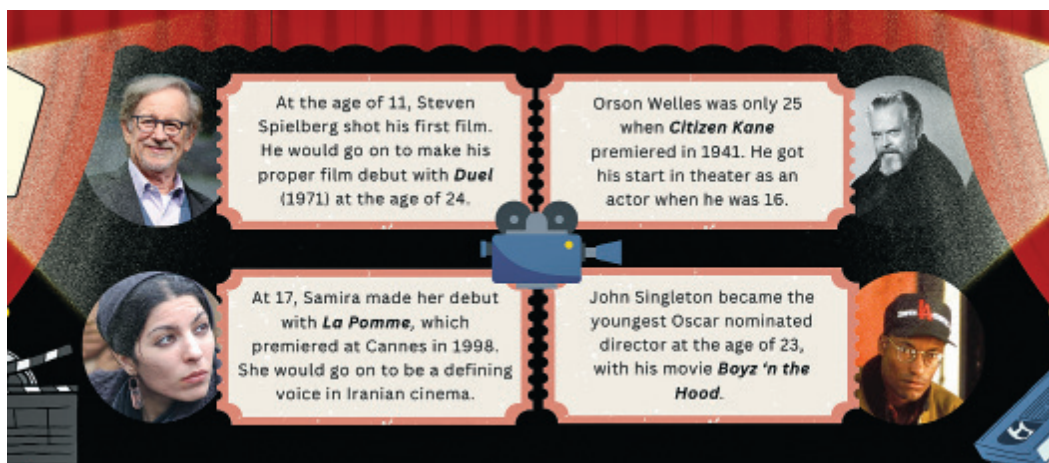
Talat reaffirms that the hardest part is just to get started. "Once you can overcome that barrier of getting into it, things will start falling into place," he said.

"Working in the industry will be tough if you can't bring something fresh. You have to find a niche. Build a small portfolio of work to show. Watch movies. Try to consume art, philosophy, and music. It might sound very obvious but it is a vital part," advises Ummid.

For Ashfaque Nipun, he urged people to be brutally honest with themselves and their art.

"When you start working in the industry, chances are you won't be getting paid the same amount as your friends working in other fields. But if you want to make something out of this, you need to commit, put in work and be wary of your craftsmanship. As you dive deeper, you'll begin to realise that you can't take people for granted. If you don't believe in your vision, how can an entire crew be convinced to share it," he concluded.

Abir Hossain is a sub-editor at SHOUT. Reach him at abir.hossain@thedailystar.net



DESIGN: AAQIB HASIB

Ummid Ashraf, an artist and colourist in the film industry, reflects on his journey. "It has been a really enjoyable experience. My career, so far, has been really small. So, whatever I initially did was meteoric," he said. "Since then, I have gotten a lot of gigs and got to work on *Kaiser* and *Pett Kata Shaw*. One of my grades also ended up on a Hulu film by Nuhash Humayun."

Uttam Kumar, a veteran in the field of film, stresses the importance of working in the industry before diving right into directing.

"It is important that anyone who is interested in direction, works in other departments and positions. What you learn in theory might not translate to practice. Whether you work as an assistant director or operate the camera, you will get hands-on knowledge about how all of it works. So, when you work

on your own project, you don't need to spend time learning the intricacies of production from scratch," he said.

The emergence of Over-the-top (OTT) media services in Bangladesh has provided some much-needed structure to the industry. In addition, it has opened up more opportunities for people behind the scenes.

"OTT services streamlined the process in the post-production side of things. We were required to list down who worked in what department. Because there are other specialised departments to work in now, it is a very exciting time to get involved in the industry," said Ashfaque Nipun.

However, despite the promising shift in the landscape, there remain gaps in the field.

Uttam talks about the arduous nature of the

industry, "I think the biggest issue is the financial aspect of it. Although I have been a part of the industry for a while now, I still go through phases where I wonder what I'm really doing here. I can't just start working some other job now because I have devoted a lot to film. Despite that, I don't really know whether or not I can still continue to work on the scale that I want."

