

RISING STARS

FOR us, born in a free country, 'freedom' is taken for granted as a birth right. It is just an attractive topic, which we write poems and sing songs about and sometime philosophise about. But for the man, or the nation, striving to break the chains of slavery and oppression to bring about 'Independence', freedom becomes a fight, a way of life and more often, death. It becomes a power larger than life, defying all proportions, until it overshadows all other meaning in life and becomes a singular goal.

Monem Khan instigated the infamous Agartala Conspiracy by which it was tried to paint Mujib as an Indian allegiance who was betraying his country by leading it away from its government. Protests from Bengalis gained momentum through 1969 and on Jan 20, 1970 DU students defied section 144 and took to the streets. The police opened fire on the unarmed public. Ayub Khan saw the situation going out of control and conceded to a Round Table Conference. The

Pakistan. Meanwhile on January 3, 1971, Mujib conducted the swearing in ceremony of the elected representatives of the Constituent Assembly. Bhutto refused to come to Dhaka to attend the convention of the Assembly. Yahya Khan was sent to Dhaka to hold talks with Mujib. Upon his return to Larkana, Bhutto declared that he would not tolerate a post below Sheikh Mujib. However he did travel to Dhaka to hold talks with Mujib. The meeting of the Constituent Assembly was fixed for March 3, 1971. But after Yahya Khan and Bhutto emerged following a 5-hour meeting, the convention was delayed indefinitely. This incident which happened on the 1st of March took place without notifying Sheikh Mujib or the majority holders. It was a deliberate attempt to antagonise an already oppressed nation and disregard its aspirations. The Bengali people mobilised mass movements. The streets, from Teknaf to Tetulia were alive with the din of protesting people. The masses had started pledging their

Conference scheduled for March 10th. From March 3rd all offices, courts of law, the whole mechanism of the city remained suspended from 6 am to 2 pm. Meanwhile Tikka Khan, the Butcher of Baluchistan, was appointed Governor and Chief Martial Law Administrator of East Pakistan. He threatened, openly and without reservation, to thrash the Bengalis into compliance. Between March 4th and 5th, more than 200 people had lost their lives.

Then arrived the fateful night of 25th March. Sheikh Mujib realised the extent of treachery dealt to him and his people by Yahya Khan. He advised his followers to escape to the villages, but refused to free himself. Only Haji Mursheed defied his orders and remained with Mujib at his Dhanmondi residence until he was arrested. The Pakistani Army was prepared to launch a full fledged attack on the Bengalis.

The first gunshots sounded near the old Airport, and spread like wild fire. Mujib was begged to flee, but he valiantly replied 'If my people and massacre the city. By 10 pm the Pakistan Army has taken over the Radio and Television centres. At 1.30 am 26th March Mujib was arrested. But

'TIS THE NIGHT BEFORE

Naheed Kámal

'Tis the night before Eid and all is not quiet. As a matter of fact all the houses are swarming with more activity than a beehive. No one sleeps due to the excitement which is created. The thought of what the next three days hold in store for one and all has everyone in shivers. All the fun and joy of Eid holds for us an unexplainable thrill.

Every religion celebrates the birth of its prophet with as much pomp and glee as is possible. The Muslims are no different. Our Eid celebrations are made even sweeter because we fast for one whole month before. Even though we may not all fast regularly during Ramadan, it is after all the thought that counts. Right?

When it comes down to the thought behind celebrating Eid we must acknowledge that the Bengali culture holds Eid as an extra special celebration. These three days require three days of endless celebration and jubilation.

The Bengali mind is emotional and has the habit of wallowing in the mire. However when it comes to Eid the pathos of the nation is forgotten and the entire nation goes into a frenzy. This starts from at least a month preceding Eid day. Every shop, and departmental stores and boutiques have the time of their lives. At no other time do Bengalis buy so much for only one day. There needs to be at least three outfits for the three days. These are saris, sarwar-kameez sets, dresses, kurtas,

shoes and slippers plus accessories: bangles, earrings, necklaces, anklets, makeup ... In short everything. Then there is the rush to the beauty saloons while the female of the species tries to make herself ever so beautiful and the male hyperventilates at the thought of the bill.

The entire month of Ramadan passes with the yearning for Eid to come. When Eid day finally arrives the world runs wild around us. There are children running around, mothers dressing up, husbands eating, etc. — a never ending source of energy seems to have been unleashed. Starting early in the morning the households are turned upside-down: shower, smoothen, set and polish, ad infinitum. Then enters the finished product in a frenzy of delight looking like a departmental store mannequin and just as uncomfortable, but we must sacrifice for the sake of beauty. Somehow the clothes looked better on the mannequin. Now what? Well you eat and greet one and all, you eat some more and greet more people, so on so forth. By the end of the day your plastered smile has given you locked jaws. Besides the best part is yet to come, when after three days of eating you find you have gained 6 pounds!

