

LIVING

From Nine to Five

by Sylvia Saleem

give yourself six months in which to be miserable, just in case you are wrong and not they.

Apart from the offer of another and much better job it is only fair to discuss with your immediate superior your reasons for wanting to leave. Such a discussion might help iron out all kinds of difficulties and put your problem in a different light.

Consider carefully

After having given a job a good try and discussed any difficulties or frustrations with your boss, you may see no improvement and then it is wiser to look elsewhere. You are only wasting your time. If you find the environment alien and if you feel you are always doing great difficulties.

Changing your job

"He who risks nothing, has nothing", declares an old French proverb. All changes involve an element of risk, but during a period of economic stability it is foolish to hang on like grim death to a job you hate simply because you prefer the devil you know to the one you don't.

There are so many training schemes open to us all that, even if you have been engaged in one kind of work for some time, there is no reason why you should not try something completely different. You should be sure that:

(a) it is work for which you have a natural gift or inclination; (b) you understand fully that you may have to earn less for a while; (c) you work harder for a while; (d) you make the mental effort necessary to all changes in our basically conservative natures.

[The Women's Employment Federation is an organisation which exists purely to advise women on all aspects of work and the possibilities of training.]

Real kind of change requires real thought and a desire to train. Rolling stones who change jobs at a drop of a hat are a nuisance to any organisation and do themselves no good. After a certain amount of time they may become, virtually unemployable because they have not become trained to do anything really well and are too psychologically unstable to stay for long in any fixed environment. No firm likes this, because all changes of staff are expensive.

But if you are really miserable and it is your first or second job, no-one will hold it against you if you leave after six months. It is a good rule to

Formidable gentlemen in Savile Row suits, formidable ladies wearing owl glasses and expensive hats, all with strings of letters after their names; older, noisier, more pushing people than yourself. They can all be very frightening indeed. Respect them, admire them if they deserve it, obey them while you work for them, but never, never be afraid of them. They eat, sleep, worry, suffer and need to be liked just as you do. They are human beings. Unreasonable fear is a destructive thing. It can turn perfectly intelligent people into cringing morons. It can make really gifted people hide their light under a bushel. It prevents people from taking up opportunities, from trying to aim a little

to discuss a perfectly reasonable request.

Take a little time to think out exactly what you are going to say and your reasons for saying it. It may be about promotion, a rise in salary, a problem with your work. Never go above the head of your immediate superior. This is not only bad taste and disloyal but can make enemies all round and you may find that you are rather ignominiously returned to the right person to deal with your problem. If you do want to see the managing director, tell your immediate superior so that everything is above board.

Asking for a rise

Something which makes people restless and unhappy at work is because they think

badly; although this is no reason by itself for you to be given a rise it does explain to your boss that perhaps you must earn some more money or will have to look for a better paid job. He might prefer to raise your salary than lose you, but do not count on it!

Fear of getting the sack is another of those fears which seem to get hold of people and paralysed them into misery. Sometimes there is reasonable fear, but mostly it is a kind of ghost which arises from some basic insecurity. This is the time to do a little self-analysis. You should be able to tell yourself more or less if: (a) you are doing your job properly; (b) you are putting in the proper time, plus enthusiasm; (c) you are getting on with outside clients and with your colleagues. Firms demand different things from people. After you have worked a while with yours you should be able to decide whether or not you are giving them value for money.

Be absolutely honest with yourself and write down on a piece of paper the things you think you are doing well and in another column mark all the things at which you may fall short. You will probably find your fears are groundless. But if you do have a suspicion that you are not pulling your weight, make a supreme effort to improve as quickly as you can. Discussion of these fears with a friendly senior might also help to put your mind at rest, but be sure it is someone you can trust.

Your fears might arise from pure incompatibility of temperament with your superior. This is life. You just cannot like everyone or be liked by everyone. If you have really tried and it still seems not to work, then you must be philosophical and decide to find a job with someone else.

Being popular

As for the fears that some of your colleagues may not like you, just try to be as pleasant as possible and forget them. Relationships at work are quite different from, and even less demanding than, sharing a flat. Remember that most people want and need to be liked, so start out by trying to like them or at least behaving as if you do. Few can resist the charm of this approach. Be polite, obliging and kind to your colleagues and they will reciprocate better than you might imagine.