"There is a lack of job security in this practice. It isn't a very feasible career path if you want to provide for your parents or yourself. I also had to put up with the archaic nature of our country's infrastructure and general outlook towards anything creative. Nonetheless, the biggest issue is getting paid on time," Ragheeb lamented.

Ashfaque Nipun discusses the issues that plague the system from the ground up.

"Practising art in our country is really hard because of the lack of discipline. In the case of filmmaking, there are courses in universities but we don't have a full-fledged educational institution teaching aspiring filmmakers the technicalities. They have to keep in mind that securing funds for a film and the lack of a proper infrastructure are things that plague even experienced directors," he said.

While one can only hope that such issues are taken care of and artists are treated with the respect they deserve, a more ominous and pressing issue appears to be hovering on the horizon.

Ever since the inception of the Digital Security Act (DSA), it has instilled fear not only amongst artists but also the general people as well. An attack on expression has ensued and continued to be monitored with an iron fist.

In conversation with Manas Singh, CEO of STS Group

Glenrich International School is preparing students to develop skills that will become globally applicable in the future

NABIHA NOHA

The Daily Star (TDS): The STS Group has decided to launch a new school named "Glenrich International School". Tell us more about the thought process behind introducing this new school.

Manas Singh (MS): 20 years ago, with a vision to start a premium school with an International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum, we launched International School Dhaka (ISD). In 2009, we introduced DPS STS School (Delhi Public School), an exceptional Cambridge curriculum school. Both schools have been highly successful and are arguably the best schools in their respective curriculum categories. Apart from being a top school from an academic perspective, in today's context, there is a need for a school to prepare students for employability internationally. Global employability always remains our primary focus.

The aspirations of parents to have their children graduate from a quality educational institute and get employed all over the world, both in the public and private sectors, play an essential role in influencing our thought process. Schools have to prepare children through holistic development. We came up with the concept of "school of life", a school that prepares students for life, and with that ambition, we launched Glenrich International School. This concept helps prepare stu-

dents not only for jobs but also develops their skills such that they become globally applicable in the future.

TDS: Dhaka has an abundance of Cambridge curriculum schools. Why did you think of introducing another such school?

MS: Cambridge is a globally accepted curriculum, which will help students in global employability in the future.

Every year, more than 13 million students study in schools in Bangladesh, but there are only 80-90 Cambridge curriculum schools. There is a huge potential to start more Cambridge curriculum schools. Our experience of running a successful school also tells us that Cambridge is the way to move forward.

TDS: What are your thoughts about the Bangladesh education sector? Does it have the potential to grow further?

MS: Almost a million students take higher secondary exams every year in Bangladesh, and that number is growing gradually. Moreover, 50,000 students move abroad to study at different universities. With these numbers in place, both from an economic and academic standpoint, I

think there is a massive opportunity for Bangladesh's education sector to embrace the growth potential. I also believe that there is scope for many new schools to come up.

TDS: On the cusp of digitalisation, how do you see the education sector embracing technological advancement?

MS: If you have to prepare students for tomorrow, you have to run schools accordingly. Technology is the backbone of any school that aspires to prepare students for the future. Most schools follow the traditional teaching method of using a blackboard or whiteboard. Nowadays, studies are moving from just chalk and talk, to more visual mediums. The technology that we follow at

Glenrich International School is digital board-based studies. Although expensive, it creates fantastic experiences for students, and this concept is widely accepted in top schools across the world. We also use the Google Classroom platform, where much collaborative work can be done. Additionally, we have introduced an app-based system, ERP, through which parents can see their children's progress and pay the tuition fees.

TDS: Tell us more about Glenrich International School.

MS: Glenrich is spread across 2.3 acres in Satarkul, Sunvalley. We have more than 80 classrooms and over 20 labs. We have state-of-the-art infrastructure, and some of them are being introduced in Bangladesh for the first time, such as the skating rink and indoor gymnasium. We also have an amphitheatre in our library and created a planetarium where students can sit in a circle and watch videos.

