

THE DEFINITIVE
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SHOULD MENSTRUAL
LEAVES BE ISSUED IN EDU-
CATIONAL INSTITUTIONS?

PG 3

NOT ALL TRIPS ARE GOING
TO BE LIFE-CHANGING,
AND THAT'S OKAY

PG 6



The Problems of ADMISSION COACHING

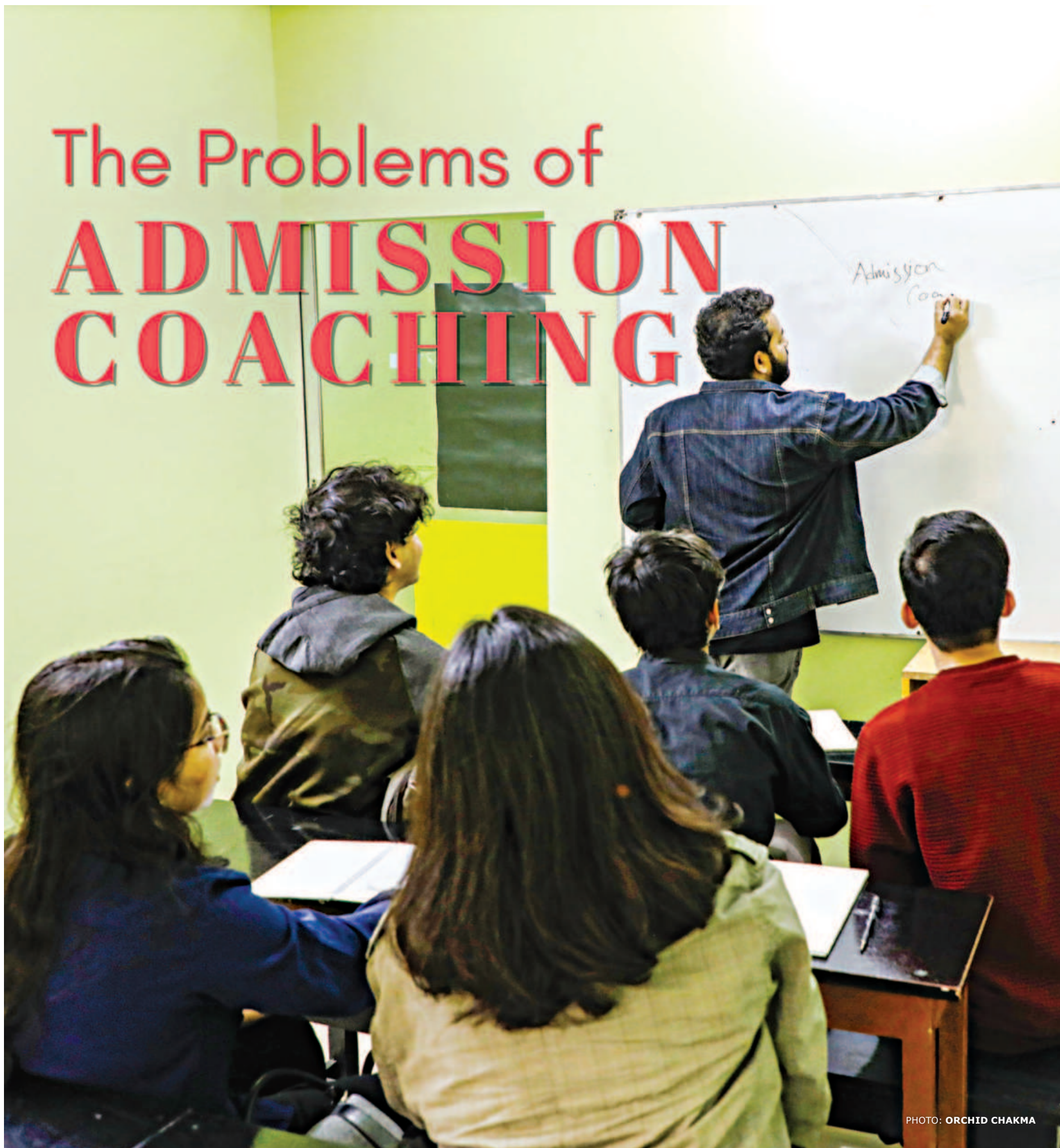


PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

EDITORIAL

I always used to complain about how time doesn't seem to pass. But now it feels like I'm in the hyperspeed scenes from sci-fi movies and my clunky spaceship is falling apart. The second month of the new year is already here and while I think I'm doing a somewhat decent job of being productive so far, I have completely lost touch with most of my hobbies.

