

RISING STARS

The toy gang and their birthday present

Samia Israt Ronee

NINA closed and locked her playhouse and went to bed. Soon after she was asleep, the door of her Doll House opened and slowly came out two parent Barbies, Sarah and Jim, and three children Barbies, Billy, Simmy and Carren.

"Sssh," said Jim, as they five crept towards the cartoon box marked 'Teddy's Home'. Jim fitted a ladder against the box and climbed up and opened it. Then came out Miranda, the monkey, Topsy the teddy bear and Squeaky the squirrel. Now they all sat down on the table and Sarah served tea on the little China tea-set. Then began the meeting, the subject was what they would present their favourite mistress little Nina. The next day is a special day, it's her BIRTHDAY.

"Nina," began Jim, "has all long been taking good care of us, so we ought to give her a present, a great present and..."

"Squeak, Squeak, Squeak, we know that, tell us something we don't know, like..." as usual Squeaky got into Jim's talking and was as usual stopped by Miranda: "Shut up, Squeaky, you disturbing thing, you chattering, chirping girl, you."

"Oh! calm down you two, we have to take an important decision. Remember, there's only one night before Nina's birthday," said Sarah.

Billy now said, "Let's give her a big doll."

"She already has many dolls in the show case," — said Simmy. "And what about us? We are also dolls!" — Sarah.

Now Topsy moaned and asked Jim what would he prefer to do, and Little Carren spoke out — "Let's think, we

have a will, God may give us some light."

"Right" — cried out the Toy Gang. All began to roam about in the room, from one corner to another, from one end to another end. They walked, walked, walked, as well as they thought and went on thinking.

"Chick, Chick, Chick." "Hey, that's Trina's chickens. Sure the cats' down there

"CHICK". They ran to the Hen House. But again not a thing. Billy said, "Let's keep on a watch."

Squeaky, Sarah and Billy were the first batch to keep an eye. The next shift was for Jim, Miranda and Simmy. Not a single thing was seen by the Toy Gang in these two shifts. At last came Topsy and Carren. You know, Topsy is a sleepy head. So he as usual fell asleep

quickly jumped in front of the nasty cat, Blackie, quite angrily held out her pointed claws and was about to scratch little Carren. Just then another little four footed animal shadow appeared in the scene and the white fluffy dog jumped upon the back of Blackie and bit her. They two fought and after a short time Blackie gave up and ran away bleeding. The puppy came up to

Simmy, Topsy, and Miranda greeted the white pup. The pup was about to go away when Sarah asked him where he lived.

"[Sigh] I'm a nameless stray dog. I don't have a house." These were the first words the cute pup had said all this time. Jim thought for a moment and said, "I know a place for you to live." Then he whispered something to Sarah's ear. Her eyes glow with light and said, "All right! How about giving the white pup to Nina as a Birthday gift?"

"Yahoooooo!! That's a super duper idea!" cried out the Toy Gang. And the pup was too glad to say anything. But there was more surprise for him, when Carren said, "Now for a name, we cannot give Nina a nameless puppy. I suggest, that his name will be 'MUSIC'."

"Great" was the gang's remark. Music had only tears of joy in his big black eyes. So, the next morning Nina and her parents found a basket in which a little white fluffy puppy lay with a card, on which were written the words: 'Music', 'Lovely Birthda, Nina!', 'Your Friends'

They were greatly surprised. Trina and Ripon (Nina's Mum and Papa) were thinking whether they would keep Music or not. But in the meantime Nina took Music in her arms and said, "Wow, this is the greatest birthday gift in my who — be life it. I like it!" "Nothing to worry about then," said Trina.

So Music with the help of the Toy Gang got a happy family. But what about Blackie? Will he take any attempt to attack Music? Well only time can make us know about that. Until then, "Three cheers for Toy Gang."



again. Come on, 'Toy Gang' — shouted Jim. They all hopped out of the window and slowly came to the Hen House. But there was no sign of the culprit. They were about to enter through the window and then again

and poor Carren alone kept on watching. Suddenly there was a shuffling noise. Carren got up and tiptoed towards the Hen House and saw Blackie, the neighbour's cat advancing towards the Hen House from the opposite direction. Carren

frightened but amazed Carren. She took him to Topsy, woke him up and returned to their room, through the window. Carren narrated the whole story, how the good dog saved her and the chickens from Blackie. Jim, Sarah, Billy,

Mountain kingdom Bhutan

Sehrish Khan Pompey

BHUTAN is a very small country. It is like a spot on the map of the world. The area of Bhutan is about 47,000 Sq kilometres. The population of Bhutan is about 1.4 million. It is bounded by India in the east, west and south and by China in the north.