Finally, never consider a job as a mere stop-gap, to be performed half-heartedly, until you find something better or get married. You will be much happier if you follow the old adage that "what is worth doing at all is worth doing well". The sheer happiness of being really good at something is a joy which has to be experienced to be believed.

lives happy, peaceful or meaningful to this day, I believe.

I have a suggestion regarding recreation. Keeping a TV set at the house is enough for our entertainment. There is no necessity to keep a VCR set at home despite having a TV set. To meet the thirst for entertainment of our viewers, arrangements may be made for showing good and would famous movies on the BTB.

Video has diverted our people from correct morality. Both our family and social structures are now, I fear, in some ways to a point, on the brink of collapse due to rapid expansion of video in the country. Video is corrupting our society in some ways, in various homes.

Apart from some young men, presently, even many middle aged men are seen to be fascinated with 'adult' movies through VCR which is regrettable. Generally speaking, our present generation is 'being understand, seduced by the video.

Now the question comes as to how many libraries are there in our country to grow a reading habit among our people? Certainly, their number is very few as against the number of video shops. I think, throughout the country, we need a lot of libraries with a view to giving our people the opportunity of getting information about culture, art, religion, philosophy, science and other fields of knowledge. We can get a truly civilized nation by means of setting up more libraries in the country, and not by the expansion of video shops which is doing much harm to our nation than do any good. I have a question here to the readers what type of an how much entertainment do we need? It is time has come to think seriously.

It is high time that concerned authorities conducted an enquiry into the existing video shops, and check all the adult movies ones and thereby curtail the boom of video shops in the country.

The Uneasy Urchins

by Fayza Haq

ALONG the streets, lanes and allies of Dhaka child labour is rampant. Children from the age of 10 to 15 go in for such endeavours as selling peanuts, cigarettes and 'paan', polishing shoes and serving as coolies. If they are careless or committing any nuisance they are reportedly caught and hammered up or fined Tk 2 to Tk 15 and even locked up. Many of these starving mud covered and bedraggled children, with only a loin cloth on, have had the experience of being taken to the vagrant homes in Dhola and Pubali. Here reportedly, they are neglected and kept in over crowded houses in poor living and undernourishment.

The girls have even a worse fate than the boys. Many of the girls who have not reached puberty are pressed into immoral trafficking. The girls who serve as maids in the houses are poorly paid. They must wash and clean in as many as three different houses a day to get their square meals. They are seldom given any accommodation. Just a bowl of rice and a few scraps is generally their reward. Although young, they are often the means of support of their brothers and sisters and their widowed or divorced mother.

Lately is a nine years old girl with sun tanned, muddy, curly shoulder length hair. She wears threadbare rags with patches and holes in the form of a thirdhand pajama which she has bought for Taka 3. The shreds of the remnants of a frocks serves as a blouse which she obtained from the house where her mother worked. She has only another dirty and yellowing nicker and blouse which she clings to. Her father has been punished for a petty theft in the neighbourhood. Her mother, a divorcee, gets Tk 300 a month as a maid, which she finds better than selling wood in the village or working at the 'dheki', husking paddy. "I used to sell wood for 50 paises for a big bundle in the village and from this I could not get even a quarter seer of rice. I was advised by my relatives to come to Dhaka and to work here. On reaching Dhaka, however, I was often caught and sent to the vagrant home in Dhola," Laily narrates.

"You are given only boiled 'kochu' and 'data'. There is no rice. You are served 'roti' without salt. There is no connection with the family. The children are separated from the parents and the brothers from the sisters. They keep us in congested mud floors. There are no windows in the rooms. The doors are locked from the outside. One ends up with dysentery and skin trouble living under these conditions", she complains.

