



DHAKA THURSDAY JULY 27, 2023, SRABAN 12, 1430 BS | A PUBLICATION OF The Daily Star

RISING STARS

FOR YOUNG MINDS ON THE RISE

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GETTING INTO THE HABIT OF READING



ILLUSTRATION: SUHAS NAHIAN



In this exciting revival, Rising Stars will focus on capturing the essence of school life, showcasing the cool things young minds are doing, and nurturing their potential for growth.

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the much-awaited relaunch of Rising Stars, a publication that holds a special place in our hearts. As we proudly present this new edition, we cannot help but reflect on the journey that brought us here.

Rising Stars, a publication focused on our youngest readers, graced the pages of The Daily Star for over two decades, leaving an indelible mark on the lives of countless young minds. However, in 2013, we bid farewell to this cherished platform, as we embarked on a new chapter with the launch of other youth-centric initiatives.

Now, exactly ten years later, we find ourselves at a juncture where the need to address the aspirations and demands of today's youth becomes more significant than ever. The world has evolved, and so have the dreams and challenges faced by our younger generation.

In this exciting revival, Rising Stars will focus on capturing the essence of school life, showcasing the cool things young minds are doing, and nurturing

their potential for growth. From riveting features on extraordinary young achievers to thought-provoking articles on trending issues, we aim to empower the youth and celebrate their unique journeys.

A print issue of Rising Stars will come out at the end of every month. Our digital platform on the other hand will be abuzz with fresh content. Be prepared to delve into captivating stories of young talent, explore the latest trends that resonate with your generation, and stay informed about the opportunities that can shape your future.

As we set sail on this exhilarating voyage, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our readers, contributors, and well-wishers. Your unwavering support has been the driving force behind Rising Stars, and we are eager to build on that foundation and create something truly extraordinary.

Together, let us embrace the potential of the youth, nurture their dreams, and celebrate their journey as Rising Stars.

With warm regards,
MAHFUZ ANAM
Editor & Publisher, The Daily Star

11-YEAR-OLD makes Marvel props at home

Shukonna Barua Prapti, an 11-year-old student of London Grace International School, is a huge fan of Marvel movies. In 2022, she and her cousins spent weekends watching the movies together. This inspired Shukonna to take up a unique arts and crafts project.

"My favourite Marvel character is Ironman," she said. "When I watched those movies, it made me want to make some of the gadgets that Tony Stark uses in his adventures."

At first, Shukonna would try by herself to make the replicas of these expensive movie props. Whenever she got stuck, YouTube came to her rescue.

While Shukonna's creations look professional, they are actually made using materials lying around at home – cardboard, plastics, glue and paint.

Her friends think all of this is very cool, and when we visited her home, Ironman's gauntlet, Loki's sceptre, and Thor's hammer really did brighten up the look of Shukonna's living room.

Shukonna's favourite subject at school is Physics, and now that she has shown her talent at creating beautiful replicas, we hope she will one day end up building real gadgets like a real life Tony Stark.



MOVIEREVIEW

Barbie

NAHIAN JAMAL JOYEETA

Greta Gerwig's *Barbie* is a delightful cinematic portal that takes viewers back to their childhood and captures the essence of playing with the iconic Barbie doll. The cast gave memorable performances as well, with Margot Robbie being the perfect choice to show how Barbie goes from being perfect to experiencing life's emotional turmoil, and Ryan Gosling's nuanced and compelling portrayal of Ken, a "neglected" character with issues of self-awareness and masculinity.

The movie challenges common myths about Barbie by drawing parallels between the fantasy world and the real world, especially when it comes to beauty standards.



THE BOMBING OF HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI



DECEMBER 7, 1941
Attack on Pearl Harbor



AUGUST 13, 1942
The Manhattan Project was officially created



AUGUST 6, 1945
The US drops an atomic bomb over Hiroshima



AUGUST 9, 1945
The US drops an atomic bomb over Nagasaki

SEPTEMBER 2, 1945
Japan surrenders

Oppenheimer

INQIAD BIN ALI

Oppenheimer was the manifestation of the type of story Nolan had been itching to tell all his career. It represents him in a microcosm – a deep, emotionally layered story, harrowingly combining scientific, social, and political intricacies of the 1940s.