This is jarringly different to how I used to spend most of my time up until the pandemic hit. My days consisted of watching pretentious arthouse movies, drawing, learning new things, and so on. Having said that, the privilege of having the time, security, and safety of indulging in those activities definitely played a huge role.

Nowadays, my days mainly consist of trying to be healthy and well-rested while balancing work and academics. It has not ended in a big comical explosion (yet) so I guess I must be doing something right. Here's hoping that I find the time to indulge in hobbies once more before my spaceship breaks down.

– Fatima Jahan Ena, Sub-Editor, SHOUT



PLAYWATCH

GAMES



Why previous generation *Pokémon* games are still relevant

A.M. FAHAD

Whether it be the anime franchise or the games, *Pokémon* has been a significant part of our childhood, with the video games being among the most influential RPGs of all time. But even though there's a new *Pokémon* game every year, people keep going back to the older generation games. The question is, why? Is it entirely nostalgia, or is there something more to it?

Before we delve into that, we need to clarify how a *Pokémon* generation works.

The first generation of *Pokémon* games dates to *Pokémon Red* and its counterparts. These games contain the Pokedex of the original 151 *Pokémon* introduced in the first region, Kanto, home to a large number of fan favourites. The second generation of the series contains a new Pokedex and a different region, Johto, with games like *Pokémon Gold*, *Silver*, and *Crystal*. The third generation introduces the Hoenn region with critically acclaimed fan-favourite games like *Pokémon Emerald*, *Ruby*, and *Sapphire*. And on goes the list.

Usually, when we go back to playing older video games, we are driven by nostalgia. *Pokémon* is not entirely different. But what separates these games from others is not solely nostalgia, but also replay value.

In contrast to the newer *Pokémon* games, the older games appealed to a broader audience. The gameplay was simple and more RPG-like, the art style was unique in its own right, and the soundtracks were mesmerising. While it's true that the newer games also contain catchy scores, likeable characters, and improved gameplay, they generally lack substance.

Take *Pokémon Sword* and *Shield* as an example. The world in this game is large and barren, with the design focusing

less on explorable areas and linear map building. Newer *Pokémon* games are starting to follow this trend, with *Pokémon Legends: Arceus* being an exception.

The dissimilarities between the older rivals and the newer ones are also significant. Rivals in previous generations had detailed personality traits that made them attractive. In *Pokémon Red*, for example, your rival is an obstacle you encounter and overcome throughout the game. The second-generation rival, Silver, was a criminal who significantly changes throughout the game, showcasing his character development both as a person and as a trainer, unlike newer games where rivals lack character depth and are simply irksome.

Another noteworthy feature in older *Pokémon* games would be the puzzles and challenges. Every *Pokémon* fan remembers the frustration from the ice-path sliding puzzles and the dopamine release after navigating the correct paths. Gym challenges posed similar difficulties while being creative and unique in their own ways. *Pokémon Emerald*, for example, shares the story of an exciting world without blasting the game with over-the-top cutscenes. Games like *Pokémon Crystal* take you on an adventure with minimal hand-holding.

While it's true that the newer *Pokémon* games are mechanically better, it's also true that they're falling into a spiral of repetitive releases of aesthetically unlikable, one-time playable, and linear genre of video games devoid of the fun of free exploration and exciting challenges. This is something the developers need to look at to improve the quality of future releases.

Fahad is a poet, a cat parent, and a self-proclaimed *Pokémon* master. Challenge him to a *Pokémon* showdown battle at [instagram.com/fvehed/](https://www.instagram.com/fvehed/)

TITLE OF YOUR MIXTAPE



A

Eugene
Sufjan Stevens

Empty Note
Ghostly Kisses

Door
Caroline Polachek

Babylon
Oneohtrix Point Never,
(Sandy) Alex G

B

Into the Iris
Dads In The Park

Push
Enrique Iglesias ft. Lil Wayne

Come & Get It
Selene Gomez

Bahir Bole Dure Thakuk
Habib & Nancy

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



PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

Should menstrual leaves be issued in educational institutions?