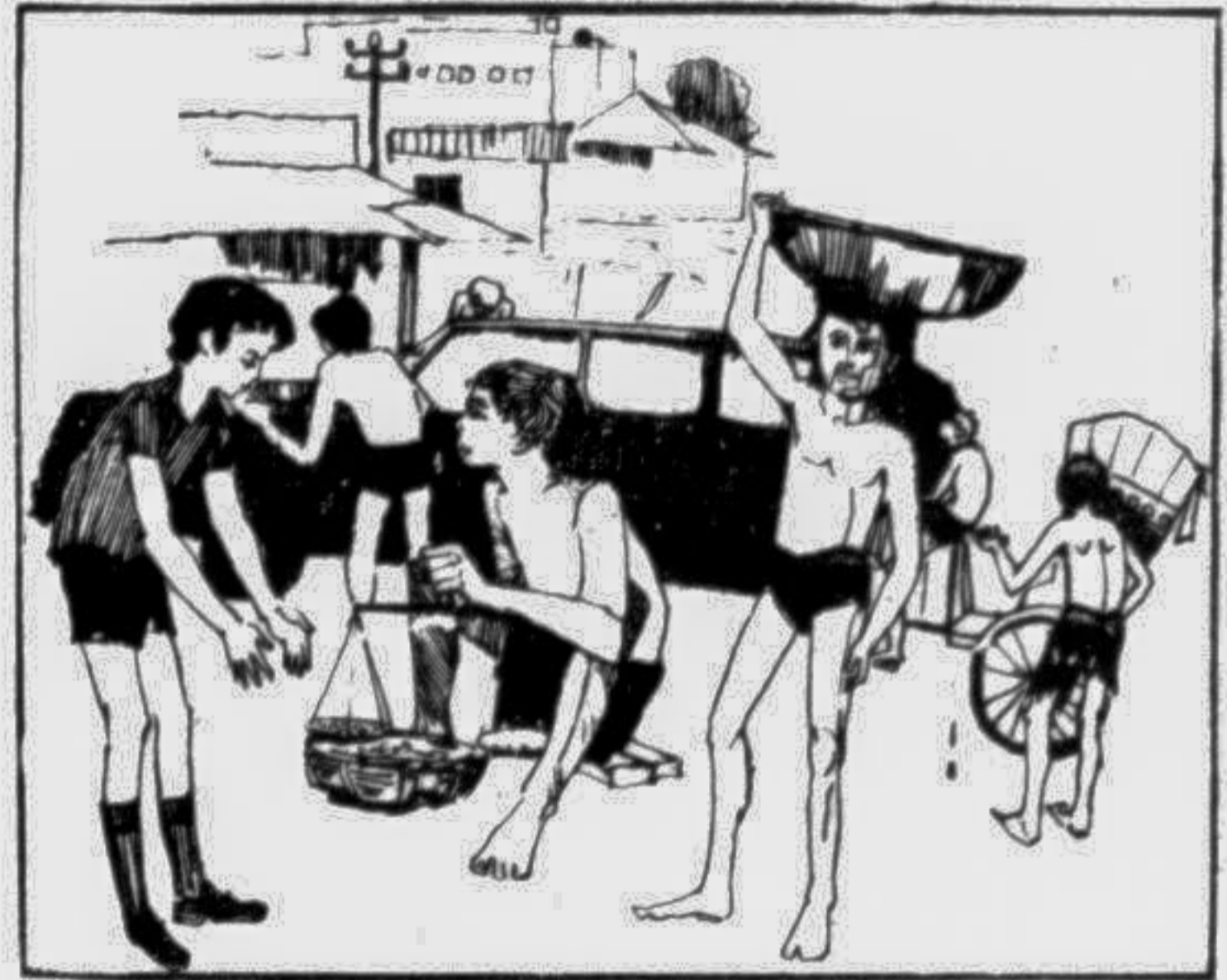
"I have washed dishes and ground spice for three years in the residential colonies. I have never been given any clothes or shelter. Apart from this, never get any money. I'm paid with some rice and 'daal' once a day so that I must work in three houses everyday. If I can't work due to ill health I must beg for 'phen' from the kitchen," she narrates sadly. Amina who is 13 looks so em-

ciated and tired out that she appears only seven years old. She has dirty knotted hair and mud splattered hands and legs. She reports of being harassed by "goondas" who want cheap women. Wearing a tattered blouse and loin cloth she narrates with downcast looks in her pensive eyes that she has been used like other women in the streets although her body is like that of a child and she has not yet reached puberty. "These people know all about having periods, getting pregnant, and many other things before their puberty," narrates a social worker, who helps educate and distribute food and clothes on a charity basis among the vagrants.