Apart from these facilities, we have a parent experience zone for when parents come to pick up and drop off their children. Furthermore, we are planning to hire the best teachers from Bangladesh and 10-15 percent of teachers are going to be expatriates from other countries. Glenrich is also known for the top USPs (unique selling propositions) that we are introducing. For example, we are introducing robotics as a regular subject. We also provide certified music programmes by the ABRSM board of the Royal Schools of Music in London and language programmes accredited by Alliance Francaise. We are introducing the French Language as a regular subject from grade one so that children can speak French fluently within three to four years. Lastly, we are introducing a company called MathBuddy, where Math will be taught in a technology-based manner.



ISD students stage "A Christmas Carol: A School Remix"

International School Dhaka (ISD) recently organised a series of drama shows on "A Christmas Carol: A School Remix". Set in the modality of theatre, these shows took place at ISD's campus auditorium on December 14, 2022, and were performed by ISD students.

The musical play "A Christmas Carol: A School Remix" is a school version of the original "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens. Created by the Creative Primary Literacy Group of the UK, the play tells the tale of an old and mean head of school, Ivy Loops, who runs a dark and miserable school. In this school, the teachers are underpaid and overworked, and the students are not allowed to smile or have fun.

Regarding the event, Jay Paguyo, the director of the play, and primary school Drama teacher at ISD said, "This is a

very significant experience for students not just to perform on stage but more importantly that they understand the real meaning of sharing and kindness to others as the message of the story. We hope we can build a culture of performing with a purpose so it becomes relevant to the lives of the students and to the audiences as well. The students had so much fun learning how to perform on stage, hence, their social skills were challenged and they definitely showed a lot of teamwork and problem-solving skills."





The Great Mice Conference

ILLUSTRATION: ABIR HOSSAIN

HASIB UR RASHID IFTI

"We're out of cheese!" shouted Mrs Basil from the kitchen.

"Will you shut up for one moment? I'm trying to hear what's going on," Mr Basil shushed his wife by implying that his affair was more important, a trick he'd learned from the humans upstairs. He had his head poking out of the mousehole with his body still inside so that he can quickly go back inside in case anything goes wrong in the conference. Mr Basil's one of the very few mice supporting the Rat Annihilation Association (RAA). But he understands that in order to maintain peace and teach the rats a lesson, the RAA members have to unleash lawful havoc* once in a while. A few mouseholes getting blown up are unfortunate yet nothing but mere war damages.

The RAA came into leadership with the promise that they'd successfully get rid of all the rats within the basement. After a quarter of the population was found dead within the vicinity in the span of two months, panic spread across the Pritchard household basement like wildfire and the mice needed someone strong to give them hope. And that's exactly what RAA leader Julius Cheeser did. RAA was voted into power unanimously and soon enough, Comrade Cheeser was making all the calls.

RAA was supposed to have weekly elections where the RAA leader could be changed as per association members' votes. Moreover, bi-weekly elections were to be held across the basement where residents could choose either of the three parties as their governing body- RAA, RDA* and MCP*. Six bi-weekly elections have been held by now and RAA has won

by a landslide in all of them. It was the twelfth weekly election for the RAA leader going on that Mr Basil was so eager about.

"My fellow mice," shouted Julius Cheeser to a crowd of his roaring followers as he rose to the stage, "It is my great honour to have been serving you for the past 11 weeks and even more so to have been selected for the twelfth time in a row. As you know, I've always been open to criticism and competition. I've always wanted my party members to stand up, demonstrate their quality as a leader, and replace me. I assure you, no one would be happier than me if any of you took my position because that is the day, I'll be able to retire knowing that the basement is in safe hands! But it is my great privilege that my party members trust my capabilities so much that they've decided not to hold the party elections anymore and have accepted me as RAA leader *sine die!*"

The crowd howled in joy until Julius Cheeser silenced them with a swift motion of his paw, "But let's not forget my brothers, the rats still lurk in the dark. Our sincere RAA agents have been working day and night to make sure you're all safe. Yet, the slanderers dare criticise us! These vile creatures are nothing but agents of the rats themselves. To get rid of the rats, we must get rid of those who vilify us first!"