It is not all that bad really, you get the chance to drive around Dhaka city in the smouldering heat in a car jam-packed with you and your friends and you have nothing to show for it but crushed clothes. But like I said, it's the thought that counts. You cannot complain because you do get 'Eid'!

The sad part of it all is that the concept of Eid has altered with time. Soon as the Namaz is done everybody tends to forget about religion and; from then on its 'eat, drink and be merry'. Eid is basically a time to show off your new clothes, jewellery and cars. Such pretentious in a nation so poor, seems out of place. Yet it has become practically a part of tradition and woe be on anyone who dares to question tradition. Tradition after all is a part of religion and culture, and in Bengal these are indelibly entwined with religion. No one can dare to alter religion. No matter how poor one is the new clothes are a must.

For the children it is all fun and games but about the adults?

For those who are too old to go frolicking in the city it is a chance to unwind and relax — three whole days of bliss: Well, kind of because guests are bound to drop in, a dozen at a time. Your relatives need to be visited of course. There you are forced to over eat. Overeating by the way causes indigestion and that is an uncomfortable state to be in, or else you end up with diarrhoea. Either way life gets to be a pain.

The heat can give you sunstroke or a migraine. All this for the sake of celebration. Eid after all proves how human we are. Because for the sake of celebrating we take all the discomfort and bear them with a smile. To bring existence in an other wise mundane existence we add to it all the preceding hoopla. After all where is the

QUOTES

- It always works, when you know what you're doing. Richard Bach.
- The truth is rarely pure & never simple. Oscar Wilde
- Smile ... tomorrow will be worse. Murphy's philosophy
- If anything can go wrong, it will. Murphy's law
- Don't let school interfere with your education. Mark Twain
- The world & dream are but one. Kazantsans
- You can kill the dreamer but you cannot kill the dream. M Lutherking
- Trust your hopes not your fears. David Mahoxey

The Dawn of Freedom

by Sabah Moyeen

Gonotantik Sangram Committee refused to attend the Conference without the participation of Sheikh Mujib. In panic, Ayub Khan stopped the Agartala Conspiracy and released Mujib.

Amidst great jubilation Mujib emerged from prison. The once adored leader had turned into a demi-god. On February 23 he addressed a massive crowd at the Race Course Maidan, where his popularity was obvious. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had become 'Bongo Bondhu'. The Pakistani government watched in awe, and pulled the chords even tighter declaring martial law and strangling democracy.

Elections were scheduled for December 7, 1970. The Awami League won 167 seats, out of the total 169 allotted to East Pakistan. Not only had they won a majority in the East, but also in the combined 300 seats in the whole of

lives to the achievement of their goal — independence. The demands were no longer ones for compromise but for freedom.

The period March 1st-26th has remained indelible in the history of Bangladesh. On March 2nd, Bongo Bandhu called for a nationwide strike. On this historic day, under the leadership to ASM Rab and Shahjahan Siraj, DU students met on campus, and for the first time, upheld the red and green flag with the yellow map of East Pakistan enclosed East Pakistan had gained the first trace of independent identity as Bangladesh.

Sheikh Mujib followed the example of Mahatma Gandhi and proclaimed a policy of non-violent non-cooperation. But Yahya Khan wanted blood; he deployed the army and fired on unarmed students. Due to this Mujib refused to attend the Round Table

arrived in Dhaka and held extensive talks with Mujib through the 16th and 17th of March. Bhutto arrived on the 21st. The convention of the Constituent Assembly scheduled to be held on the 25th was again delayed indefinitely. While the Pakistani Govt held talks PIA flights had secretly started carrying in Pakistani troops dressed in ordinary clothes. Underhandedness and treachery continued. 23rd March, Pakistan Day, became a day for mourning for all Bengalis. Many hoisted the flag of Bangladesh. ASM Rab led a procession to Sheikh Mujib's Dhanmondi residence and thrust the flag into his hands.

Meanwhile the Pakistani Army busted themselves instigating non-Bengalis against Bengalis and Hindus against Muslims. Mujib called for a nation wide strike on the 27th March, but events took a far drastic turn

before that at 12.30 am Sheikh Mujib declared war and proclaimed the independence of Bangladesh. The message had to be conveyed via wireless and Chittagong Radio Station. On 27th March Major Ziaur Rahman the then Provisional Commander in Chief of the Bangladesh Liberation Army read out the declaration of Independence in English from Kalurhat Radio Station. It followed in Bangla on the 28th of March.

This was the inevitable historical event 21 years ago, which has ensured our freedom today. The dawn of freedom which smiled down on the 16th of December 1971 was painted with the blood of 300,000 martyrs who forgot friends, family, home and fear of death to achieve national identity. So today we are a free and sovereign people living in an independent democratic country — a proud Bangladesh.