The unorthodox storytelling kept me glued to the edge of my seat. Following a brief intro of Oppenheimer's younger days, it all bounced between the hearings of Oppenheimer and Strauss and the climax of the Trinity Test and its aftermath. The use of subtle colour gradients and black-and-white imagery only

added to the tension of the film.

Cillian looked at home from the word go. He flawlessly depicted the dazed, egotistic, and glory-obsessed scientist. In contrast,

Rami Malek's portrayal of David Hill has gone under the radar. It might just be a cameo, speaking very few words, but his composed acting changed the trajectory of the story, bringing the best out of Robert Downey Jr. in the following scenes.

Oppenheimer might be no *Inception* or *Interstellar*, but the richness of the story, and the purity of his directing have ensured

it's not only Nolan's richest masterpiece to date, but one of the finest movies of the 21st century as well.

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ILLUSTRATION: FATIMA JAHAN ENA

CLIMATE CRISIS Explained

FATIMA JAHAN ENA

What is the common factor between you, a student stuck on a rickshaw in 40 degree Celsius temperature, and a polar bear, stranded on a tiny piece of ice? You're both suffering under the global climate crisis.

Since the Industrial Revolution, human activities have been the main driver of climate change. Emissions of greenhouse gasses, such as methane and carbon dioxide, have caused more heat to be trapped by the ozone layer, resulting in a drastic increase in global temperatures.

Consequently, the average global temperature will increase by 1.5 degrees Celsius from the pre-industrial era within the next five years. While it may seem like a small number, keep in mind that the hottest day ever recorded globally was on July 3, 2023, which means things will probably get worse from here. The alarming heat levels also affect our lived environment, leading to strained water supplies, power shortages, and even weakened food security.

People living in under-developed or developing countries, such as Bangladesh, are more vulnerable to the horrific impacts of the crisis. Rising number of flash floods in the country oftentimes mean people have to leave their homes behind in order to survive. On the other hand, the occurrence of droughts means there is an increased risk of famines. As a result, people having to undergo such horrific tragedies must relocate as "climate refugees" in order to live.

So, what exactly is worsening the climate crisis? "Human activity", as one of the main drivers means that we, as individuals, are contributing to global warming due to carbon