FARNAZ FAWAD HASAN

The government of Kerala in India has recently been making headlines for its announcement to undertake work on introducing menstrual leaves for educational institutions in the state. The announcement came following a decision by the authority at Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT) to reduce attendance requirement by two percent (down from 75 to 73) for its female students.

Menstruation, one of the most normal bodily functions, has been branded as taboo since the beginning of time. Along with cramps and spasms, the debilitating pain is accompanied by other unpleasant symptoms like nausea, discomfort, impatience, and an overall sensation of malaise. Additionally, it's worth noting that periods can change over time and with age, and many women experience fluctuation in their menstrual cycles from month to month.

People are different, and so are their bodies. Not all women have the same experience during periods. While some women experience seemingly painless periods, for others, just standing up and going about with their day can be akin to a hefty sucker punch.

Yet, there is the concern that some individuals may abuse the privilege of menstrual leaves were they to be introduced, which in turn may perpetuate sexist beliefs and attitudes. In a country where menstruation is heavily stigmatised, a gendered leave might propagate gendered stereotypes and have a detrimental effect on the wage difference.

It is important to note that other countries have already implemented "Period Leave" policies. Japan, for example, has had a "Period Leave" policy in place since 1947 as a part of the Labour Standard Act, which states that an employee can't be made to work if she requests a leave of

absence due to menstrual complications.

However, a survey conducted by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan found that only 0.9 percent of menstruators requested period leave. The survey found the main reasons for this to be the absence of period leave in employment regulations, low usage among co-workers, and discomfort in discussing menstruation with male managers. These findings highlight the need for clear policies and open communication to increase the use of period leaves.

Most educational institutions in Bangladesh have rigorous attendance policies, and many do not consider menstruation to be an acceptable excuse for missing classes. Women have been indoctrinated to put up with the discomfort associated with their periods, so they don't think it is okay to skip work or school unless there is a serious medical emergency.

By gaining an understanding of the current situation and barriers surrounding period leave, steps can be taken to address the social stigma attached to menstruation. It is necessary to start implementing this in schools, especially since menstruation is often thought to be dirty and embarrassing due to the lack of proper sex education. Introducing menstrual leaves in schools may encourage young girls to gain knowledge and understanding of how to properly manage and navigate through their periods more comfortably.

The topic of period leave has sparked both arguments for and against it. Although implementing this will not fully bridge the equality gap, it is worth a shot to normalise and re-evaluate the stigma surrounding this topic.

Farnaz Fawad Hasan is a disintegrating pool noodle wanting to stay afloat. Reach her at farnazfawadhasan@gmail.com

Let's not interpret old media through a modern lens

ADRITA ZAIMA ISLAM

It is easy to scoff at the characters of a Jane Austen novel who happen to be whiling away their time drinking tea and taking care of estates in this day and age. Many people refuse to read Hemingway because of his portrayal of women as crude imaginings of what men believe women should be like. It is rare to find a Hitchcock film that does not show its female lead as being entirely encapsulated in the world of the male lead. However, because of these shortcomings, which are visible to us largely due to our modern sensibilities, should these works of art be abandoned altogether?

A book written in the 1800s or a movie from the 1940s will obviously depict things differently as opposed to how we might perceive them in today's context. But this does not mean that such forms of media are beneath being a source of entertainment for us.

If we hold our modern perspective and our sociocultural beliefs to the same rigorous standards, it is almost certain that we would come to hate every product of the past. Even if we could somehow get past these inhibitions, our discomfort regarding the outdated ways of thinking means that its value will depreciate for us. Characters, incidents, and the product itself will mean less to the audience. It will seem much shallower than it really is.



DESIGN: SYEDA AFRIN TARANNUM

Historical backdrop and our understanding of the relevant historical backdrop are important when we try to study a material or even enjoy it. Jane Austen wrote about the English society as she witnessed it around her during that period. Hemingway's perspective on women was coloured by his own personal experiences. And while his view of them, in my opinion, should not be lauded, it resonated with the sentiments of the majority during that period of time, leading him to attain the recognition that he did.

Such beliefs aligned with the rest of society at the time and were deemed acceptable. It is only through understanding the society's views during that period that we can enjoy these forms of media. Although, we might do so with a grain of salt. Furthermore, through our consumption, we can receive a better idea of the evolution of sociocultural dynamics and popular media itself.