Bhutan is a constitutional monarchy; the king is advised by the Assembly. India guides foreign policy; for the rest, Bhutan is an independent state. Their king's name is his Majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuk.

There are 18 districts in Bhutan. Phuntsholing is the most beautiful town of Bhutan. It is also the gate-way of Bhutan. Indians can travel in Bhutan without any passport or travel permit.

Among the people Nepalis are more in number than the Bhutanese. So are their languages — Dzongkha and Nepali. The main religions are Mahayana Buddhism and Hinduism. The national dresses of Bhutan are 'Kho' for man and 'Kyira' for woman. Their national flower is the Rhododendron, their national bird the partridge, and animal the Dragon.

The main food crops of Bhutan are rice and maize. Timber, fruits and silk are the

chief exports of Bhutan. The highest mountain of Bhutan is 'Khaulakangri' and the biggest river is 'Mangdechhu'.

The capital of Bhutan is Thimphu. Here snow falls continuously three months in the winter and the weather becomes so cold that schools and colleges remain closed for those months. Punakha is called the winter capital of Bhutan. At this time the people of the Royal Family stay in Punakha. There is an animal sanctuary in the outskirts of Punakha. There is a rare animal in that forest. It is a monkey. Its face is reddish and its whole body is covered with yellow fur. The monkey is a subject of great interest to the zoologists.

There is a beautiful valley in Paro. It is compared with the valleys of Switzerland. There is only one airport in Paro. The name of their plane is 'Druk-Air'. There is also a museum in Paro. It holds the history of the kings of Bhutan and many ancient things.

The main foods of the Bhutanese are rice, pork, imadaci (Chilly curry) and momo, one of their favorite dishes. Yak is also found here and they are fond of its meat. They say 'Chu' for water and 'thang' for road. When they meet, they offer 'Kuzuzambola'

to each other as our 'salam'. Bhutanese are very much fond of dogs. There are three kinds of dogs—Apsao, Dochi and Damshi.

They have only one newspaper named 'Kuensel'. They celebrate their king's happy birthday with pomp and grandeur for three days. Their main festival is 'losar'— means Buddha Purnima; they celebrate it like our 'Eid'.

Drinking is very much open in Bhutan. Each hotel, big or small has a bar in it.

The national day of Bhutan is on 17th December. Bhutanese Buddhist temples are called 'Gumpha'. Inside the gumpha, there are very big golden statues of Buddha, whom they worship. There are also tankas inside the gumphas, which are painted wall mats. These paintings signify the deep internal sayings of the Tibetan Buddhism. The Buddhist priests are called 'lama'; lamas keep their head bald and put on a reddish maroon robe. Lamas use prayer wheels for counting their prayers just as we use tasbeeh. 'Parma Sambha' is their most famous Lama.

Bhutan is our neighbour. Bhutan is also a member of the SAARC. We know very little about her. We should pay more attention to our neighbours.



