



Breaking the stigma through education
Mayabee Arannya, works as the Co-Lead for Kotha, an organisation which was established in 2016 to fight the root causes of gender-based violence in Bangladesh. Kotha also uses social media as a tool to aware and educate people through resources created by the youth for the youth.

Education is an integral part of their operations and Kotha has the first youth-led Comprehensive Sexuality Education Programme which is called 'Kotha at School'.

"We go from school to school, teaching young people about their bodies, rights, gender norms and stereotypes, bullying, cyber harassment, sexual health and peer-to-peer relationships. What makes our programme stand out is that our peer educators who are teaching these middle

and high-school students are close to their age. They are usually high-school graduates or university students who are trained by us. We believe every young person has the right to knowledge and information about their bodies," shares Mayabee.

Mayabee explains that due to past experiences, judgment, and sexual stigma, people's insecurities surrounding relationships and sex increase tenfold. Having past sexual experience can make one person insensitive towards a partner's lack of it. Additionally, many people might feel insecure sleeping with their partners knowing they have had sex with someone else before and they compare themselves to them.

"I've observed when people who get into a relationship and have sex, with the expectation of getting married in the future, the person who was emotionally

more invested often regrets 'losing it' to someone before marriage when the relationship does not work out. Placing such value on virginity adversely affects all parties involved, even though virginity is a social construct and not a fact," observes Mayabee.

She opines that conversations surrounding taboo topics, like virginity, need to be mainstreamed. "They are only happening behind closed doors and safe spaces, but I think we need to have the 'audacity' to bring this up in our day-to-day conversations. Making this a dinner table discussion might cause chaos at first, but we need to have these uncomfortable dialogues with people to start shifting our perspectives."

By Rubab Nayeem Khan

Artwork: Rubab Nayeem Khan / Collected

◆ HOROSCOPE ◆



ARIES (MAR. 21-APR. 20)

This week will be hectic. Loved ones might find you annoying. Do your own thing without drawing attention. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



TAURUS (APR. 21-MAY 21)

Be careful when dealing with investments. Your original ideas will be appreciated by your superiors. Social activities will promote new connections. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



GEMINI (MAY 22-JUN. 21)

Take care of issues at hand. Be prepared to overcome frustrations at work. Think twice before agreeing to take on new projects. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



CANCER (JUN. 22-JUL. 22)

Romantic opportunities will be plentiful. Don't stop doing what you love. Secret affairs will come back to haunt you. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



LEO (JUL. 23-AUG. 22)

Don't get intimately involved with a co-worker. Make plans with loved ones. Minor health problems may lower your productivity. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEP. 23)

Relatives may be difficult to deal with. Things can escalate if you are not careful. Look out for yourself this week. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



LIBRA (SEP. 24-OCT. 23)

Sudden changes regarding friendships are likely. Lovers will be demanding. Go after your professional goals. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



SCORPIO (OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Avoid boredom by being productive. Set your goals and head for your target. You will want romance in your life. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Consider volunteer work. Put your efforts into creative projects. Sudden changes could result in estrangements. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

Avoid residential changes this week. Check everything before getting into anything. Put off any plans for travel for now. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



AQUARIUS (JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

Help family members sort out difficulties. Things at home will be unpredictable this week. You can expect opposition at work. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



PISCES (FEB. 20-MAR. 20)

Control your spending. Look into career choices. Enjoy the company of those who enjoy the same pastimes. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.

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লব্ধী সোপ ফ্রী!

KOHINOOR CHEMICAL