However, this does not mean we should not question the dubious qualities of art from the past. It is important that it is made very clear that certain practices are outdated.

Studying the impact of old media requires sincerity and the ability to distinguish between what was widely prevalent at the time of inception of said media, and what is widely prevalent today. The interpretation of old material, thus, presents a fallacy of sorts. On one hand, lies our instinct to disregard anything that goes against our beliefs, and on the other, is the want to do justice by the material. And the line between the two is very thin.

Zaima is a struggling student, a failed guitarist and a poet in need of better poetic ideas. Send her your sympathies at zaima2004adrta@gmail.com

THE PROBLEMS OF ADMISSION COACHING

FATIN HAMAMA

University admission in Bangladesh is an extremely stressful phase for high school graduates. In the absence of a holistic evaluation process, the pressure of preparing for multiple heavily competitive exams within a span of 3-4 months is immense.

Since these tests follow a structure that's significantly different from what the school curriculum follows, the sudden transition can be tough to adapt to and prepare for. Therefore, most admission candidates opt for attending admission coaching centres for guidance. Although not a formal academic requirement, this practice has become common over the years.

However, the general coaching culture in Bangladesh is the product of a faulty, grade-biased education system. One that actively perpetuates a "public university mania" and the pressure of pursuing STEM majors once students are done with their HSC or A Level. Unsurprisingly, admission coaching centres have come to embody some of these same problems and questionable ideals.

The classes and model tests offered by coaching centres are simply resources that are to be used for revision and practice of relevant syllabi, with some guidelines here and there. As mentioned before, these fall under no compulsory academic curriculum. Keeping that in mind, the extent of promotional activities and rather hefty

amount of course fees (the highest range being BDT 18,000 –22,000 depending on course subjects) charged by many of the prominent admission coaching centres may just be too high. Some even go above and beyond by constantly calling and pressuring both the students and the parents about enrolment following HSC exams sessions and preceding admission exam sessions.

Misbaul Masud Joy, who sat for his HSC in 2021 from Notre Dame College, Dhaka and now goes to Institute of Business Administration (IBA), University of Dhaka, had a bitter experience to share.

"After I got selected for IBA, I decided to skip the model tests for BUET (Bangladesh University of Engineering Technology) that a particular coaching centre where I was enrolled was offering. They used to call thrice a day, and at one point basically scolded me for

not choosing a STEM major. Afterwards, they also called my parents and complained about me being an insolent child," he said.

Acceptance into public universities, despite their many systemic and administrative issues, is still widely considered to be a parameter for judging a student's worth in Bangladesh. To make the same point, coaching centres also put a noticeable effort in recruiting current students and graduates from public universities as course teachers, most of whom proudly voice these very ideals in classes.

It's not at all unusual for them to belittle students from private universities, or literally any other universities that do not fall under their idea of "reputable" institutions. Besides preaching the toxic practice of institutional pride, such behaviour further pedals the detrimental outlooks in this regard.

"Within my circle, what I've noticed is that people who do not ace admission tests tend to avoid others, mainly people who did well in them. I blame the coaching centres for playing an active role in instilling this inferiority complex that most don't have control over during this time," said Ahnaf Kabir*, who sat for his HSC in 2021, and is now enrolled in Ahsanullah University of Science and Technology (AUST).

It gets worse when you take into account the existing practice of "special batches" in some of the renowned coaching centres, and realise how easy it is for these establishments to commoditise the hard work and resulting success of students for their own cause.

These special batches are separate classes of students with a previous record of academic excellence and remarkable class performance in the first few weeks of admission coaching. Naturally, most of these students end up securing top spots in public universities, largely to their

own credit. And then, the coaching centres put a distinct emphasis on their results while advertising, mostly highlighting a stellar success-rate based only on the results of this particular class. While it gets them the popularity they aim for, it leaves a lasting toll on the mental health of many students involved, given the longer class hours (up to 5-6 hours per lecture) and comparatively more grueling course materials they're put through.

Anupam Sayeed*, an admission candidate this year who completed his HSC from Sylhet Government College, added, "I'm currently attending an admission

course at a popular admission coaching centre. The other day the teachers selected a few students including myself for a separate batch amidst an ongoing class. It was an extremely unprofessional thing to do, because it evidently demotivated the rest of our classmates."