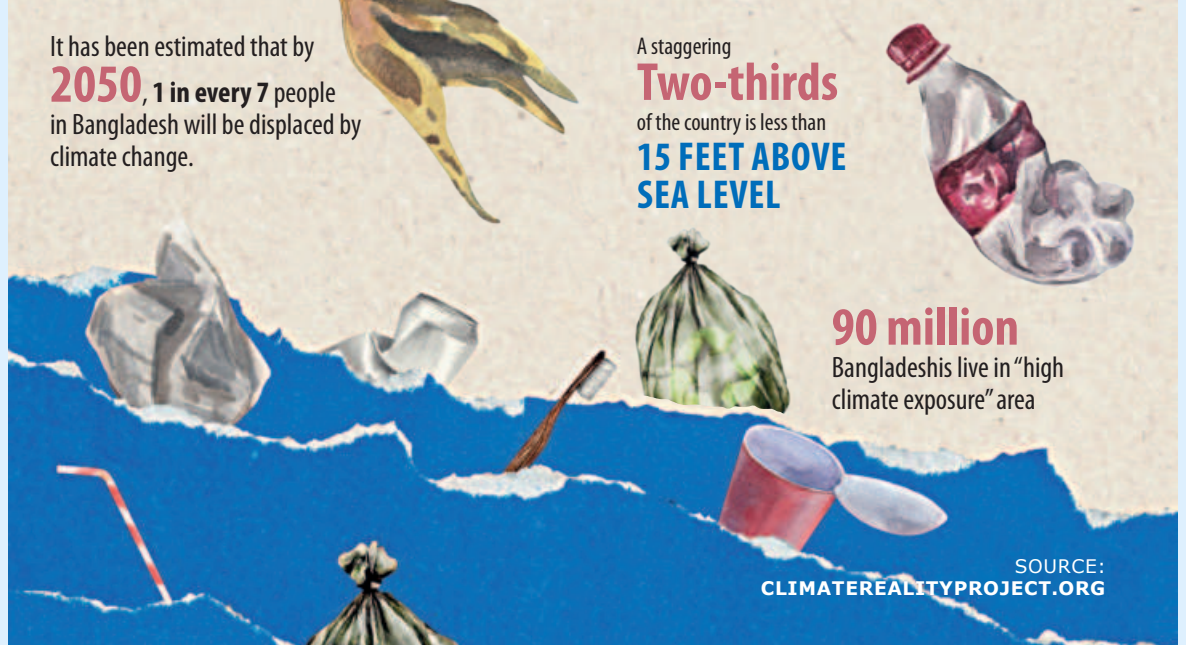


ILLUSTRATION: ABIR HOSSAIN

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emissions from our cars, plastic and food waste, overconsumption of power, etc.

While that may be so, it must be noted that large corporations are the biggest culprits. Take Shein, for example. The fast-fashion mega corporation has become a household name, all the while generating about 6.3

million tons of carbon dioxide per year.

The next question may be: what's being done about this? Global frameworks and agreements, such as the Paris Agreement, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Sustainable Development Goals, are in place to cut down on global emissions. Many countries are also switching from fossil fuels to renewable energy, such as solar or wind.

In such situations, feelings of helplessness or eco-anxiety are common. You may feel as though individual efforts may not make that big of a change in the grand scheme of things. But know that everything counts. You choosing to cut down on plastic waste or opting for eco-friendly modes of transport helps the planet. Additionally, raising awareness among your peers and family may encourage them to integrate sustainability into their lives. You can also use your platform to advocate for sustainable policies and help make a difference. So, while the climate crisis sounds terrifying, there may be hope yet.

The writer is a sub-editor at Rising Stars.



ILLUSTRATION: FATIMA JAHAN ENA



PHOTOS: ORCHID CHAKMA

Getting into the habit of READING



How to retain your attention span



Drink Water

Staying dehydrated for long periods of time can impair your ability to think and focus.

Exercise

Spare about 30 minutes of your time every other day for a quick walk.



Meditate

The practice of redirecting your thoughts can help foster self-discipline and a positive outlook.



RUBAMAAMREEN

For many of us, reading can seem intimidating. Many young people shy away from books, seemingly finding them too similar to the textbooks they are taught in schools. However, for those who want to try reading as a hobby but struggle to get into it, there are a few ways to make it work.

The primary difficulty most face is to separate themselves from their gadgets. Most young people are guilty of looking for instant gratification everywhere, but books normally take time. So, trying to free the mind from social media by physically distancing from the phone might actually work.

Despite the negative impact electronics may have on readers, it should be noted that being online does not always imply hindrance to one's reading habit. In recent times, the prevalence of eBooks and audiobooks has played a consequential role.

Armin Mizan Arisha Chowdhury, 16, an eighth-grade student at Maple Leaf International School, says, "Audiobooks have helped me visualise scenarios more clearly, especially when they have different voice actors for each character."

As phones and laptops prevail in our current digital age, finding somebody with the same taste in books can prove quite exhausting. Joining a book club or an online reading community can help. Platforms like GoodReads, Litsy, and LibraryThing all provide secure environments for one to share their thoughts and opinions about what they read.

Whenever you are travelling, always keep a light book in your carry-on bag, particularly when you expect it to be a long journey. This can be done

during travels within Dhaka as well, with all the horrendous traffic.

A lot of people struggle to find reads to their liking. An effective way to begin your reading experience is to start with something familiar. Your taste in movies and shows will often coincide with your preference of books. For example, if you are a major fan of rom-coms, aim for books with similar plots.

It is also crucial to keep in mind that each person has different preferences. Just because a certain author is extremely popular on social media, it does not necessarily mean that you will enjoy their works too.

Fareha Afreen Rashid, 15, an eighth-grader, shares, "It was difficult to find books that actually piqued my interest instead of simply following what was most sought-after on the internet. I would spend time checking out blurb after blurb on different websites until I found anything intriguing."

Another method of beginning to read can be by setting reading goals. They also offer a sense of achievement whenever you accomplish your goal.

When setting a goal for yourself, aim for something that is practical instead of something that seems impressive. Setting the bar too high can result in failure, and therefore cause a decline in interest.