My Other World

When I am alone, or in bed at night
My mind drifts away into another world.
My thoughts and feelings rise
And travel through this other world

I travel through adventures
They're always different
From flying in a space shuttle in outer space,
To finding an ancient key in my backyard.

Sometimes my world makes me think
Of my past and my future.
And sometimes those thoughts
Take me beyond my wildest dreams.

I wonder how I would feel without my other world.
Maybe, I would feel that something was missing from my life
Or perhaps,
I would not feel any different at all.

But now that I have my other world
I would not want to lose it.
And even though I have fun in the world that I live in,
I have an extra special kind of fun in my other world.

Anjum Hossain
May 4, 1991

Beep, Beep!

by Judith G De Costa

I hate travelling and I made a small secret of that fact. I hate to travel by car, owing to the continuous slamming of brakes which is inevitable if you drive through the streets of the town. I get too nauseous to have a 'joyride'. On trains it is probably the closed chambers which make me sick — flying is out of the question!

But let's get back to automobiles and traffic. Let me draw out my average school-home route for you. I struggle through one jam at what is known as the 'Maghbazaar chourasta' and viall find myself in a similar situation further up at Farmgate, an area which I think should have been called 'Jungle Gate.' Travelling by these two areas, to take a small example, is guaranteed to turn a fifteen minute ride into an hour-long ordeal. Especially if it's midday and the only way to get the sun out of your eyes is to shut 'em tight or dash out of your car and go hide in a dark building. The only thing I can do while traffic moves is twiddle my thumbs, too exasperated to speak, afraid I may say the wrong thing.

Why is it that traffic resembles a stubborn mule only when you're in a hurry? It doesn't even crawl: caterpillars and babies crawl. If you have ever had the misfortune to be stuck behind the wrong car and watch traffic zoom by on your side of the road, you'll wish your car could transform into a high-tech jet plane at the push of a button. Wish away; it's free of charge.

To add to your problems come the very helpful traffic police who, most of the time, rather than being the solution are the root of the problem. I have repeatedly noticed

around the road in front of Hotel Sonargaon that traffic coming from Kawran Bazaar, Farmgate, Green Road and Bangla Motor is stopped simultaneously. If you're stuck there, you can expect to wait for anything from five minutes to forty-five minutes. I'm speaking through experience. Then finally the cars start to move. Right into one another. There's so much chaos, you'd think Bedlam's more quiet. Automobiles and rickshaws come pouring into the middle from all four directions like water down a pipe. So there's lots of blaring of horns, name-calling, spitting in fury etc. etc. and in the dead centre of all this you'll find good ole Sarge so-and-so wondering what went wrong, just when he thought he had the situation perfectly under control.

We teenagers are accused of sound pollution because we listen to music too loudly. How do these accusers explain the ear-shattering cacophony drivers make? Some have a habit of honking like crazy as they drive down a street even if the car in front is so far off that you could have six stretch-limos stand back to back between the two cars. Let me tell you about another habit, while I'm at it. It's no secret that most young drivers like to listen to loud English music, preferably hard rock, as they cruise. But they'll play it even if the only thing that comes out from the speakers is a deafening jarring sound. The ones

worth listening to, are not, though it seems played not for the benefit of the occupants of that car but for those which pull up alongside them. Usually it turns louder, as if mystically, at a traffic light I love music and always listen to some (preferably in a less conspicuous way) and when I experience some thing like this I feel like running out and bashing the guy on the head with his set!

Ah! What's there to say about traffic? Whether here, Calcutta, London or LA it's the same story. However, it is probably only here at home that, other than exhaust fumes, blaring horns and horrible drivers, we have the added inconvenience of detours nowadays in the city, because the roads are in such bad shape that they have to be repaired through the busiest hours of the day and left free for use in the evenings.

Traffic is one of man's most pitiable mistakes. He should have considered the consequences of putting one automobile after another on the streets when creating them. Aspects such as the miseries one experiences seeing, or worse, feeling, cars flow into one another's paths are all part of a condition we know as 'the flow of traffic'. Really, it's a shame, the way the streets are today.

But suppose this aspect was considered while the automobile was still in its infancy. Then where do you suppose we would all be?

Mystery at Mandrake

by Munaza Alam

... Now more surprises await for our heroes as they try to solve the hidden mystery at Mandrake

We examined the room thoroughly, but with no success as to the twins' whereabouts.

fun in a mundane existence? Eid brings to mind a sense of release — that there is fun left in the world and unlike other fun things this is legal with the bonus point of being blessed by God. So we celebrate like fools wearing silk and satin plus all the jewellery and make up when the temperature is above 27°C! It is easy for the guys because what they wear are usually nice and loose with space for air to pass through. They do not even need any make-up or jewellery (I think). Even though you do see some insane guy walking down the road in a three-piece suit. Eid is basically for the female and children, the men hardly bother about the superficial. The children are filled with the sense of joy that children feel on days of celebrations. The females meanwhile live for the day when they can wear their new clothes and jewellery. They sit and eye each other with cynicism, as if they actually take pleasure in it! The young men are busy feeling uncomfortable and flirting. That is Eid for you. A lot of frivolity and very little substance, and to think its a religious occasion!

