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# ‘We’re the only species to have threatened life on the planet’

Says historian Dipesh Chakrabarty in conversation with *Star*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Modernity, identity, and postcolonial theory have long been the primary areas of interest for Dipesh Chakrabarty, a pioneer of subaltern studies and currently the Lawrence A Kimpton Distinguished Service Professor of History, South Asian Languages and Civilisations, and the College at the University of Chicago.

In a candid and exclusive discussion held at The Daily Star Centre yesterday, Prof Chakrabarty unpacked his most recent work with the “Anthropocene”, relaying the stories of how human life coexists with other life forms on the planet. The most urgent lesson to be taken is the risks that arise from this coexistence.



**This is the first time that a biological species -- not a volcanic eruption nor a meteor shower -- has become akin to a great object threatening life forms on Earth.**

“Geologists are saying that humans hold geological power today,” he said.

“Just as a meteor shower made dinosaurs extinct, the number, the technologies, and the consumption patterns of human beings on earth have turned our species into a force that can bring about the sixth great extinction. This is the first time that a biological species -- not a volcanic eruption nor a meteor shower -- has become akin to a great object threatening life forms on Earth.”

“We’re the only species to have threatened life on the planet.”

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Marking the death anniversary of Tanwir Muhammad Taqi, a painting competition was held at the Charukala Institute in Narayanganj yesterday. Children of various ages from different educational institutions took part in the event. Some of them also drew portraits of Taqi. Seventeen-year-old Taqi went missing soon after he left home on March 6, 2013. His body was found floating on the Shitalakhya river on March 8. It has been 10 years, but the family's wait for justice is still not over.

PHOTO: STAR

# Breaking the glass ceiling one at a time

Women share success story at event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Her business was wrecked during the pandemic, leaving her in a dire financial situation. She signed up with a ride sharing company and took satisfaction in being a female chauffeur in Dhaka. She currently earns more than Tk 3,000 per day.



Moriom Akhter shared her inspirational story at a programme in the capital's Chhayanaut yesterday.

The programme titled, “DigitALL: Technology in Equality of Men-Women” was organised by the daily Prothom Alo, in collaboration with

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# Women face more harassment online

## Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

While women’s participation on social media is increasing, they are also facing more harassment on these platforms, speakers told a seminar yesterday.

The speakers made the observation at an event organised by Light House, titled “DigitALL: Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality”, in association with Pathfinder International, in Dhaka.

Referring to findings of a research conducted by ActionAid in 2022, Sohrab Hussain, adolescent behaviour change manager at Pathfinder International, said 63.51 percent of women have faced harassment online.

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# No need for dialogue with BNP: Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday ruled out any immediate prospect of dialogue between the ruling party and BNP.

“I don’t see any necessity [for a dialogue],” Quader said after a reporter asked about the possibility.

He was speaking at a press conference at his secretariat office on different contemporary issues.

“If there is a need for dialogue, I will invite Fakhru [BNP’s secretary general]. He can call me

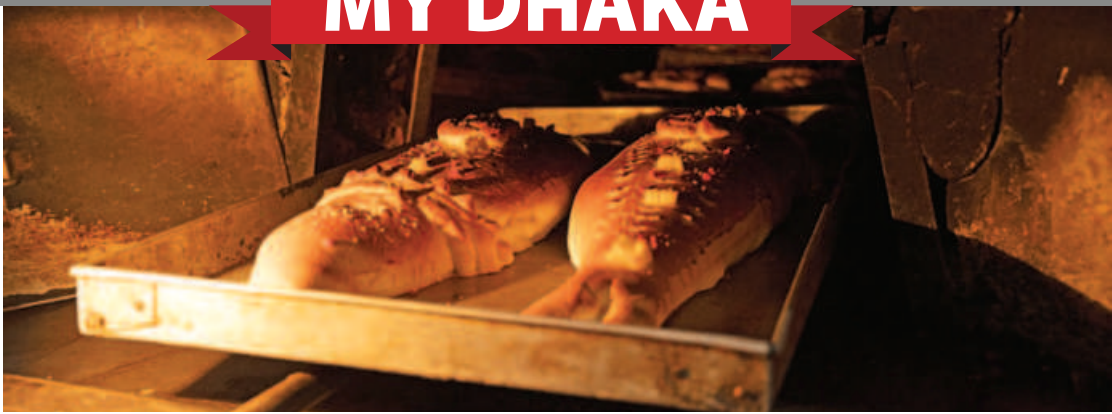
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PRAYER  
TIMING  
MAR 7