Another disturbing issue that plagues these coaching centres predominantly, is the constant inappropriate and sexist remarks made by instructors during class time. So much so, that it has become a norm for them to make misogynistic jokes, and objectify women as a way of teaching "humorously" and "in a friendly manner". It is a common occurrence to encounter a male teacher's lecture and hear at least one example that metaphorically involves women and sexual connotations in the most absurd ways possible.

"One of my instructors in the coaching centre I go to regularly talks about how he wants to cheat on his wife with a younger girl our age. Recently, he made a gross remark about our clothes by comparing the girls in the class to the *ordhomatra*, *purnomatra*, and *matrahin* alphabets in Bangla," said Deeeba*, who sat for her HSC in 2022 from Adamjee Cantonment College. Sajid Rahman, who finished his HSC in 2021 and now goes to National Institute of Technology, Hamirpur, India, had more to add, "It was common for the teachers to tell male students that getting into BUET is a sure-fire way to 'get girls' and that they should study hard for that 'reward'. Constantly bringing up women as a way to explain topics, unbelievable as it sounds, was common."

The horror of such indecent behaviour being imparted as part of education itself, in a co-ed classroom with students from drastically different backgrounds, schooling, and social bubbles, is mind-boggling. Degrading women in every possible explanation or example, making them seem like a reward that's part of institutional status to the male students in the very presence of their female classmates, frequently answering simple questions with irrelevant and inappropriate innuendos –these can't be the only way to establish oneself as a friendly teacher the students can "relate to", to liven up a class, and teach with wit and humour.

Some of the guidelines provided during orientation classes and actively throughout the admission coaching period are no less ludicrous. Repeatedly advising



ILLUSTRATION: **ABIR HOSSAIN**

in favour of unhealthy habits like avoiding all forms of recreation, studying eight-nine hours a day to ace the "admission war" is very common, especially in medical and engineering admission coaching centres. While there has been a noticeable change in this particular trend over the last few years, it's still not enough.

"When I attended the orientation of a coaching centre recently, they handed out leaflets including tips on how admission candidates shouldn't sleep more than 3-4 hours a day and study for the rest of it. The teachers are no better with their advice during regular classes and it's honestly depressing," said Nadeemahafrose Mondol, who sat for her HSC in 2022 from Udayan Higher Secondary School.

There's no doubt that university admission is an important academic transition for everyone who wants to pursue higher education. In our country, the competition is brutal due to the systemic shortcomings and conventional evaluation process that's not very accommodating for all kinds of learners, as it should've been.

One of the many disappointing outcomes is that it has enabled these coaching centres to commercialise these very problems as part of a glorified "admission war". Despite not being part of any compulsory curriculum, they've become a compulsory part of the academic journey for most students.

Admission coaching centres are profiting off the general misconception and anxiety surrounding this whole case while actively circulating the same things and promoting equally questionable ideals inside the classrooms. Is this really how we're preparing young minds right before they enter an arena where they're expected to reach their full potential as human beings, learners, and most importantly changemakers?

**Names have been changed for privacy*

Hamama's problems smell like daruchini because she's dweep into them 24/7. Send help at fatin.hamama003@gmail.com



Not all trips are going to be life-changing, and that's okay

RAYA MEHNAZ

We have seen one too many movies about travelling, and it has always made us hope for a life-changing trip of our own. After all, who wouldn't like to experience what the trio of *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara* had experienced, or find a new lease on life the way Liz from *Eat, Pray, Love* had done? Travel, in that way, signifies hope for change, healing, and rejuvenation.

Isn't that why trips seem almost indispensable after a rough semester? Or when work is being too hard on us? Or even when we find ourselves gradually numbing to all the discordance around us?

We hope that going outside of our comfort zones, with people we like, will change things for us. It will remind us of things that actually matter, like nature, friendship, spirituality, and everything in between. However, things don't pan out the way we hope sometimes. Sometimes, the trips we hope will revitalise our deadened spirits end up being kind of mediocre.

This creates a predicament. Did we not put all our existential burdens on the shoulders of this one trip to fix? If we just come out of it feeling just as wilted as before, what was even the point of it all?

That is where the problem lies. We con-



PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

sider vacations to be extraordinary, where reality is suspended for the time being. It is a blank state in our life's trajectory where we could be at peace, where our problems wash away amongst nature.

