

VOLUME 25, ISSUE 24, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2025,
AGRAHAYAN 3, 1432 BS

Star

Life

Style

E-mail: lifestyleds@yahoo.com

64-65 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215. A publication of

Let's talk MEN!

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SKINCARE BASICS

all men should know

There's something about men and skincare that feels like a running joke. Ask a man about his skincare routine and you'll often hear one of two classics: "Routine? I just use soap. On everything" and "We're men! Our skin is supposed to be rough."

And yet, these are often the same men who, come winter, wonder why their face feels like a sheet of sandpaper or why shaving burns.

Men do have different skin from women. It's thicker, oilier, and produces more sebum. That's why breakouts and blackheads love to camp out on male faces. Plus, frequent shaving means more irritation, dryness, and ingrown hairs.

So yes, your skin might be "tougher," but that also means it's more prone to buildup, blocked pores, and that delightful post-shave sting that could be avoided with just a little care. The routine: Simple, quick, and foolproof

Skincare is not rocket science. You don't need a 10-step K-beauty regimen, a vanity full of serums, or any product that smells like rose petals. In essence, you need three things — cleanser, moisturiser, and sunscreen.

A proper facial cleanser is designed for the skin on your face, which, unlike your elbows or knees, is thinner and more sensitive. A good cleanser removes dirt, sweat, and excess oil without stripping away your skin's natural moisture.

Oily skin often overproduces oil because

it's dehydrated. Moisturiser on the other hand, acts like a tiny shield that locks in moisture and keeps out pollution and dryness. Whether you have dry or oily skin, a lightweight, non-greasy formula, keeps your skin balanced and prevents that midday shine that makes you look like you have been deep-frying samosas on your forehead.

Lastly, if there were an award for Most Ignored Product by Men, sunscreen would win every year.

Sunscreen isn't just for the beach; it's for every day that the sun exists which, last we checked, is all of them. UV rays cause premature aging, uneven tone, and sunburn, even through windows or on cloudy days.

And honestly, applying sunscreen takes less time than arguing that you don't need it. Pick one with SPF 40+ and apply it every morning — yes, even when you're just going to work. Shave, don't burn! Shaving, while necessary for some,

is basically a form of skin torture. Constant scraping leads to dryness, redness, and razor bumps. To make life easier, shave after a warm shower, when your pores are relaxed. Use a proper shaving gel — not the soapy foam your granddad used in 1962.

Most importantly, and this cannot be stressed enough about, moisturise afterward to calm the irritation. Splashing your face with aftershave that burns isn't "refreshing." That's your skin screaming!

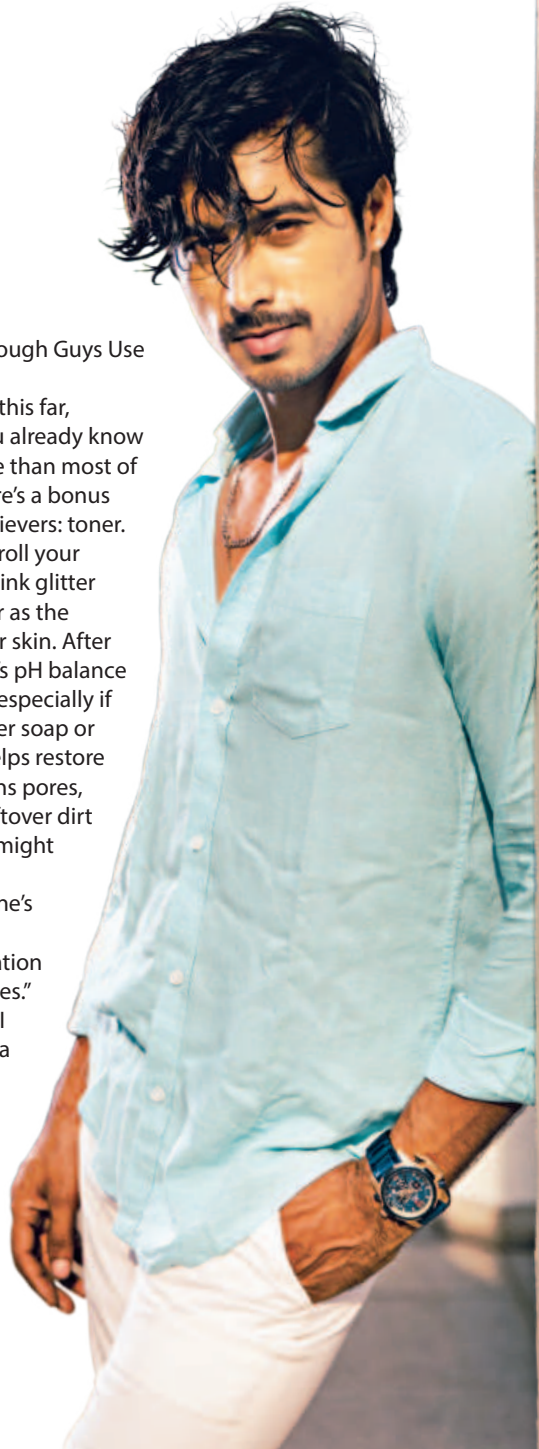
Final Thoughts: Tough Guys Use Toner (Sometimes)