"Was Geronimo Stilton one of those agents of the rats?" someone heckled from the back of the crowd.

Silence corrupted the floor as all the mice went quiet. "Who said that?" howled Julius Cheeser.

After a minute of chaos and confusion, his followers brought a bruised-up mouse in front of him and put him up on the

stage. It was Timothy Samson, writer for the PH Times*.

"Geronimo Stilton was a victim of one of the attacks of the rats," Julius sounded ever so confident in his reply, "After he went missing, four units of RAA investigators were deployed under my command to look for him, although he was the leader of the opposition party. Yet, you mice harass me like this on your paper and now in my meetings."

"He went missing just one day after the fifth bi-weekly election, just when he was winning. Don't you find that a bit suspicious?" smiled Timothy as he spat out blood.

Shaking in anger, Julius pulled out his sharp claws and scratched Timothy across his body. Timothy's little body shuddered as Julius kept on inflicting pain until his ministers stopped him. After his followers were done cleaning up the mess, a disturbed and furious Julius left in a hurry.

"How dare these mere rodents start questioning me?" screamed Julius as he kept on pacing across his chamber.

"Sire, not just the PH Times, the common mice have started asking questions too," whimpered his assistant, Jerry, "What if they find out?"

"Find out what, Jerry?" Julius looked at Jerry with bloodshot eyes as he slowly walked towards him, "Go on, say it. I won't hurt you. I just want to hear you say it."

Jerry couldn't look Julius Cheeser in the eye. Shivering in fear, Jerry whispered, "That there's no rat, sire. This entire time, it was just poisoning."

Jerry was thrown across the room against the wall. RAA clean-up crew* had to clean up after Julius one more time that same evening.

Upstairs, Mr Pritchard was dozing off to sleep with his book open when Mrs Pritchard was finally done with the dishes and came to bed.

"Hey, what's the name of that rodenticide you bought a few months back?" asked Mrs Pritchard.

"Mice Master. Why?" he asked.

"Mrs Chopra was asking. She's got mice all across her kitchen. I told her about the one we used 3 months back in our basement and the wonders it did. I haven't seen a single mouse around since then," replied Mrs Pritchard as she tucked herself under the blanket.

***Glossary**

Lawful Havoc: Section 244 of RAA Constitution implies that RAA members are allowed to wreak havoc across the Pritchard household basement as long as it is intended for the annihilation of the rats.

RDA: Rodent Development Association, main opposition party of the basement. Established 1 month earlier by ex-RAA member Geronimo Stilton.

MCP: Mice Communist Party, the only communist party of the basement. Pretty much irrelevant now. Julius Cheeser was previously a member of the party before he founded RAA.

PH Times: The leading newspaper of the Pritchard household basement. Labelled 'Anti-Mice' by Julius Cheeser in a speech two weeks back.

RAA clean-up crew: Special force deployed by RAA to sweep out the political mess made by RAA party members to make sure the residents feel safe.

Remind Ifti to be quieter at hasiburrashidifti@gmail.com

READER SUBMISSION

Accepting your parents is not the same as loving your parents

SUMAIYA RASHID

Are you realising that your parents aren't the great role models you thought they were? Are you beginning to relate to the lyrics of Sasha Sloan's "Older", where it goes "The older I get the more that I see/ My parents aren't heroes, they're just like me"?

Firstly, allow yourself to experience the emotions you are entitled to. It could be hatred, sadness, fear, or despair. Instead of suppressing your feelings, be present with them, talk about them, write about them, and, if necessary, cry about them. You should be upset because you should have been cared for and supported without having to perform in a certain way.

We must accept our parents for who they are and what they can offer. Then we may decide what type of relationship we desire. It can be a close connection, or that of a trusted confidant. It could be at arm's length, with rigid boundaries and no contact. But, in order to reach that conclusion, we must embrace the reality of who our parents are, which involves letting go of who we wish they were.