Trips, just like any human activity, depend on several prerequisites to succeed. It is not something that will always deliver the best results whenever we want

it. Travelling is unpredictable. Sometimes, the quality of the trip does not depend on the journey or the desired destination, it is dependent upon everything else: bad weather, disagreeable people, sudden injuries, and a myriad of other factors. Not to mention our overflowing expectations, inspired by our harrowing need for reprieve and adventure, which realistically

have very little chance of being fulfilled, can create issues as well.

Then again, are mediocre trips really that undesirable?

If we try to look at travelling from a truly utilitarian point of view, perhaps travel that does not actively make our life richer is nonsensical. However, travelling can just be an act in and of itself that we don't assign so much meaning to. It can consist of simply packing our bags and setting out. Not because it will bring us peace, or that it will heal us from our emotional wounds, or even that it will bring us closer to our travel companions. After all, trips don't fix our life. We do it ourselves. The best it can do is give us an opportunity for a fresher outlook, untainted by everything else in our life.

Not to refute Francis Whitman, who desperately wanted to have a spiritual journey with his brothers at the start of *The Darjeeling Limited*, but journeys cannot inherently be spiritual or any other meanings we assign to it. It is all circumstantial, and we can rarely ever force it. All we can do is enjoy it when and if it happens.

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Why videogames from the 2000s feel more fun

SABIL SADAT ZAHIR

Some of my fondest childhood memories consist of coming home from school and spending the afternoon playing games on my PlayStation (PS) 2. From fighting it out on *WWE Smackdown vs Raw* or the *Dragon Ball Z: Budokai* games, to watching my older brother and cousin play *Resident Evil 4*, I felt like there was something magical about experiencing videogames in the 2000s. Call me nostalgic if you will, but modern gaming fails to have that same profound effect on me as the games from that era.

In the 2000s, videogames were more experimental, with consoles like the PS2 and PS3 having a larger library of games compared to newer generations. This is not to imply that more is objectively better, considering how the increasing costs of game development affect how many games are being made.

However, it is not farfetched to assume that the lack of variety is likely due to the gaming industry undergoing a case of "marketing myopia", wherein the product's profitability is prioritised over the customers' experience. When you look at companies like Rockstar Games, who released several *Grand Theft Auto (GTA)* titles in the PS2 era, but re-released *GTA V* across the next three different console generations, it becomes clear that mon-

etisation seems more important to game developers than player experience.

Nowadays, many unfinished games are released, with updates and additional content added later on. But in the past, you would get a complete game from the beginning, instead of waiting for chunks to be released over time. Another feature that makes 2000s games more appealing to me is that they were produced in a period which moved past the graphical and technical limitations of the 1990s, before the commercialisation of videogames in the 2010s. Games were made with more care, and with fewer filters. We can also look back on how movie/TV show tie-in games were a big thing back then, and while they were not all great, we did get certain gems like *Spider-Man 2* and *Return of The King*.

Split-screen co-op games were more commonplace back then, but have lessened with the advent of online gaming. Online games may be fun, but the experience of playing an online game compared to a couch co-op game feels like talking to a friend over the phone instead of actually hanging out with them.

Maybe it's the nostalgia talking, as I do not play videogames as much as I did in my childhood or teenage years. Whenever I do find the time to play something, I feel more inclined to play older games



than newer ones. But I believe that if you also grew up during the 2000s and early 2010s era of videogames, you might share the same sentiments. It would not be fair to say that games are objectively less fun now, as newer technologies have allowed games to be grander in scale allowing us to experience fantastic games like *Red*

Dead Redemption 2 and *The Witcher 3*. But looking at the state of the gaming industry overall, it seems videogames lack the same fun factor they once had.

Sabil spends most of his time trying to stay as hopeful as possible. You can contact him at sabilsadat616@gmail.com

Three Wishes

SARA KABIR

Three wishes, only three wishes demand.
Take it or leave it,
No refunds command.

You'll ask what all the rest do,
Beauty, and fame,
and riches galore.

A trip to the moon,
Or maybe a fountain of fortune.
Offers and gesture,
and maybe dreams too?

Speak to your soul;
No! that's too soon.
Who am I talking to?
What did I hope to do?

A beacon of hope,
A tool for destruction,

A chalice of madness,
A symbol for more.

