

RISING STARS

Crazy People Study in the US

by RiMaz

Bangladeshi people behave quite weirdly where the USA is concerned. First, they condemn it and then they become desperate to get over there. For better or for worse, American culture has had a great influence on Bangladeshis — Macgyver has become a household word here and will probably become part of the language soon.

Students are the ones most eager to fly off to the heaven/half-like place known as USA. Although they give excuses that they want to go there to get a good education, they immediately add that they actually hate the place and will promptly come back to their motherland after doing their Ph. D and after making a few million dollars.

If you have your mind set on studying in the US, the best thing to do is to catch hold of a parent (either will do) and set off immediately. If your parent is living there, you'll be entitled to study in a high school there, and if you can maintain reasonably good results, you're certain to get into at least one Ivy League institution.

If, however, you want to do it the hard way, then read on. Go to the Unfortunate Student's Impedance Service — Student Counselling Centre. You're likely to end up going there at least 50 times because they have some very peculiar rules:

- a) You have to be a member of the Student Counselling Lib.
- b) To become a member, you have to fill in a form. Forms are available only on Sundays between 8:00 and 8:25 a.m.
- c) Completed forms can be

submitted only on Wednesdays, between 7:30 and 7:45 p.m.

d) The library is open only on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. (and no one is allowed to spend more than half an hour in the library each month).

e) These rules are changed every few days.

If you are able to get into

send weird letters (Swarthmore); others will never reply (most of the rest).

Even if they condescend to reply, half of the letters get lost (i. e. stolen) in the mail. Your letters, however, are almost 90% sure to reach them, albeit after an average of two months.

Then comes filling in the application forms. If the 300-page applications from each university don't scare you, the essay topics will. You will have to tell them everything about your life from zero to now. Not even your innermost secrets are spared. If you miss out one tiny bit of information, they'll probably use it as an excuse to reject you.

You'll also have to get teacher's recommendations and reveal your horrible half-yearly results. And then you'll have to do the most horrible of things: you'll have to take the SAT.

The SAT deserves a special mention because it is usually a

great turning point in the admission process: it is the point at which you turn from half-mad to entirely insane. It is no joke memorizing 3,500 words and their meanings — which is what you have to do to get a reasonably high score (over) in the SAT English or verbal part.

Then comes the waiting. If you are still alive at this point and are not in a lunatic asylum, then you're one of the lucky few — you just might make it to the end. As you agonizingly spend your days, you tell everyone "Hal! It was nothing. In fact I'll do the same next year just for the fun of it", but you secretly pray that you might never have to do such a ghastly thing.

Finally, one fine day, you get a letter: "Dear so-and-so. We are very happy to inform you that you have thankfully been rejected. The reasons are as follows: 1) You have no money and neither do we. 2) We got 200,000 applications for only 50 places and we had to reject many qualified applicants.

We wish you the best of luck in the University (if any) to which you get admitted."

Of course, among the 500 rejections you receive, there just might be one acceptance letter, and every attempt will be made (by your cat, your fate and your little brother) to keep you from discovering it. If you do, then congratulations and good luck on the four-year long infernal and thrilling journey (opinions differ) at the end of which you will get the long awaited reward — a Bachelor's degree.

RiMaz is off to college in the US this coming fall.



STUDENT COUNSELLING

application forms. If the 300-page applications from each university don't scare you, the essay topics will. You will have to tell them everything about your life from zero to now. Not even your innermost secrets are spared. If you miss out one tiny bit of information, they'll probably use it as an excuse to reject you.

You'll also have to get teacher's recommendations and reveal your horrible half-yearly results. And then you'll have to do the most horrible of things: you'll have to take the SAT.

The SAT deserves a special mention because it is usually a

As Cole Dodge's sixteen-year old daughter, I attended his Press Conference on the State of the World's Children, last month. Mr. Dodge is UNICEF representative in Dhaka. More than a hundred journalists attended the conference.

"I would not allow my daughter to marry until she was at least eighteen," Mr. Dodge informed those present. In the past, Bangladeshi women were married off at the age of twelve or even less than that. Today, the average woman starts her home when she is eighteen. Her husband is no younger than twenty-five.