If you've made it this far, congratulations! You already know more about skincare than most of your friends. But here's a bonus step for the overachievers: toner.

Now, before you roll your eyes — no, it's not pink glitter water. Think of toner as the reset button for your skin. After cleansing, your face's pH balance can get thrown off (especially if you've used a harsher soap or face wash). Toner helps restore that balance, tightens pores, and removes any leftover dirt or oil your cleanser might have missed.

Gentlemen, no one's asking you to start talking about "hydration barriers" or "ceramides." But it's 2025 — the "I just splash water" era is over. So next time you're tempted to skip because it feels unnecessary, just remember — neither do cars need washing. But they sure look a lot better when they're clean.

By Nusrath Jahan
LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed







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MUSING

Why modern fatherhood isn't what it used to be

Traditional values define fatherhood within a rigid framework. Although someone who plays a significant role in every family, he is rarely seen as the one with emotional attachments. As the "master" of the household, he is considered the earner and the provider. And anything beyond is an additional bonus, but never enough on its own!

As far as the family is concerned, previous generations have expected men to be conditioned to express love only through actions. What they held in their hearts remained within, unspoken and never revealed. In this article, we look into whether the orthodox expectations of patriarchy still hold true, or whether we have fully broken free from them.

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A father is always present in the background. Not often celebrated, his sacrifices pass mostly unnoticed. Yet, it is well understood that without him, the family structure, as we know it, would break down.

He is traditionally seen as the parent who takes care of the finances and ensures the well-being of children. Though emotionally reserved, he caters to the family's every need, often at great personal sacrifice.

He hides his deepest fears and insecurities from the rest; his griefs and sorrows are for him to carry, as it is considered "unmanly" to share the burden with anyone else. His wife is his only aide in this struggle, but also maintaining a considerable distance.

In this effort to make both ends meet, he loses the opportunity to spend precious time with children. As they grow up, they lose the moving connection with their dad and cling to their mother for comfort. The wife, too, has her struggles, but she is perhaps not seen as the one in the armour, devoid of any emotional vulnerabilities.

This has been the all too familiar story of yesteryears!

Unlike previous generations, fathers of this time and era are desperately trying to bridge the gap between this orthodox expectation and modern sensibilities. They are now

learning to express love beyond mere words. They are getting habituated to showing love and nurturing in ways that were once thought unnecessary.

As gender roles evolve, the modern father stands at a crossroads. Many have moved on, but collectively, as a society, we have not. Despite the desire to fit into this newfound role, we continue to find the weight of notions of the bygone era. And this makes our struggle more difficult.

We speak of equality and shared responsibility, but still expect every father to be a stoic parent. We expected them to provide financial stability and social stature, while additionally mastering their new role as an emotional caregiver. It is as if any new identity must come ALONG with his pre-defined role.

Yes, we want fathers to be multitaskers. But perhaps, the time has come to view fatherhood not as a mere extension of patriarchal duties. We are slowly embracing a new notion of parenthood, where both men and women can be successful while still being human. Fatherhood, just like any other role in the family dynamics, should not be a mere dispensing of duties. It can simply be a quiet act of love; a steady, evolving journey of empathy, connection, and presence that redefines what it truly means to be a father.

By Mannan Mashhur Zarif

Photo: Star LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed





PERSPECTIVE

LEAVE ME ALONE DURING DOWNTIME!

How many days are there in a week, seven? No, there are only six days — at least that's what I would like to tell everyone who tries to hijack my day off. It's downtime after all!