STAR PROFILE



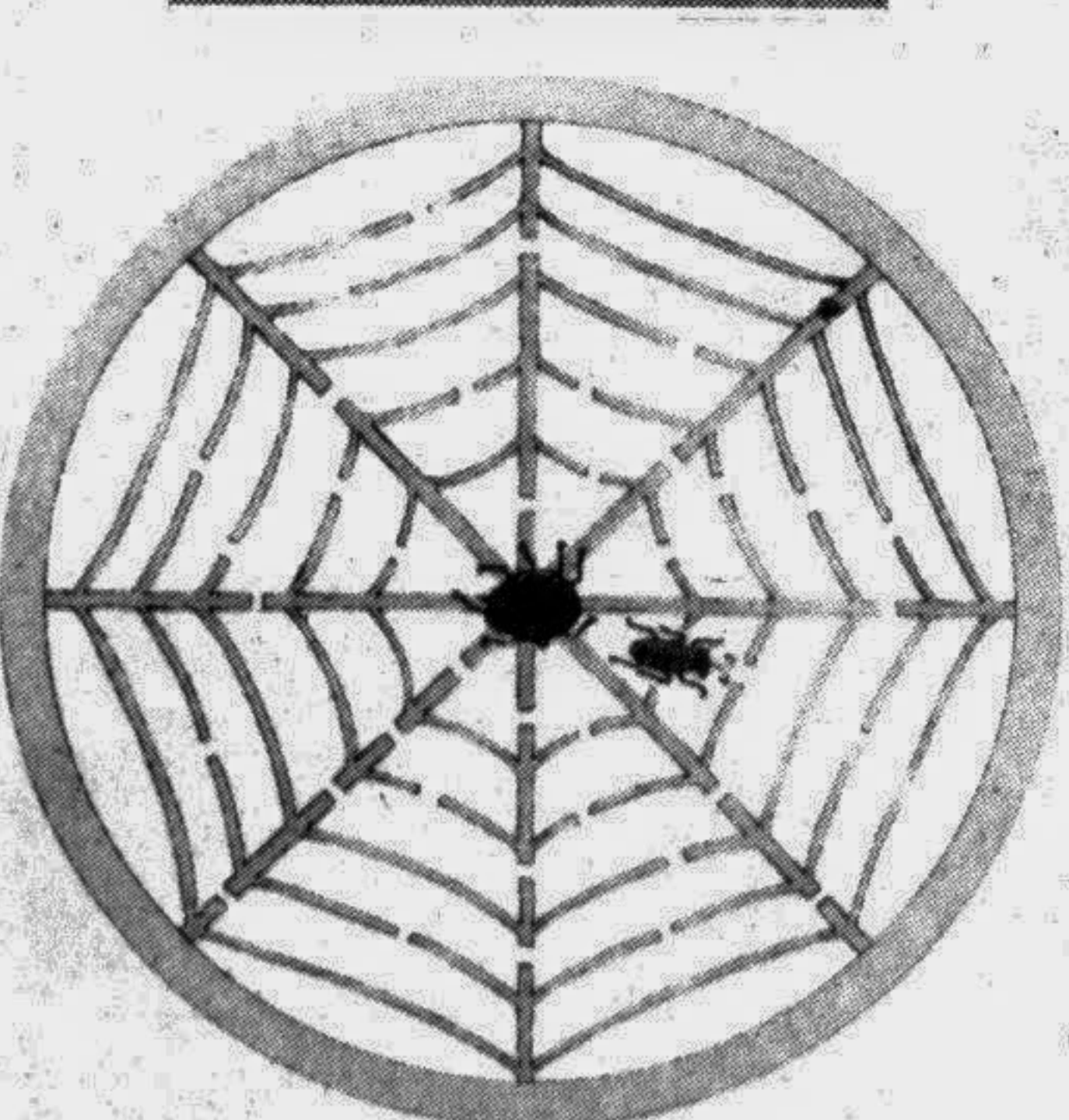
She was born in 1929, fourth of May. The Belgian-born actress shot to fame with her first major film 'Roman Holiday'. She won an academy award for her performance in 'Roman Holiday'. Among her most famous films were 'Breakfast at Tiffany's', 'Sabrina', 'Funny Face', and 'My Fair Lady'. She was suffering from colon cancer.

Bet you didn't know

PROBABLY the most amazing fact about the sky is its size. So get ready to read a lot of very, very big figures.

- In our part of the universe (called a galaxy) there are millions and millions of stars. But our galaxy is only one of at least 100,000 other galaxies that are as big or even bigger than ours.
- Astronomers measure the unbelievable enormous distances in space by what they call 'light-years'.
- The light from the moon, 238,857 miles away from the earth, reaches our eyes in about one and one-third seconds. The light from the sun (93,000,000 miles away) reaches the earth in about eight minutes.
- Stars look small because they are so far away. Actually, some of them are so large that their size cannot be imagined.
- Although the moon appears to shine, it has no light of its own. All its light is reflected from the sun.
- Five planets can be seen at night with the naked eye, but they are not always visible at the same time. They are Venus, Jupiter, Saturn, Mercury and Mars. The other planets are too far away and too small to be seen without a telescope.
- A 'shooting star' is not a star at all. It is a chunk of matter that is travelling through the atmosphere anywhere from ten to fifty miles a second. Its correct name is a 'meteor' while it is flying through the sky. If it lands on the earth it is called a 'meteorite'. Diamonds have been found in meteorites.
- A rainbow occurs when drops of rain, mist or spray split upright rays from the sun and reflect them.
- Lightning breaks between clouds and strikes upward as often as it strikes downward. Only one bolt in hundred hits the earth. Of course there is no truth in the old saying that "lightning never strikes twice in the same place". Lightning has struck the Empire State Building and other sky-scrapers many, many times — not only during different storms, but during the same storm.