You may grieve the parents you wished for but did not receive. You may grieve



the person you could have been if your parents had shown you the love and support that every child deserves. If you need more time to be angry or outraged about it, go ahead and take it. But there is a lot of power in accepting your parents for who they are, which may make you feel less emotionally charged. Ultimately, this will allow you to decide what kind of relationship you want to have with them.

You can ask yourself what actions can

be taken that is consistent with your values and allow your emotions and voice to be heard. It might be as simple as writing a letter, posting on TikTok or Instagram, having important conversations with your family, speaking with a friend, or getting professional assistance. In times like this, being in touch with your feelings and acting in accordance with them can lead to healing and positive development.

TherapyJeff, a professional counsellor

from Portland, Oregon, encourages his audience on TikTok in setting healthy family boundaries. He says, "If you are labelled as the problem for creating boundaries it's because they can't take accountability. They need to protect the dysfunctional system at all costs. You're not actually making things worse when you're like, 'I'm not going to deal with this toxicity anymore.' However, just because you set a healthy boundary with your family doesn't mean you won't feel left out. Sure, you're the one setting the limit that's deciding not to be closed with the family, and probably for a very good reason. But are you specifically missing your family numbers? Or are you just craving the feeling that family can give you care, closeness, and acceptance because you've created a surrogate family filled with friends in your community that give you all the healthy love you could ever want?"

In order to move forward and feel more at peace, oftentimes the first step is to accept the reality of who your parents really are, as difficult as that may be.

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Why light-headedness should not be overlooked

ABRAR AHMED

Have you ever stood up really fast and felt dizzy out of nowhere? Your vision goes black, you feel a loss in your sense of balance and your body feels heavy as if you are going to pass out? Chances are, you have had this commonly-experienced feeling before at some point in your life.

Feeling lightheaded is often a normal sensation – it is caused by a lack of blood flow to the brain, which mainly occurs due to a swift and sudden movement. The sudden drop in blood pressure from quick positional changes can be triggered by several physical factors such as dehydration, poor eating habits, stress, allergies, and other illnesses. This sudden feeling is generally short-lived, and tends to go away in a matter of seconds. It might seem harmless, but as someone who has experienced a severe case of it first-hand, light-headedness is not as benign a feeling as one might assume it to be.

It was a normal day in 2017. I was enjoying my summer break, reclining on the couch watching television to be specific, when I heard the doorbell ring. I got up rather quickly, and while my energetic younger self was running over to open

the door, I stopped midway through as this feeling hit me out of the blue.

I felt my vision go completely dark. I was thinking that I was fine as I seemed to be in balance, so I waited for my vision to reappear. Then, out of nowhere, I felt the ground rushing up for impact, followed by a loud thud. I realised I had fallen to the floor, narrowly missing hitting my head on a sharp object.

What makes light-headedness so dangerous is if it's accompanied by nausea and dizziness. Dizziness is what gives the feeling of being unbalanced, which puts the person at risk of a bad fall. Vertigo, a type of dizziness which makes you feel that your surroundings are moving when in fact they are still, is one of the most common and dangerous conditions that could accompany this lightheaded

sensation.

However, this feeling can harmlessly go away if the right things are done. Once a person is struck by it, the first thing they should do is hold onto something in order to maintain their balance. If possible, it is advised to sit back down from where they got up.

Still, prevention is better than cure. Luckily for us, we take several steps in order to avert this feeling from striking us in the first place. Drinking lots of water, getting up slowly from sitting or lying down, limiting salt intake, and getting enough sleep all help to prevent it.

Although the symptoms are usually manageable at home, light-headedness may sometimes even have a more severe underlying cause such as a heart attack, stroke, head injuries, internal bleeding, anaemia, or other conditions. If this lightheaded feeling becomes too repetitive and does not go away even after following the precautions, one should seek medical attention if they have any concerns about it.

Abrar Ahmed still dreads this befogging feeling. Contact him at [instagram.com/abrarahmxd](https://www.instagram.com/abrarahmxd)



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