You work hard five days a week; a day should be reserved for catching up with friends and running errands. And then, the one remaining day of the week is downtime: the peaceful time spent doing nothing, or doing anything that does not make your grey cells work that much, or anything that makes you the happiest! Especially in this era of constant noise, pretence, and tension, this is necessary.

So, what do we do during downtime? That, of course, depends on your idea of Zen. The guitar you have given up on could be brought out for some jamming. The PlayStation that has been crying for your attention could finally be fired up, whilst dropping yourself on the couch. Or you could catch up on the latest flicks, shuffle through your vintage LPs, or revisit your die-cast car collection.

Or, do nothing. That's my pick. Do absolutely nothing! I spend hours staring aimlessly at the ceiling. I watch long YouTube videos that hold no direct meaning for me, except perhaps for intrigue and curiosity — wristwatch repair videos, solo vlogs on tranquil camping sites, walking tours at random places around the world, and so on.

What underlying theme is simple: shut off your brain, do nothing!

I will admit that it was a shock for my wife to see how a man can sit in a place without moving at all, with a blank look on his face, just munching away one snack after another.

There are indeed naysayers. For example, an overenthusiastic co-worker from the office may disturb your peace during downtime. Unless there is an emergency, no self-respecting colleague should contact his/her

teammates during the weekend.

In a world where overwork is admirable and the rat race gets brutal, I dare say that one needs a day in a week to be lazy and unproductive.

If your holiday is productive, you haven't lived.

The day should start lazily. There should not be any hurry or fuss about getting out of bed. The mild weather makes you want to stay longer under the blanket. Sure, go ahead! Sleep is downtime's best friend.

On the other

hand, I dread when someone even remotely starts making plans. Is just a day for yourself and your family once a week too much to ask for? Fine, have a few friends or cousins over — those you love dearly — but a bigger party spells crowd. It is work, and work is something one should actively avoid during downtime!

Let's say there is a 'dawat' at night. People say, "Just come by for dinner. You have the whole day to take rest; that should be enough."

Sorry, that will not be enough. Perhaps my introversion makes me avoid gatherings as much as possible. Everyone's idea of downtime is different, and that's perfectly alright, as long as you do not break that one

rule: your brain should be at rest, you should be at peace.

It is Thursday evening when I am writing this. Tomorrow is my downtime, which means it is now 'Downtime Eve', an occasion of much joy. For many people, the night before the day off is more fun than the day off itself. This is because you are excited that you get a break and that there is no work tomorrow. The idea that you do not have anything to do the next day is exciting in its own right!

I am a simple man. I enjoy the simple joys of life. And one of the purest sources of bliss is going to bed without setting the alarm clock, without having to worry about the next day. Let's cherish that!

Photo: LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed



LS EDITOR'S NOTE

Men's Edition

Men's style doesn't have to be complicated; it just has to be clever. We might not have endless options to choose from, but that's what makes it interesting: using a few pieces to create maximum impact. And winter just adds to that fun, because now, we have access to more outfit options that are usually stowed away until the temperature drops. So, read on as we dive into the must-haves you need in your arsenal to slay this season! Oh, and don't think we forgot about shoes, because what's a good outfit if you show up in clown shoes?

Photo: Adnan Rahman
Model: Abdullah Al Mahfuz
Styling & Direction: Sonia Yeasmin Isha
Wardrobe: Cats Eye
Makeup: Sumon Rahat
Location: Chefs Table Courtside



Let's get one thing straight — winter fashion for men is not about wearing every warm thing you own at once. Gone are the days when throwing on a sweater over a random shirt counted as layering.

REDEFINING COOL

What men are wearing this winter



Winter 2025 is about smart layering, textured fabrics, and tones that make you look like you meant to walk into that café looking this put-together.

The humble hoodie has officially graduated from “lazy weekend” to “low-effort cool.” It's the ultimate winter staple for men who want comfort without looking like they have given up. Go for clean, solid colours — grey, navy, or beige — and avoid the oversized, faded college ones that have seen too many laundry cycles. Pair it



with jeans or chinos, throw on some sneakers, and you've got that effortlessly casual vibe that says, “I didn't try too hard... but it worked anyway.”

We know the real winter MVP, right? The jacket. A good jacket can instantly elevate any outfit, no matter what's underneath (even that questionable T-shirt you refuse to let go of). For Dhaka's mild chill, lighter options like denim, bomber, or suede jackets strike the perfect balance between warmth and style. The key here is not layering for survival but layering for style.