You should not be disheartened in case you cannot achieve your goals. Just because you started a book does not mean you have to finish it till the end. Forcing yourself to read will only take the fun out of it.



Rubama Amreen is a student of Maple Leaf International School.

Annoying Your Parents into Buying Your FIRSTPHONE

SAIF SAMMI RAHAT

Getting a phone for the first time is like being an alien from a different planet and finally finding the means to connect with the rest of the universe. Now imagine having to convince your parents that it really is necessary to be able to connect with the outer world, and them failing to understand. How frustrating! Actions must be taken!

Convincing your parents to get you a phone might seem like a daunting feat. My parents initially did not want me to get my own phone before I turned eighteen. It was only after I ended up missing a few coaching classes because I had no way to communicate with my teacher or my friends about schedule changes that they finally gave in.

A good first step is to list out the reasons you need a phone. Make sure the reasons sound convincing, even if they are made up. A good example is the need to communicate with them in case of an emergency. Another example is the need to access Google Classroom and getting instant notifications about study materials and schedule changes — you would want to mention this if you want to avoid being given a button phone. “Communicating with friends” may be a valid reason but it can’t be the primary one.

There are also things you would definitely want to avoid saying. Do NOT compare. Don’t say “Fahim’s parents got them a phone!” — your parents hate being compared to other parents the same way you hate being compared to your classmates.



How not to become dependent

ON YOUR PHONE

Set specific time limits for phone usage. This will help prevent excessive screen time and dependence.

Dedicate more of your time to things like reading, playing outdoors, exercising, etc. Doing so will reduce reliance on your phone for entertainment.

Disable non-essential app notifications as it can help you focus on other things without constantly having to check your phone.

Designate areas or occasions where you completely avoid using your phone, such as during meals, right before going to bed, or during family or social gatherings.

The next step is to present your reasons. But before that, make sure they are in the best possible mood. Consider doing those chores you never do, or getting up early and making them breakfast. Make sure you don’t wreck the kitchen, however, as that might do more harm than good. You could also wait to get some good grades in an exam and showing them the results before broaching the topic. If you can’t get good grades in an exam, maybe you don’t need a phone.

After that, present all the reasons you listed out earlier, use PowerPoint or Google Slides if you think that might work. Don’t panic, just remember that they’re your parents and they will love you no matter what. If they aren’t convinced, don’t get mad. Think of more reasons and try again in a week or two.

Saif Sammi Rahat is a student of SFX Green Herald School.



ILLUSTRATION: ABIR HOSSAIN

Leafhopper

under the vast purple sky

A.M. FAHAD

It was 3 AM in the morning. A leafhopper jumped onto the next blade of grass, looking for one that isn't shrivelled. Grass had been in abundance then. It's been years, no, centuries, actually. Hubris and concrete have melted into smithereens of dust. Metal that held bridges and landscapes has turned into rust and decayed into nothingness. Although, the world is very much alive. And truth be told, it has never been this alive before. Quietude looms over the clouds beyond the horizon as the skyline displays a magnificent work of colours.

A city stood here once. Rosy-cheeked children would run after each other as the seconds passed, and adults would yell at them with their eyebrows curled into small fits of rage. In that world, ignorance amassed like water near the roots of a cypress tree. And with every tree that was cut down, a city fell on its hind legs, like a dog with a tumour on its flesh, or a bird with salmonella. It came to them slowly. They were giants. And their children were fruits of violence who were being raised to hurt, pillage, and destroy everything that stood under this giant plastic dome.

The leafhopper looked up to the sky. It was purple and full of whites scattered across the canvas. A sense of calm settled in its exoskeleton like a song on a radio from across a tin house by the road, reverberating in its bones like a cure for the loneliness this world shrouded itself with.

But that was all just a dream. They didn't exist anymore, and even if they did, under some moss-covered basement, we no longer had anyone capable of using one. Of course, we were talking about radios. Or anything else the earth swallowed whole. In reality, doom was inevitable. And all of them knew of it. Some chose to collect plastic after school, while others chose to indulge themselves with the vastness this world had to offer. The same vastness that swallowed them whole and gave birth to flowers prettier than their greed-filled brains could comprehend.