Help the beetle find his way out of the web before the spider gets him.



JOKES

One day two male centipedes were standing in the street when a female centipede strolled past. One male centipede turned to the other and said: 'Now, there goes a nice pair of legs, pair of legs, pair of legs, pair of legs, pair of legs...' Angela's mother was looking in the mirror and plucking out the few grey hairs which she found in her head. 'Mummy, why do you have some grey hair?' inquired Angela. 'Probably because you're such a naughty girl and cause me so much worry.' 'Oh!' said Angela. 'You must have been a devil towards grandmother.'

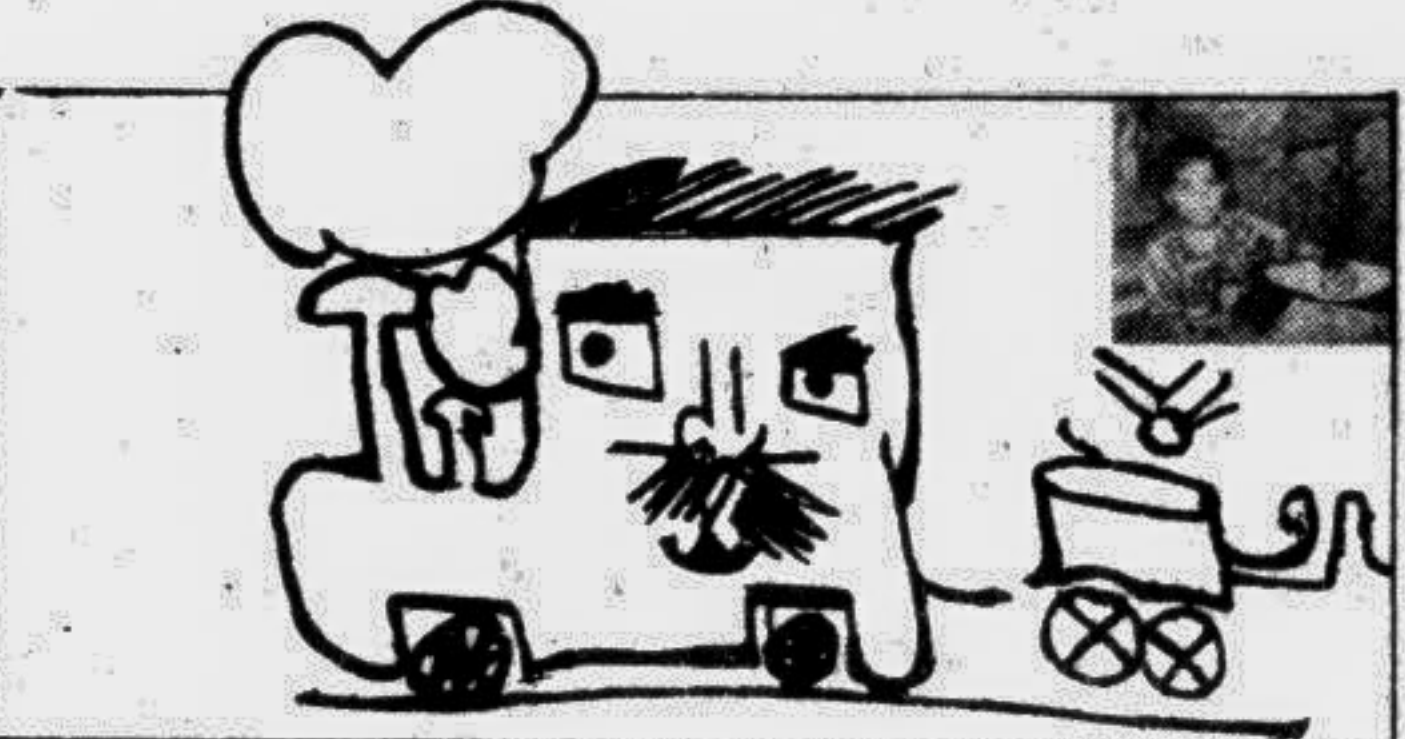
Little Fred came home from school after a particularly hard day and said to his mother: 'I wish I'd lived in olden days.' 'Why?' asked his mother, curious to know the reason. 'Because then I wouldn't have so much history to learn.'