For evenings or when you want to look sharp without going full suit, slip into a blazer in a rich seasonal hue — chocolate brown, deep olive, or even bold burgundy have been gaining traction this winter. Pair it with dark tailored trousers or chinos, a high-quality shirt, and minimal accessories: a leather-strap watch or a refined scarf in a complementary neutral should do the trick.

Shoes matter too! Suede loafers or clean derby boots will take you far beyond standard “jeans-and-jacket” territory.

Denim still earns a place — dark washes, minimal distressing — but skip the ultra-loose fits unless you are intentionally going streetwear. Interestingly enough, there's noted tilt back toward slimmer, tapered trousers this season.

Colour is no longer the enemy. While classic black, charcoal and navy remain safe bets, winter 2025 is showing a willingness to embrace richer tones and subtle contrast. Olives, whiskey-browns, berry-deep reds and even pastel accents are creeping in, giving you options beyond monochrome. Against these colours, accessories like knitted scarves, leather gloves, and textured boots give your outfit a very fresh depth.

Above all, remember this: fit is everything. No matter how high-quality the fabric or how on-point the colour, if your blazer drops down your shoulders, your trousers puddle around your boots, or your layers balloon out at the sides, you are undermining your own effort.

Tailoring your pieces, even just hem adjustments or a nip at the waist, makes winter dressing look intentional instead of bulky.

In short, for winter this year, gentlemen should be aiming for thoughtful layering, outerwear, rich colour accents and impeccable fit. Forget your usual bulky everything and wash-and-wear mentality — this is about showing up and feeling absolutely amazing about your choices. Dress like you mean it, and the cold never stood a chance.

By Nusrath Jahan



Know your shoes

Own the look

Are you athletic, always on the move, and keeping fit while you are at it? Are you the corporate king, making big deals and setting the boardroom on fire? Or, are you an artist, footloose and fancy-free, viewing the world through your creative, artistic eyes? Whatever may be your path in life, some shoes will always be an important part of your persona.

To begin with, let's look at the basics.

A good pair of trainers is key. Gone are the days when they were only meant for jogging. Trainers, sneakers, and active shoes are now perfectly acceptable as everyday wear. Choose a good pair as it is an investment that will be in your life for a while. Prioritise fit and comfort, but also keep style in mind.

Sneakers have never been more stylish than they are now. So, do your research and get the ones you are drawn to the most.

For our gum buddies, sneakers and trainers are not just footwear but serious style statements. There is a pair that is perfect for them in all price ranges, so let them pick!

Formal or dress shoes are next. Whether you have a strict dress code at work or wear formal clothing occasionally, it is crucial to own at least one pair of good, formal shoes. It brings polish and sophistication to your look. Again, do your research and find out the pair you like the most.

Oxford lace-ups, brogues, monk straps, or Derbys — there are many different types and more. Black, brown, oxblood, and chocolate are the basic shades that work with most outfits. Again, prioritise style and comfort when choosing dress shoes.

Speaking of comfort, loafers and moccasins are must-haves for any man on the go. Considered the height of fashion by European elites, every man of style and culture must own at least one pair of loafers. Loafers are made from softer materials like suede, calfskin, and nubuck to make it super easy on the feet. Exotic leather loafers make a serious style statement and are best for men of leisure who prefer the finer things in life. They are fantastic for casual wear, and look fantastic with jeans, khakis, panjabis, and shorts, even!

So, there you have it, the most basic yet versatile pairs of shoes to make you the stylish yet suave gentleman you truly are!

By Sabrina N Bhuiyan
Photo: Adnan Rahman
Model: Abdullah Al Mahfuz
Styling & Direction: Sonia Yeasmin Isha
Wardrobe: Cats Eye
Makeup: Sumon Rahat
Location: Chefs Table Courtside

#FOOD & RECIPES

Are men really the better COOKS?

The notion that “a man can cook” lands as angels singing hymns to the ears of whoever is in the vicinity, along with the enquirer. Earning brownie points from your friends, colleagues, girlfriend, or soon-to-be in-laws would be the least of your concerns if you have that skill up in your sleeve, trust me, I know. Incidentally, if you are well-versed or innately good at the art of gastronomy, the inevitable question arises from the surroundings, “Is he better than his wife?” To which many, but not all, respond with a quip, “Have you ever heard of a great woman chef?”

Which brings us to the focus of this article, “Are men really the better cooks?” Before we dive into the intricacies and complexities of such a loaded question, let’s get one thing clear: knowing how to cook is not a virtue. Every capable and normally functioning adult should know how to cook regardless of their beliefs, religion, or gender. Which is why having the skill to cook does not make one a saint, just as not knowing it should not be mistaken for courageous defiance.