"I came to Dhaka three years

Abdul Karim a 15 year old from Faridpur who is in Dhaka for a few months now says, "People gave me the impression that if you go to Dhaka, there are good jobs to be had very easily. I have looked for domestic work at Hatkhola, Arambagh, Fokirapool and Kamalapur, but as I have no guardian to stand security people are afraid to employ me as they fear that I will steal and run away. One can sell peanuts or cigarettes or even do boot-polish work in parks and at bus stands, railway stations and near cinema halls. But if I earn Tk 30 a day, this automatically goes to appearing the darawans so that I am left with nothing.

As a 'coolie' there is a lot of competition so that I earn only Tk 40 a day. I could



ago when a seer of rice sold at Tk 10. My father died of small pox. I came with my uncle who had to return to our village Nandini as he could find no other job but that of cutting paddy in areas far from the city and this did not pay much. While I have sold wood in the cold and wet weather at home, here I have to often beg for 'gruel', she says. The middle class families have about three children on the average and can employ only one servant. The wandering urchins who wash and wipe are not paid even Tk 10 per month. "One is paid not according to the capacity of work but according to one's size. Thus the older maid is paid as much as Taka 250 a month while we are only given left overs of the kitchen," Amina narrates.

Fatima is so thin and stunted that she looks six although she is 10 years old. She has often begged with stories of a sick and old father and starvation at home. She has no mother and has a step-mother who treats her brutality while her father could not be bothered as he has children by the second marriage to fend for.

"My father has had a major operation in the stomach and he cannot work much, as it is, I can cook and clean and look after a child. I can cook simple 'daal-bhat'. But I'm afraid to go to work leaving the shelter where I live for fear of being caught by the police and sent to Dhola where they starve you and lock you up", Fatima comments about herself.

Living at Kalabagan, 15-year old Bablu can get no other job. Before, while living in Naya Paltan, he has done whitewashing. His father spreads insecticides on the roads. He has elder brothers, who have tried to get jobs in mills nearby but in vain.

Moreover the pay did not cover the transport cost to and from work.

Cheated by rogues and underpaid by the middle class employers, the half-clad children on the road carry on an existence which is admirably for its independence and consistency.

They do not easily give way to the frequent rounding up by the social workers and police and continue to peddle their wares even on holidays. Yes, there are delinquents and lazy ones, but too many appear just overworked and neglected which is heart rendering considering their youth and apparent innocence. Surely they deserve a better existence and brighter prospects.



something wrong you are destroying your self-confidence by continuing to be wrong or to be thought wrong. There are, of course, periods of frustration and sterility in all jobs, but these should not be allowed to last too long. Although most jobs carry a definite period of notice from one week to one month, it is fairer to be civilised and discuss the most convenient time for you to leave so as to cause as little disruption as possible. If a wonderful job comes up and you have to take it on at a certain date or lose it, any humane boss will understand if you explain the reason, but consideration always pays, even if you feel you hate the sight of them all and could not care less. You never know where you might meet them again!

higher and from finding out if they have any talent for a particular job or calling. Fear should be dropped right to the bottom of the nearest lake. This may seem easier said than done. But a little sitting down and thinking helps. All superiors have duties towards their juniors. All people in charge of an organisation should be looking for the brightest and best among those who work for them, otherwise they are not worth their salaries. No immediate superior should mind being asked to spare a little time to consider the problem of a junior. In fact it is one of their duties. So long as you are not being a nuisance and taking up too much time or creating a mountain out of a molehill, they will not, or certainly should not, refuse to see you or

they are underpaid, but they would rather die than ask for a rise or discuss their work in terms of money. As 99 per cent of those who work do so principally because they need money in order to live, salaries are obviously an important part of any job. No-one can object because you want to find out what possibility there is of earning more. Discuss the situation but never resort to the kind of blackmail which intimates that other firms are dying to employ you at a higher salary. You may find that you are politely put out of a job with nowhere to go. You are perfectly within your rights to say that you think you should be earning more money because: (a) you have not had a rise for a long time; (b) you think that you deserve it (explain why); (c) you need it