Mr. Dodge said that for the past two decades this country has been focused primarily on the economy. It is time that we begin to focus our energies on human development. Bangladesh's commitment should be towards the child and the mother. They are the most vulnerable people in this society.

Often the mother is left to take care of a baby after the father does not return home at night because he knows he can not support his family. The mother is often weak and sick herself, adding an extra burden to the situation.

In 'Impressions of Women and Children in Bangladesh', a book written by Raana Haider, the author believes that most of the women in the country weigh about 50 kg, and half of them suffer from anemia. A man's intake of calories is 29 per cent higher than that of women. Often, these women already have poor nutrition before they are married. When they get married and then pregnant, their bodies weaken and their babies are born with low birth weight.

Often these mothers do not know what to do with their children when they fall ill. It is, therefore, necessary for mothers to be educated on

The State of Bangladesh's Children

by Jorna Amrita Dodge (Class XI, Kodaikanal International School)

child care. Mr. Dodge gives the example of Oral Saline. Every mother should know how to treat diarrhoea.

Today Bangladesh is at the top of all graphs and charts showing population density in this region of Asia. Even China has only one-eighth of Bangladesh's density of population. In 1971, an average family had seven children.

water. The use of pit latrines seem to be the most appropriate and cost effective way to ensure an increased level of rural sanitation.

Lack of sanitation not only affects the poor, it is equally harmful to the whole population. The middle class and the wealth of this country also eat vegetables and fruit that have been washed by contaminated

jeopardy. The next step to ensure that the child will be able to live and support his/her parents in their old age, is education.

In Bangladesh 4400 hours are spent in the classroom per year. Teachers spend less time teaching than doing any other activities involved in their everyday life. Totally committed and dedicated people are a necessity for this type of occupation.

Mr. Cole P. Dodge stated that a child needs to finish third grade in order to have some sort of literacy. It should be stressed that daughters of this country need to be encouraged to attend school. This year, 45 per cent of the children who attended school were girls. This figure was compared to the 32 per cent of girls who went to school in 1971. Most of these students were able to finish eighth grade.

Imams who command very high respect of the ordinary masses are willing to help in promoting education for children. This surely will help the marriageable age to increase even more, and thus our birth rate will decrease.

In the state of the world Children Report Launching Press Conference Mr. Dodge informed us that Bangladesh has a lot of potential and a lot of challenges. However, the only way for this country to progress is through united efforts by everyone. Everyone refers to the poor, the government, the NGOs, the middle and upper classes. Let us then work to promote the child on whom rests the future of mankind.



Educated mothers are part of a safe future for children.

Today there is an average of four children per family.

Child immunization has worked with rare success in Bangladesh. In 1990, 80 per cent of all children had at least one vaccine. Today, this figure has risen to 89 per cent in this case of BCG. Immunization in this country seems all the more important because of lack of sanitation, especially among the rural people.

Sanitation in Bangladesh is a challenge this country faces. Majority of people use hanging latrines, which cause faecal contamination of the waterways and sources of surface

water. It is, therefore, the country as a whole that has to face the challenge unitedly.

It was reported that in 1991, one-half of the deaths in this country were of children. With the increase of the marriageable age of women, proper immunization for all children under one and hygienic disposal human waste, more deaths will occur because of old age and less in children. It would also aid in the challenge Bangladesh faces with its density of population.

If a child can live beyond the age of five, the child's survival is no longer in such great

O's over Matric?

by Sagheer Bin Faiz (A-level student)

There has been a trend in the past few years for people who originally intend to take their Matric exams to change their minds and shift to O-levels. The trend is slight to O-levels. The trend is shift to O-levels. The trend is shift to O-levels. The trend is shift to O-levels.

With the state of education as is in the universities, most parents breath a sigh of relief if they can send their child abroad. Almost everyone taking their Matric is aiming

for higher studies abroad. This is one factor that often makes them shift to O-levels. The O-level syllabus is much more vast than that for the Matric exams; it is better at preparing students for an education abroad and what's more, because of its high standards, the O-level examination is internationally acknowledged. Thus, the better the student's chances of being accepted abroad — this means a lot, especially to those who cannot afford to study abroad without a scholarship.