Cooking was a survival skill that was honed by Homo Erectus during the era of hunters and gatherers. And somewhere along the line between then and now, it somehow became the battle of the sexes. How? You, dear reader, might think. Here’s how. The split started centuries ago, and the trend was prevalent across different monarchies across the world. But for the argument’s sake, we shall focus on Europe. In the 17th and 18th centuries, French Monarchs

decided that cooking was not just about feeding people; it was about prestige.

For generations, women ran the kitchens, even in aristocratic homes. But once royal courts turned food into a symbol of sophisticated art form and status, the tide began to shift. Guilds like Les Maîtres Queux barred women from entry, and just like that, the art of cooking moved from the home to the public stage, putting men in the limelight. What was once survival became ceremonial. And with it, the idea quietly took root: cooking for the family was duty, cooking for the world was glory.



The first brigade de cuisine by Auguste Escoffier in the 19th century was a military-style kitchen with a hierarchy that included commis, chef de partie, sous-chef, and other positions. The two branches of male and female cooks grew further apart as a result of industrialisation. Men went out to work in hotels and restaurants, while women’s reign of cooking was limited to the borders of their kitchen. Then came television, fame, and Michelin stars, and the



narrative solidified: male chefs as visionaries, female cooks as caretakers. When this system spread beyond Europe, it carried the same hierarchy with it. What began as a matter of structure became culture.

Chef Louis Diat, the celebrated head of the Ritz-Carlton kitchens, once said, “You must cook from the heart.” Cooking begins with instinct and emotion that transcends skill, titles, or hierarchy. The truth is, it’s hardly fair to compare men and women in this field. When a man chooses to cook, he often does so out of passion. For most women, cooking has never been positioned as a choice. It has been an expectation, a domestic responsibility inherited through generations.

Yet, when a woman loves to cook, she perfects it in ways that rival any professional. She will improvise with what’s available,

balance flavours by instinct, and master consistency. The difference is not in capability, it’s in conditioning.

I, for one, grew up in a home where both my parents cooked. We never had any gender-specific household chores. My father is a master chef when it comes to khichuri, and my mother never treated the kitchen like a prison. With no playgrounds to escape to and limited screen time (yes, that worked then), I’d often sit near the stove, watching my mother work, experiment, and make me taste and understand how everything gets better if you put a little bit of care into your craft. She cooked because it was her responsibility, yes, but also because getting enamoured by her food would send us to cloud nine.

Over time, I realised she wasn’t just feeding us, she was shaping how I understood care, structure, and pride in small things. I inherited those instincts, and now I, too, cook for the people I love and allegedly I am good at it. Maybe not with her finesse, but with the same intention.

So, are males inherently better cooks? Most likely not, and neither are women. The art solely depends and varies on the skill, passion, curiosity and how much the individual cares, regardless of gender. Because at the end of the day, food does not care who’s behind the stove; it only remembers who respected it enough to make it matter.

By K Tanzeel Zaman
Photo: Collected

#MUSING

GUY TRIPS

Where friendship turns into healing

I am not one for Bollywood movies, but one movie in particular lives rent-free in my head — Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara. Was it a particular masterpiece? Not really. But it stirred something in me that refused to fade — a yearning to hit the road. Not necessarily to Spain and go skydiving (although that's still on my bucket list), but to take a trip with my closest guy buds, cell phones off, and reality on hold.

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Would it really work the same? Does it have to be an international outing, or do local overnight stayovers count? Would it still feel different if the trip had girls along, or if it were with your partner or family? Being a realist (read pessimist), for a long time, I didn't think so, chalking it all up to 'movie magic.'

Well, as fate would have it, I got the chance to find out for myself. An old friend returned to the country after a decade, and as these things often go, it led some of us old friends to reconnect. That reconnection turned into numerous weekend stays and even a trip down to Cox's Bazar early this year. Sadly, that friend has gone back, but the memories and experiences we shared made me reconsider my opinion on ZNMD being just 'movie magic.'

So, why have these trips/stays been so memorable? Why do I think guy trips are therapeutic now? For starters, travelling with your mates can be as spontaneous as one text of "Man, I'm so bored" to spiral into "Ok, transport sorted, let's roll" in less than 10 minutes. Try that with your partner or your family and see how that goes!