	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
Azan	5-15	12-45	4-30	6-05	7-30
Jamaat	5-50	1-15	4-45	6-10	8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



# Tradition of breadmaking on SHAB-E-BARAT still alive in Old Dhaka



**RBR**

A bite into a slice of oven-toasted, fresh bread smeared in soft, salted butter and sprinkled with sugar dust is no doubt heavenly. When the bread is in the shape of a fish with marble eyes and slightly pulled scales, with sesame seeds topped over it, the glee is almost childlike.

It's Shab-e-Barat and lanes of Old Dhaka are bustling with shops vending these soft, fluffy decorative pieces of bread. At the factories, mounds of flour are being made into dough and layered or shaped in moulds of fish and crocodiles, and shapes like circles, triangles, and rectangles.

The bakers add their imagination in detailing the products. Topped with candied fruits, they are sprinkled with sesame seeds and braids designed around edges. Some even have mirrors set on them in shapes of flowers and geometrical patterns.

Many people make it a point to visit the narrow lanes of Nazimuddin Road and stop at “Dhaka Bakery” for their festival bread. Although similar baked bread is found in places like the more renowned Ananda Confectionery, Olympia Bakery & Confectionery, or Chawk Bazar the ones from this particular shop



have a certain plain goodness about them.

Md Alamgir Hossain is the owner of Dhaka Bakery. For 20 years this tiny shoebox-styled old store is rolling out special bread on Shab-e-Barat. The rest of the time they lie low, selling special toasts and regular baked products.

At the back of this lacklustre

shop is their equally threadbare factory, where they have big woodfire ovens, where all the baking takes place. This year, Dhaka Bakery has already received orders for 50 mounds from different areas.

There is a certain festive energy surrounding the Shab-e-Barat, a night special to Muslims. Prayers dominate the day's routine but

on a day like this, one needs to let go of strict eating discipline and indulge in the simple pleasure of maybe eating a slice of the special bread procured from Old Dhaka with carrot halwa.

For many, the afternoons are spent making different halwas and decorating them with almonds and edible silver foil. In many households, the air gets heavy with aromas of cinnamon and cardamoms sautéed in ghee. The ritual to prepare bread and halwas and sharing them with neighbours and the underprivileged is part of the day's plan.

Shab-e-Barat has lost much of its grandiosity in past few decades. Yet for many, it remains a night of prayers and devotion followed by a day still steeped in tradition.

Every nook and cranny of Dhaka have stories waiting to be told. “My Dhaka” gives interested writers the platform to share experiences of city life. Only selected stories will make it to our print edition and digital platform. Send your Dhaka story (within 450 words) to [raffat@thedailystar.net](mailto:raffat@thedailystar.net)



# STELLAR WOMEN

Spark Your Inner Power

# REGISTRATION ONGOING

CATEGORY  
WOMEN IN EDUCATION

Stellar Women is an initiative of The Daily Star and bti, through which we will be recognising one extraordinary woman every month (from January '23 to December '23), playing a vital role in their distinguished fields for the development of the society and nation.

For the month of April 2023, we are inviting all the women in 'Education' Sector to register, who are:

Implementing multiple measures to ensure accessible education to all

Contributing to the development of a self-sufficient nation through education

REGISTER YOURSELF  
BY 31ST MARCH '23

FOR DETAILS



[btistellarwomen.thedailystar.net](http://btistellarwomen.thedailystar.net)

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