Day in and day out,
All I do,
is grant wishes for these fools.

They never ask,
for world peace or freedom,
An end to this injustice,
A way out of this pandemonium.

It's never the things that matter.
It's never the things that should.

So, three wishes and three wishes only.
What will I grant today?
Another meaningless rant.

Three wishes and three wishes only.
Take it or leave it,
so I can one day be free.



PHOTO: SARA KABIR

CAW!

HASIB UR RASHID IFTI

Just ten minutes past midnight on New Year's Eve, Kaiser grabbed onto all the fireworks he could and ran straight out of his house. As he bolted down the stairs, a few of them fell from the box. But Kaiser couldn't afford to lose more time by stopping and picking them up. It was 11:51 PM on his watch already. Just nine more minutes before 2033.

Kaiser still remembers New Year's Eve of 2022. The entire neighbourhood was up on the roof, ready to see Kaiser and his friends' fireworks party. They had bought some ten thousand taka worth of fireworks and sky lanterns. They kept the party going up until 3 AM in the middle of the night. The party poopers were complaining on social media about the commotion and the pollution. They finally had to stop when the older neighbours intervened and started nagging them. But Kaiser was older now. He had his own apartment and there was no way anyone could stop him from celebrating the whole night.

Sure, he had lost some of his friends along the way. His friends had grown up and no longer had time for New Year's parties. They had lost their way of living and were busy adulting. Kaiser had a job too, but that didn't mean he had to stop enjoying the little things in life. When that lantern goes up in the sky, it's not just a ball of fire going up; it's something that's been lit up with your own hands and is going to stay up for miles in the sky. It's your signature on the canvas of the clouds.

Kaiser moved into the neighbourhood months earlier. Usually, the fireworks would start hours before 12 AM back in



PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

the old days. But this time around, Kaiser couldn't even hear a single firecracker explode anywhere. As an impatient Kaiser ran out of the gates of his building, he found himself in a deserted street.

As he walked further, he saw people chatting with their friends and waiting for the clock to hit midnight. There were only two minutes left and yet nobody was ready.

"I'll teach them how to have fun!" shouted Kaiser, struggling to catch his breath. Just 60 seconds. He pulled out a matchbox from his pockets and put the large firecracker in the middle of the street.

As he stared at his wristwatch, waiting for the second's hand to hit the sweet spot, he ignited the matchstick.

Suddenly, someone grabbed Kaiser. Another person kicked the firecracker away and both of them pushed Kaiser onto the ground. Snatching his fireworks box away, a voice snickered, "Firecrackers, huh! Hey Mrinmoy, come take a look. When was the last time you saw one of these?"

"What do you mean? It's New Year's Eve," coughed Kaiser as he got up.

"How old are you dude?" laughed the other voice, "Fireworks are so 2022! There

are babies, old people and pets in almost every house in the neighbourhood. These millennials are so selfish, I tell you. They are willing to go to any extent to celebrate the stupidest of customs, even if someone else has to pay the price."

"Don't you people have fireworks parties in your neighbourhood?" asked Kaiser with a hint of desperation in his voice.

"Unless you want to get bullied as a loner with no friends, I suggest you keep the fireworks in your cupboard, dude," Mrinmoy laughed, "How irrelevant do you have to be in 2032 to light up stupid loud sticks? And don't even get me started on sky lanterns! When you boomers launch them up in the sky, don't you selfish people even think twice about where the lanterns are going to land? And that they might start a fire by accident? Grow up, grandpa!"

Kaiser fell to his knees. He buried his face against the dirt and started sobbing. He had lost everything. His new year's fireworks, his friends and the only connection he had to his past. He had become what he feared the most about growing up – irrelevant. Picking up the rest of the fireworks or whatever was left of them, Kaiser trotted back to his house.

Sitting on the electric pole above Kaiser's head, a crow breathed in a fresh gust of clean air. The crow flew past Kaiser and sat on a fence to get a closer look at Kaiser's crying face. "I told you ten years ago, Kaiser. My time will come," said the crow.

All Kaiser heard was, "Caw!"

*Remind Ifti to be quieter at
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Send your short stories, poetry and illustrations to shoutfablefactory@gmail.com

The Daily Star EduSummit 2023



The Daily Star and Uttara University jointly organized the second version of EduSummit this year on the 24th of January, 2023 - the international day of education. It was a day-long summit consisting of four exclusive sessions.