It's also less stressful, as you are dealing with like-minded simpletons just like you, so two pairs of clothes can last five days, and as long



as someone remembers a charger, everyone's good to go. Another perk? Because it's just the guys, you can stay WHEREVER you want, no fancy five-star accommodation needed, meaning your trips are affordable!

It also means that because you are not worried about keeping a loved one safe, you can explore places and do things you would never dare to with partners or family, like walking through a wooded area for half the night in search of ghosts, only to find foxes and crazy, coloured spiders.

Not into adventure? That's fine too!

If you were on a trip with your partner, you'd have to plan outings lest you hear the dreaded "Did we come here just to sleep all day?" spiel. And even when you do head out, you're transformed into a part-time content creator documenting her trip for her Instagram feed.

No such problems on a guy trip. Guy 1 wants to nap till the afternoon? Let him. Guy 2 goes four kilometres away for some breakfast buffet that only stays

open for two hours? No one cares. You get the picture. You're all free to do what you want, even if all you do is absolutely nothing!

But the absolute best part? You can just sit on the beach (or insert place), you and your mates, and just talk about everything you have going on. No judgment, no future material for blackmail/fights, no interruptions!

All you will get are arms around your shoulder, a few moments of silence, followed by your bud's confession of his own problems. That's when you realise how similar your struggles are, and how few outlets exist that will truly listen and actually relate. Because make no mistake, dear reader, men are going through very difficult times these days, and the worst part is that no one really cares.

I can tell you this much. The year 2024 was rough on me, as I am sure it was for many of you in various ways. In my case, by the end of the year, I was heartbroken, and I'd lost a parent — so, to put it mildly, I was not okay. But the trips I had with my friends helped me process the hurt in a way that would have otherwise taken years. The trips also revealed what my friends were going through, too — divorces, financial losses, struggles I had no clue about. But we talked, we understood, we supported, and I like to think we came out better for it.

So, no, readers! Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara is not just movie magic. A trip with your guy buddies might just be the therapy you need, only cheaper. Maybe curb the expectation of finding and falling in love with a Katrina Kaif lookalike, and you're set.

By Intisab Shahriyar
Photo: Collected





“Not for bachelors!” How Dhaka’s housing market humiliates men

A walk in any alley around notable areas of the capital city shows a common sight: “To-let” signs and notices glued on walls, with one line that stands out every time — “Not for bachelors.”

Many young students and working professionals come to live in Dhaka city, away from their families, in pursuit of an education or employment. Although Dhaka wholeheartedly welcomes anyone who can afford it, the same cannot be said about landlords or neighbours. Life in Dhaka city is not easy for young men whose families do not live here.

Most landlords seem unwilling to rent their apartments to bachelor men. They are often stereotyped, considered noisy, troublesome, irresponsible, likely to delay paying rent on time, or likely to offend other tenants in the building. However, in many cases, despite their initial reluctance, landlords often set aside their stereotypical bias against bachelors, but at a hefty price.

Take, for example, the Merul Badda area of the capital city. Back in the days before BRAC University fully shifted its permanent campus to that area in 2023, many students looking for apartments reported being turned away at the main gate by the guard as soon as they mentioned they were

bachelor students.

Referring to the anomaly, Afif Rahman, an undergrad student of BRAC University, said, “Now the very same landlords are reserving their apartments for students only, for almost double the rent, that too for a single washroom, mosaic-floored apartment without even an elevator!”

In some areas of Dhaka, bachelor men often face higher rents than families, according to numerous complaints.

Riad Uddin, an undergraduate student of East West University, talked about his struggles finding a place with his roommate. “When I was looking for an affordable apartment a few months ago, almost all apartments were for females or families,” he said.

“The few landlords willing to let us in their building charged extremely high rent and utility fees. It almost felt like we had to pay an added tax for renting an apartment as bachelor men in Dhaka.”

Forced to pay an unreasonable amount of rent, those who do manage to find a place often end up sharing it with other bachelors as a sublet to reduce the financial burden. But even then, their plight does not end here.

Even if they are taken into a building half-heartedly, many bachelor

men complain that they rarely receive the same freedom and respect as families.

Devjoti Mondal, an undergraduate CSE student, complained, “Even though we pay rent like everyone else, we don’t get the same freedom other self-respecting tenants get. Despite occasional emergencies, like anyone else, we constantly get warned about when we can or cannot enter the building. Despite our good behaviour, we get abrupt eviction notices with no proper reason.”