The problem with the Matric syllabus is that it places more emphasis on memorising, while the O-level syllabus actually allows a person to think for him/herself and figure out things alone. In the Matric exams one could score high marks by simply memorizing the whole thing without, perhaps, understanding a word of it! But this is not a remote possibility in the O-level examinations. The leakage of question papers before an exam has become pretty frequent and is no big secret among society.

An easy syllabus and a familiar question paper should be more than adequate to help one pass in the first division, don't you think?

The standards of English in the Matric system also leave much to be desired. After all, English is a universal language and to be deficient in it could be a serious handicap. Matric papers show an average level of standard primary school English which half the time is anything but accurate.

People taking or preparing to take their Matric may be offended by this article. But there is no offence meant on our part. This article aims at the creation of an awareness regarding the flaws and shortcomings of the local system and the narrow limitations to knowledge which it presents. If the Board revised the Matric syllabus and made it somewhat more updated and modern then many Bangladeshis would have a brighter future. Intermediate exam syllabi could also use a revision. The Board should, nevertheless, look to the betterment of the Bangla education system, for on it depends the future of the country.

Don't just throw this article aside without giving all that's been said a serious thought. It you do throw it away you are throwing away the most important thing in the lives of millions of Bangladeshi children, those of today and those of the generations to come.

When Loneliness is the Way

by Sabah Moyeen

COMING back home was far from easy. It had taken Sloane all the will power she had mustered up during the last year. Ever so, as she turned into the gravel path and looked upon the dishevelled house which had been her home a year ago, her knees weakened and she sat heavily on the greenbench on the side walk. Gripping the lamppost, she shut her eyelids tight trying to keep those bitter tides at bay. But the nightmare was still shadowing

- Answers to last week's riddles!
7. A coconut
 8. A candle
 9. A coffin
 10. A man ploughing with a plough drawn by two buffaloes. The fourth tongue is that of the plough.
 11. Rain
 12. Ears
 13. A banana
 14. A peacock

Anne: Did you hear what happened to poor Mr Brown's wavy hair after that terrible accident he had?
Dan: No, what did?
Anne: It waved goodbye!

her, haunting her. Gradually her mind rolled back in time. The scene was nothing unusual. Sloane, sixteen, sitting upstairs in her dingy room, hugging her knees and biting her lips to hold back tears. Downstairs, in the unpretentious little kitchen, her parents were at each other's throats again. Sloane crawled feebly to the parted door. Her father was drunk and violent. Her mother abusive and furious. The vehement screaming and battering were rocking her senses. The barrage of obscenities should have shocked her had she not been only too used to it. Her mother's blood stained mouth, the cigarette burns on her body, the insane animosity on her father's drunken face, it all petrified the insecure adolescent that Sloane was. She knew the neighbours were listening, she was aware of the constant stares, she knew the repulsive gossip about her mother and her notorious father. It could have torn any one apart.

Sloane had tried so hard to make her parents happy with her, with each other. She deliberately asked for stories of their wedding day, reminded them of birthdays and anniversaries, pushed herself to

do better at school just to get a little attention. She was trying so hard for their sake, that somewhere along the middle, she forgot to care for herself. The person inside her was annihilated. The degradation and humiliation did not matter any more. People turned away from her at her acerbity. She developed an antipathy towards people — trust, faith and love were vague ideals only remembered in the past. When Jim left her for another girl Sloane saw the last straw snap. She was hurt for the first time in many months, and it stifled her senses.

The period at the reformatory, where she found herself after a month of listless and apathetic roaming around from job to job, place to place, was a rebirth. She came into contact with people who were even less fortunate than herself. She would not have believed it, but they and their lives stared her in the face. She felt sorry for them — the first traces of emotion and feeling after a long period of amnesia. People opened up to her, and she responded. They were willing to care for her to understand her, not kick her around like a worthless bum. The first few weeks of probi-

tion from alcohol were frustrating and painful, but they paid off ultimately. Seven months later when Sloane was applauded at an anti-drug and alcohol campaign, she cried for joy. She had achieved the dignity and respect, that the world had refused her. Sloane learnt to live for herself.