The virtual summit kicked off with Professor Dr. Eaysmin Ara Lekha, the Pro-Vice Chancellor of Uttara University delivering a keynote speech on "Grooming up the next generation of young leaders".

"Private Universities play a vital role in grooming students to become leaders. Problem-solving, critical thinking, self-awareness, empathy - are the things a student should focus on to stand out. When a student is being able to study his/her favourite subject, they will excel. Students should develop both their soft skills and technical skills," she shared her thoughts.

A panel session was held after that, on bridging the gap between industry and academia through collaborations. The speakers for the session were, Rubayat Saleheen - Head of Marketing and Communication at Guardian Life Insurance Ltd., Monsurul Aziz - Head of Communications Strategy at Nagad, Professor S.M. Arifuzzaman - Head, the School of Business at the Canadian University of Bangladesh. The session was moderated by Rafeed Elahi Chowdhury - Senior Brand Specialist at The Daily Star.

"Our teachers should play an extensive role to make sure this gap doesn't exist. I always try to ensure that the learning journey doesn't end within the classroom, but also implemented in real life", shared S.M. Arufizzaaman.

Rubayat Saleheen added, "People who have a knack for learning the latest subjects to adapt to technological advancement, will eventually learn. But the academia should equip students with basic life skills that are compulsory for everyone, like learning how to manage finances."

"In these difficult times, our institutions should ensure that the students are equipped with the basic knowledge to ace in careers," stated Monsurul Aziz.

There was another keynote session on "Transformational Leadership: Turning today's youth to tomorrow's leaders", conducted by Ejazur Rahman - Managing Director and Lead Coach, Mind Mapper Bangladesh and CEO, ISCEA (Asia).

"Many think that to become a leader, one needs a position. That's not true. To become a leader, one needs a choice. We can't control or change what other people do. Then how should we address that as a leader? By doing the right things that will inspire people to follow and act accordingly" mentioned Ejazur Rahman.

Lastly, there was another panel session on Investing in Quality Education: Past, Present, and Future. The speakers for the panel were - Galib Ibn Anwarul Azim -

Regional Technical Specialist, Pacific Region at United Nations Capital Development Fund, Tony Michael - Adviser at Oxfam in Bangladesh, and Tanjilut Tasnuba, National Programme Officer (Policy and Governance), Skills 21 Project, at ILO Bangladesh. The moderator for this session and the host of the entire event were Tanjim Ferdous, In-Charge, NGOs, and Foreign Missions at The Daily Star.

"A lot of standardization is required to know how the curriculum can be improved. And for that, we need to go develop a lot of policies to streamline the issues," shared Tanjilut Tasnuba.

Tony Michael added, "Showing high numbers of enrollment is not that tough. We have crossed numbers theoretically in

several parameters. However, how much have we achieved from a realistic sense?"

"We have to change the tone of textbooks for the young generation. I wonder for how long will we follow textbooks instead of bringing in audio-visuals. Our generation learns more from memes. He/she is aware of what's happening around through memes. Then why should we educate them on the facts through textbooks?" shared Galib Ibn Anwarul Azim.

EduSummit 2023, an initiative of The Daily Star and Uttara University concluded with discussions on incorporating the industry, developing policies on the grassroots level, focusing on skill development, etc.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



PROF. DR. EAYSMIN ARA LEKHA
Pro-Vice-Chancellor
Uttara University

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



EJAZUR RAHMAN
Managing Director & Lead Coach
Mind Mapper Bangladesh
CEO, ISCEA (Asia)

HOST



TANJIM FERDOUS
In-Charge, NGOs & Foreign Missions
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SPEAKERS



RUBAYAT SALEHEEN
Head of Marketing & Communication
Guardian Life Insurance Limited



MONSURUL AZIZ
Head of Communications Strategy
Nagad



PROF. S.M. ARIFUZZAMAN
Head, School of Business
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MODERATOR



RAFEED ELAHI CHOWDHURY
Senior Brand Specialist
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SPEAKERS



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Adviser
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TANJILUT TASNUBA
National Programme Officer
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Skills 21 Project, ILO Bangladesh



GALIB IBN ANWARUL AZIM
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TANJIM FERDOUS
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