He continued, “It has come to a point where we cannot even choose an internet service provider of our own choice, even that falls under the landlord’s say-so!”

Md Hadiul Islam Purno Mridha, a working professional who lives in a sublet apartment in Dhaka, faces similar challenges balancing his work and bachelor life.

He shared in this regard, “Despite paying extra under the guise of rent, we have almost no satisfaction as tenants. Landlords gatekeep basic needs such as access to the roof, a key to the main gate, and even running tap water on a timely schedule.”

The struggle does not end there. Living away from family also takes an emotional toll on them, adding to

the challenges of daily life, whether a student or a working professional.

“When you live with your family, at midnight, if you open your fridge, you will find at least something to eat,” expressed Syeed Farhan, an undergraduate student of a private university. “But loneliness hits the hardest at night when you live in a sublet apartment, and you find your fridge almost empty, with nothing to eat.”

He further claimed, “It gives you a real and hands-on idea about the harsh truth of living in Dhaka city; the kind of reality check that may feel like a punch in the gut. For example, if I spend Tk 15,000 on groceries and another Tk 10,000 on rent and utilities, I know I have to earn more than that just to survive in this city! And God forbid, if you fall sick, you are on your own.”

Still, some try to see the silver lining. Reflecting on his own journey, Afif Rahman confessed, “Living alone, away from your family, teaches you important life lessons early on, which you wouldn’t learn otherwise. It makes a person more mature than their age.”

By Minhazur Rahman Alvee

***Certain names have been changed upon request**

Photo: Ashif Ahmed Rudro

Why men must pay closer attention to cardiac health

Heart disease remains one of the leading causes of death among men globally, and Bangladesh is no exception. As men continue to balance careers, family, and daily pressures, their hearts often bear the silent strain. On World Men's Day, experts remind us that understanding and protecting men's cardiac health is not just a medical need but a matter of self-care and longevity.

Dr Ashraf Ur Rahman is a Medicine Specialist and a Cardiologist at the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD). He notes that the majority of cardiac cases he encounters involve men above the age of forty.

Dr Rahman explains that the difference between men's and women's heart health begins with hormones. Women benefit from the protective effects of oestrogen, which usually helps maintain healthy blood vessels and cholesterol levels. Men, however, lack this hormonal shield. As a result, they are naturally more susceptible to ischemic heart disease (IHD) from an earlier age. Once women reach menopause and oestrogen levels drop, their risk becomes nearly identical.

"Hormonal protection gives women a head start," Dr Rahman says. "Men, without that advantage, face heart-related risks much sooner, especially if unhealthy habits come into play."

The lifestyle link

While biology sets the stage, daily habits often determine the outcome.

"Many men also compromise food quality because they are always on the go," notes Dr Rahman. "Add irregular sleep, stress, and addictive habits like smoking, and you have a combination that quietly damages the heart over time."

Stress itself plays a major role. With modern work-life demands, men often



shoulder significant financial and emotional pressures, leading to hypertension and coronary artery disease (CAD). Genetics can intensify this risk further. Men with a family history of cardiac problems are particularly vulnerable and should begin routine screenings earlier than others.

Common conditions and overlooked symptoms

Among Bangladeshi men, the most frequently diagnosed heart conditions



include coronary artery disease, ischemic heart disease, and hypertension. These typically develop silently, progressing over years before showing clear warning signs.

"The problem is that men often do not take minor symptoms seriously," Dr Rahman warns. "Headaches, easy fatigue, chest discomfort, or swelling in the feet are not just signs of tiredness. They can be the heart's way of asking for help."

Other early indicators include shortness of breath or decreased productivity at work.

When left unchecked, these symptoms can escalate into severe cardiac events. Dr Rahman emphasises that awareness and timely response can prevent a tragedy.

"Many heart attacks could have been avoided if men had sought medical attention earlier," he adds.

The need for early diagnosis

One of Rahman's strongest messages is the importance of early screening. "Early



diagnosis makes a big difference. It can significantly prevent or slow down the severity of heart disease," he says firmly. "Prevention is always better than a cure."

He advises men over 40, especially those with a family history of heart disease, to undergo annual check-ups. Simple tests such as blood pressure measurement, lipid profiles, ECGs, and stress tests can uncover silent risk factors long before symptoms appear.

"Cardiac issues don't appear overnight," Rahman explains. "They develop gradually. The earlier you identify them, the better chance you have to protect your heart."