Sloane hesitated momentarily before pressing the doorbell. She had called and spoken to her mother earlier. Mrs Roger opened the door. 'Mum!' Sloane tried to keep her shaky voice under control. Mrs Roger was surprised to see a vibrant, bright-eyed, healthy girl facing her instead of the dope-eyed dishevelled trouble-maker. Sloane watched her mother's cold cratched eyes, expressionless face with disbelief. Her father puffed on his cigar and then walked away. She quivered at the intensity of their rejection something inside Sloane broke. It was perhaps the bond she still feel for them. They had never changed. She had grown up, but they would never. But this time she was determined. She would not step back into the nightmare again. She would not let them ruin her life.

That night, in her one room apartment, Sloane slept, having pushed her entire past out of the crevices of her mind to wake up again to a fresh new morning.



by Rukhshanda Rehnuma Mowla (Age 6)

from Anwara, Chittagong

QUIZ CLUB

This week's Quiz Club questions are:

1. Who wrote Portrait of a Lady?
2. When was Swami Vivekananda born?
3. Who were the stars of the Indian film 'Awaara'?
4. Who is the author of 'Pather Panchali'?
5. How old is the sun?
6. Where is Mauna Kea?
7. What is the currency of Brazil?
8. Who was the most successful music group ever?
9. What is David Bowie's real name?
10. Who wrote the novel Dracula?

Answers to January 10th's Quiz Club:

1. The Eagle
2. Half bull, half man
3. Li Peng
4. 81 years old
5. Maha Vajiralongkorn
6. Jahangir Khan
7. January 17th 1991
8. Ephesus, Greece (modern Turkey)
9. 1705
10. Orange River in South Africa

— A one-humped camel is known as a dromedary. The dromedary has long legs and therefore quite tall. It is native to India and North Africa.

— The House of Bottles is a house built entirely of 18,000 liquor, soda medicine and beer bottles. It was built by George Plumb and completed in 1978.

Registration

Our latest members' numbers are here! We would like you all to please put your name on any material you send in. Welcome to the club!

Syed Mohammed	RS 0060
Ali Zain	RS 0061
Ifkhar-ul-Haque	RS 0062
N. Malathy	RS 0063
N. Sangeetha	RS 0063
Alina Andalib	RS 0064
Rimaz	RS 0065
Layeqa Bashir	
Mohammad Astifur	
Rahim	RS 0066
Jasim Gani	RS 0067
Md Mizanur Rahman	RS 0068
Warda Nasser ali	RS 0069
Alwina Sharmeen	RS 0070
Md. Kamran	RS 0071
Sheikh Tina Saleem	RS 0072
Sahamama Shahreen	RS 0073
Md. Zafar Barkat	
Rumi	RS 0074
Shahed Chowdhuri	RS 0075

— The earliest know was Ling-Yu.—The Zoo of Intelligence' opened in China by Emperor Wang in 11th century BC.

— The largest flying dinosaur was the PTERANODON which had a wingspan of 25 feet!

City search

Hi there pals! hidden in the puzzle are the names of some Asian cities and capitals. They may be hidden diagonally, horizontally, vertically or even backwards. So get ready with a pencil for a trip around Asia.

Mahruba Sameen Hussain

P	T	H	I	M	P	U	S	O	T	O	Y	K
Q	R	V	S	E	T	U	I	L	U	B	A	K
R	U	B	B	S	W	A	J	R	A	H	S	N
V	A	O	N	K	B	T	V	K	S	R	P	O
N	K	M	M	U	O	N	A	L	A	R	G	A
A	A	B	D	O	Y	K	O	T	H	U	N	D
R	S	A	O	R	A	S	N	V	L	T	I	A
H	O	Y	S	H	R	S	E	A	N	S	K	B
E	J	R	D	M	N	R	N	A	B	E	E	A
T	R	S	S	T	O	A	C	O	L	O	P	M
O	M	G	O	H	U	C	I	A	X	U	R	A
X	G	N	A	N	E	P	M	S	A	L	O	L
N	N	L	L	M	A	Y	A	B	A	R	U	S
T	D	M	S	V	N	O	O	O	N	A	R	I