Tommy found the old, abandoned family Bible in the attic and opened it to find a large leaf pressed between its heavy pages. 'Oh,' he said. 'Adam must have left his clothes here.'

A story from the slum

Mohammad Al Islam

EXACTLY seven years ago, my father came to Dhaka. We were very poor and my father came to Dhaka for a job. After a lot of searching, he got a job in a came shop for Tk 700. My life is still very difficult. My father is now a rickshawalla. I have three sisters, they all work in a garments factory.



They go to work, in the morning and come home around 10 in the night. And their earning is not enough for our family. My father has asthma, and we can't afford his medicines. This is the reason why my sisters work in the garments factory. I live near Shipahibag Comilla hotel. We don't always have running water. Before coming to school I want to take a shower, but there's always a big line for the bathroom. This is the situation here. I am ten years old. The name of my school is Bangladesh Na-i Progati Shanga. I read in class two. My elder sister has worked hard, so that I could go to school. I was sent to Shishu Adhikar Forum by Bangladesh Na-i Progati Shanga. And by being here, I realized that I have to study, draw pictures, write stories, and there are so many other things to do. And so I am very happy.

A new magazine called *Shishu Katha* is written and edited ENTIRELY by children. And not just any kids — these journalists are underprivileged kids from the slums and tenements of Dhaka. They do all the writing and editing, the only thing adults do is help with the printing. The Rising Stars will regularly carry stories from *Shishu Katha* so you can learn more about these spunky kids.

Oh My Sweet Country!

Oh my sweet country!
Oh my nice homeland!
I am only for you.
None can destroy you.

Oh my the Almighty!
Oh my the all-powerful!
Give me strength to protect her.
Give me ability to prosper.

Oh my lovely country!
Oh my wonderful land!
How nice you are!
I am happy to live here.

-Md. Zafar Barkat Rumi

Announcement

Ekushey Essay Competition

Get out your pens and paper, and get to work! The Rising Stars page is holding an essay contest for our young readers, the topic is 'How I feel about Ekushey February'.

To compete, you must be in the classes 9 to 12. The essay should be neatly written or typed, and be between 350 to 400 words long.

Please print your name, address, class and school or college on the upper left corner of the first page. We must receive your entry by February 15th.

You don't have to be a Rising Stars Club members to participate. The best entries will be published in our paper.

Send Messages!

The Rising Stars is pleased to announce that we are opening a new column for members only. You can send birthday greetings, good luck wishes, congratulations, or any short messages you want to your friends and classmates. We will print them in our *Just For You* column.

To send your messages through this column, you must be a member of the Rising Stars Club. You can send your messages to the Rising Stars Editor at the Daily Star. Please print CLEARLY, give your registration number, and the date on which you want the message to appear. Remember the page appears on Saturdays.

If your friend's birthday is on Wednesday, don't worry! Just add that date and send him/her an early greeting! Make sure your message reaches us at least 3 days before you want it to come out.

Our regular feature page Living will appear tomorrow (Monday).

Rising Stars will resume its regular appearance on Saturdays and Living on Sundays as of next week.

QUIZ CLUB

- 1) Where is the world's most biggest tomb, the Pyramids? How many men were employed and how many years did it take to complete the work?
 - 2) Name the seven new wonders of the world.
 - 3) What is the official crown of England?
 - 4) How many volts are the shocks of an Electric Eel in and out of water?
 - 5) Name the heads of four of the presidents of the United States carved in granite on top of Mount Rushmore.
 - 6) What is the earth's radius?
 - 7) Where is the Buddhist pilgrimage place?
 - 8) When did the World War I end?
 - 9) Who built the Suez Canal and when?
 - 10) Who invented the television?
- Answers to January 16th's Quiz Club:
1. Baitul Mukarram Mosque
 2. Louisiana
 3. Persians in the 7th century AD
 4. James Hargreaves in 1764
 5. December 16th, 1982
 6. Ronik O' Sullivan from England
 7. Jackie Joyner Kersee (US), Kevin Young (US) and Vitaly Scherbo (Ukraine)
 8. Mourning his son's death
 9. Hindustan Ambassador
 10. 14th January, 1990.