Small changes, big impact

While the idea of an overhauled lifestyle can sound daunting, Dr Ashraf Ur Rahman insists that heart protection does not require radical change; it requires consistency.

"Start with what you can control," he advises. "Quit smoking, choose home-

cooked meals over processed or oily food. Even small steps, if done regularly, make a real difference."

Exercise remains one of the most effective tools for maintaining heart health. Cardiologists recommend at least 30 to 45 minutes of physical activity several times a week, whether it's brisk walking, jogging, swimming, or cycling. Dr Rahman adds that the mental benefits are equally important: "Exercise helps release stress, which in turn keeps blood pressure and heart rhythm in check."

In addition, managing stress through exercise, mindfulness, adequate rest, and time away from screens can improve cardiovascular function.

World Men's Day is an opportunity to remind men that strength lies not in enduring silently, but in taking charge of their well-being. Too often, men ignore their symptoms or delay medical consultations out of fear or overconfidence.

"It's time to change that mindset," Dr Rahman says. "Health is not about appearing tough. It's about being wise enough to care for yourself."

Heart health, he stresses, is a lifelong responsibility, not a short-term goal. Early prevention, annual check-ups, and mindful habits are the pillars of a stronger, longer life.

Men often devote their energy to providing for others but forget that their own health forms the foundation of everything they do.

The message this Men's Day is clear: protect your heart before it demands your attention.

Dr Ashraf Ur Rahman concludes, "Your health is not an expense but an investment. Care for your heart now, and it will take care of you for years to come."

By Nusrath Jahan
Photo: Collected



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Confessions of an Instagram husband

Behind every perfect photo, there is an Instagram husband. Albeit selfies, the OTDs, glammed-up faces at the photo booths in weddings, so-called candid shots at cafes, and travel stories are often the hard work of these individuals working behind the scenes. But who is an Instagram husband? You may be one even without knowing the terminology! He can be anyone who has been assigned for life with the task of regularly taking photos and videos for someone's Instagram, Facebook, and the like.

What is this obsession with taking pictures? I have seen many men and women alike who go to all these beautiful places, and then, they busy themselves with taking photos right away, instead of actually enjoying the moment. My earnest request to them is to pay a visit to a professional studio and later add any background of their choice. No need to travel; it saves a lot of time and money!

Don't you want to keep memories, though? Yes, but the only memory I have from any outing is of me taking pictures of you! This phenomenon is



very common. The next time you are at a "location" being an IG husband, just look around, and you will easily spot several others just like you, who are busy clicking away.

What is fascinating is how universal the concept is. You could be cruising on the Bosphorus or the Padma River, you could be at the top of the Eiffel Tower or on the Empire State Building — IG husbands are everywhere! Especially during trips, we have to be aware of clearing up storage on their phones to accommodate the huge number of photos.

This is a full-time job, and like any career, this one also has its fair share of training and evaluation.

"See, the background is hazy. The frame is too shaky to hold the phone properly! Why aren't you telling me that my hair isn't right? It's too sunny here. It's too dark there. Your timing was wrong. Tap on the 'portrait' mode. Go further. Come closer," — these are just a few of the most common things we hear, and things get embarrassing at times in public places!

So, as an Instagram husband, my wife (in my case) is the model, the director, and the photoshoot coordinator all at once. And me? I am just an unpaid photographer.

Did my photography skills improve? Even if it did, I would not tell her, because she would make me snap even more pictures. But what I can tell you is that I have grown a distaste for photography itself. I envy actual professionals, who, with their fancy DSLRs, perhaps enjoy clicking away. But I reckon even they, though relentlessly passionate in their craft, must go nuts at some point.

How many pictures are enough on a date — two, three, five? Or

how about zero? On a trip — 10, 20, 50? One cannot and should not count, as it will only add to the frustration. Back to my case, I think I have captured more photos of wifey than the Apollo missions did of the moon.

It starts simply. One small click for a man, one giant leap for her album! Soon enough, I have a large collection of photos to deliver to her WhatsApp for selection and editing.

I have half a mind to set a quota, sort of a limit. Let's say, 10 clicks per day on a trip, 5 when dining out or at the wedding. All I am saying is that if being an Instagram husband is like a job, let's at least have a job description, working hours, and decide on the deliverables.

As long as there is Instagram, there will be Instagram husbands. They are the unsung heroes. So, as you scroll online and come across a beautiful photo of your friend, chances are high that there was someone behind it that made it happen — an overworked, tired, underrated Instagram husband!

By Zane
Photo: Collected