A city stood here once. Rosy-cheeked children would run after each other as the seconds passed, and adults would yell at them with their eyebrows curled into small fits of rage. In that world, ignorance amassed like water near the roots of a cypress tree.

"Are you doing your best?" the minuscule bug asked itself. There is no way to tell, really. After all, we are small, insignificant, feeble creatures. We exist under a bug catcher's microlens, tiny specks in comparison to the brilliance of creation and destruction.

"The best you can do is good enough," the leafhopper muttered under its breath, like a gentle reminder of a mother. It stood still for a moment before using its gears to launch itself to the next blade of grass. We didn't know the future. We existed underneath the process of its creation. As the night slowly neared its end, the sky changed its shade to a mixture of orange, blue, and bronze. And made room for sunlight to shine on the dead city.

Grass had been in abundance then.

A.M. Fahad is a student of St. Joseph Higher Secondary School.

Intrusive

DIHAAN KHAN

My mind works in strange ways.
The cogs turning endlessly, repeating
time over itself –
Linking screws in a ceaseless attempt
To fuse together the past and present.
Memories melting together, shattering
to shreds
Only to be glued together again
By the tears of countless entities.
I'd be lying if I said I wasn't delusional.
I'm losing my mind
To hate what millions have,
In my nine to five job, I'm overworked
And overwhelmed with the beef I cause
Between my conscience and my
impulses.
Ranting on forever, an eternal Karen –
But then who is the manager, and who,
the worker?
All fused together by the past and the
present,
And perhaps the future plays a part too.
Melting on my tongue like a bitter pill,
All I know is that I know nothing,
I am nothing.
Nothing in the rotation of the Great
Perhaps

*Dihaan Khan
is a student
of Mapleleaf
Intl. School.*



DESIGN:
FAISAL BIN IQBAL

Hosting POKEMON BATTLES with your friends

With online battle simulators like Pokémon Showdown running since 2011, these online Pokémon games have grown into immersive experiences for an individual to dive into.

SCARFED MAGIKARP

Here are a few you can get into easily.

Pokémon Planet

Pokémon Planet is a free-to-play browser-based MMO (massively multiplayer online) Pokémon game where players can catch and train Pokémon, battle with other players, in-game trainers, gym leaders, and Elite-4 members, trade with others, and many more. The game combines all the regions up to generation 5. Pokémon spawn in various areas like the original video games. Players can also catch legendary Pokémon that spawn in exclusive areas or during in-game events.

The game also has a unique chat option where people can post about trading, have conversations, or run commands. Players unlock the chat option after defeating the third gym leader, Misty, to prevent spammers.

Pokémon Showdown

Pokémon Showdown is the most accessible online Pokémon battle simulator. Compared



can compete in formats other than the randomised metagames if they have a team which they can easily build using the website's teambuilder function.

For playing *Pokémon Showdown* competitively, a solid idea of Pokémon fundamentals is necessary. For example, Effort Values (EVs), Individual Values (IVs), abilities, items, and move sets are things you need to build an idea on to be competitive on this platform.

To play with your friends on *Pokémon Showdown*, all you need to do is click the "Find User" button on your home screen and write your friend's username. Your friend's profile will pop up on your screen, and you can challenge them to a battle.

Pokémon Revolution Online

Pokémon Revolution Online has the first four regions from the base games and eight hundred and ninety Pokémon from the national Pokédex. The game is among the easiest to dive into, in terms of exploration and competitive gameplay, with guild wars, tournaments, quests, gym battles, and many more.

To play *Pokémon Revolution*, visit their website and create an account. After that, download the client for your device and start your adventure. To host battles with your friends, get your starter Pokémon from Professor Oak's lab and then add your friend from the social tab. You can then send them a battle request and start battling.

As you proceed further into the game, you'll be able to compete against your friends, like a real-life Pokémon journey, as you explore, catch more Pokémon, level up, and grow as a trainer.

PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA



to other online games, *Pokémon Showdown* updates its website the earliest, which lets the players compete with the latest Pokémon, move sets, and items offered by the latest flagship Nintendo games.

The default setting of the battle simulator is the latest generation's random battle option. In a random battle format, two players match against each other with balanced teams of random six Pokémon with competitive move sets, abilities, and items. Players