But then whoever said religion can't be fun? If we can't take pride in our religion than what can we take pride in? And if we cannot celebrate our faith than what use is our faith.

It is better to celebrate with the blessings of God than otherwise. This way our road to heaven might even be less rocky. It may be uncomfortable and full of pretensions but such is our life. Despite all this the best part of it is the sense of joy which overcomes an otherwise and nation. We are able to laugh and joke and eat with our friends and be with them in an atmosphere of goodness.

Eid Mubarak!

It was some minutes later that we struck oil.

We had returned the fire-place to its original position and were on the point of leaving the bedroom when an idea struck me. I gripped Chris' arm and whispered in her ear.

'Yes, let's try it!' she whispered back, very excited now.

She took out her skeleton keys and unlocked the wardrobe doors one by one. There were a few coats and some empty hangers inside, nothing else. Chris rapped on the wardrobe wall but what we heard was clearly not what we wanted to hear; however hard she tried we definitely did not hear a hollow sound.

'There may be a false wall behind the wood,' Chris' spirits were still sky-high. She groped around in the wardrobe, obviously looking for something, and cried out triumphantly when she found it. She pressed the switch.

I shone my torch inside the wardrobe. Its back was slowly moving back and with it another wall slid back — a metal one! Chris had been right! An opening appeared. Cautiously we went through it.

This one was a very small room. Unlike the other one it did not have an electric lighting system (although we had not used that). There were three chairs in it and ... and some rope — rope that had been cut and was now lying on the floor!

Excitedly we began to look about. At last we had come across something! A final breakthrough!

A sheet of crumpled paper in a waste-paper basket caught my eye. I went over to it and flattening out the paper read what it said.

Expecting a message of some sort, I was completely taken aback to see lines from nursery rhymes scribbled across the sheet! Some of the letters were written in capitals but the rest were in small letters. What on earth...?

To be continued

QUIZ CLUB

Here are this week's quiz questions. Remember to send your answers with your name and address no later than next Thursday. Congratulations to Omar Anam again, our first Quiz Club Winner!

1. What is acid rain?
2. Which city is called 'The Bride of the Sea'?
3. Who was the man of the match in this year's World Cup Cricket finals?
4. Who invented the wireless telegraph?
5. What is the currency of Spain called?
6. What is an asteroid?
7. When and where was Ludwig van Beethoven born?
8. Where is 'Kua'Kata' (in Bangladesh)?
9. What is the highest mountain peak in Bangladesh?
10. Which team had the lowest score in one innings in this year's World Cup Cricket?

Here are the answers to March 13th's Quiz Club:

1. F W De Klerk.
2. Allan Border.
3. Prabhakar.
4. Leading American gold medal winners for swimming at the 1988 Olympics.
5. Great theologian, litterateur and politician of the subcontinent.
6. Mosquito.
7. India.
8. Belgium.
9. Mongolia.
10. Beijing, China.

TOM 'A' MOM in 'NOT POSITIVE BUT COMPARATIVE'

by Sanjida Shaheed Class - X

DON'T PLAY FOOTBALL INSIDE THE HOUSE, TOM!

WHAT WAS THAT CRASHING NOISE? THERE'S NO BOY AS NAUGHTY AS YOU, TOM!

YEAH, BUT THERE ARE MANY BOYS NAUGHTIER THAN ME, MOM!

I'M BEING EXTRA CAREFUL, MOM!

ROBERT THE DUCK

by Shahed Chowdhury (7-4)

HOW COME YOU DID SO BADLY IN HISTORY?

THAT'S 'CAUSE I COULDN'T REMEMBER THE DATES AND EVENTS VERY WELL!

... THEN HOW DOES YOUR TEACHER REMEMBER EVERYTHING SO WELL?

IT'S PROBABLY BECAUSE SHE'S SO OLD, AND...

... SHE WAS PROBABLY BORN BACK THEN, SO SHE MUST HAVE SEEN EVERYTHING HERSELF, AND THAT'S HOW SHE REMEMBERS THEN!

I MUST REMEMBER TO TUNE THAT NOISE IN THIS PART!

Fill out this form and send it to us, and you will be a member of the Rising Star Club. Send in your writings, illustrations, and cartoons. It is an ideal opportunity to express yourself through the print media.

Name: _____

Father's Name: _____

School: _____

Full Address: _____

Telephone No. _____