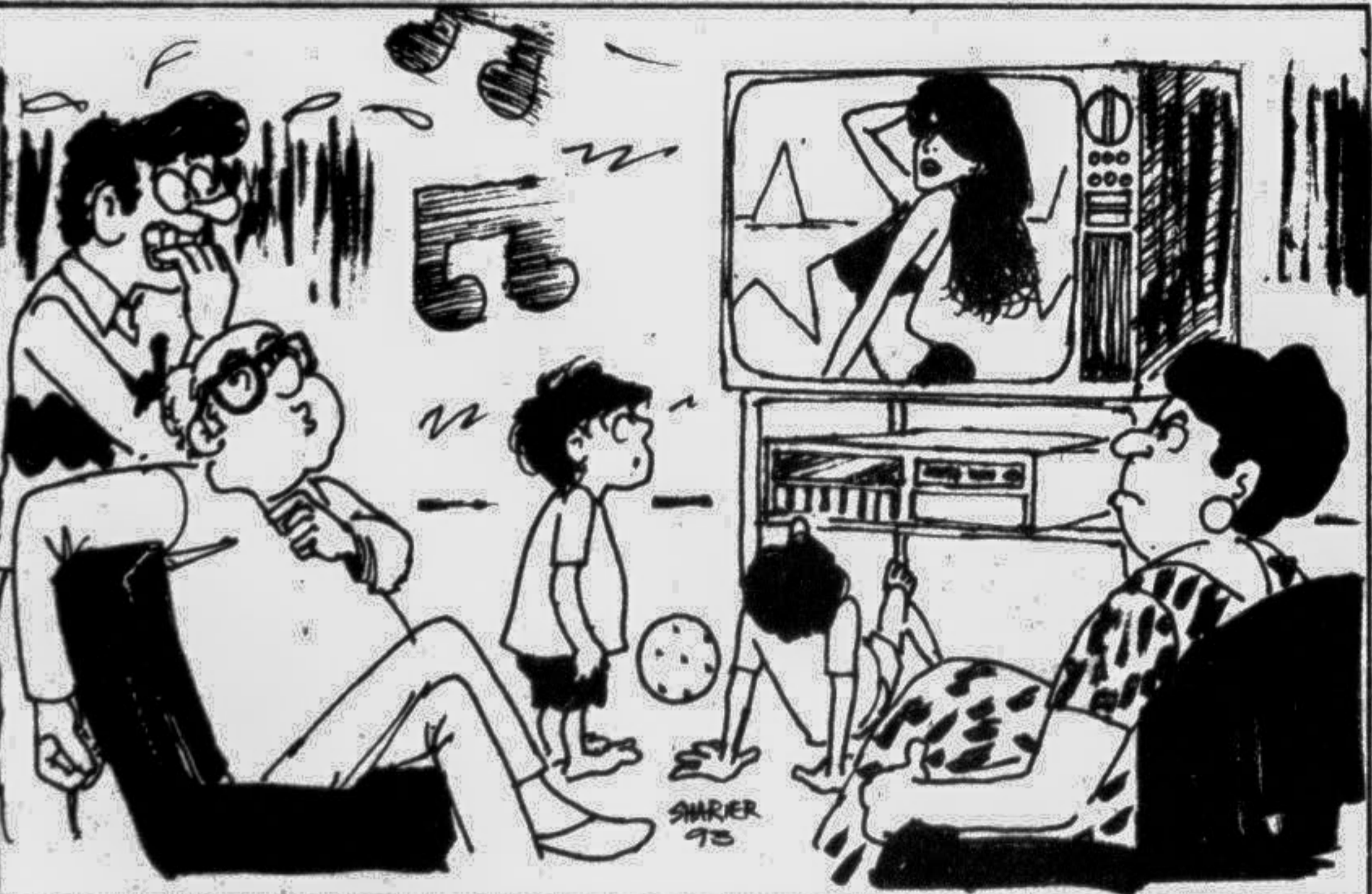
Is Video a Curse or a Boon?

by M Delowar Hossain

"The Naked Cell", "Bolero", and "My Tutor", "Summer Treat", "Kiss the Night", "Calligula and Rasaluna", "Doctors Wives", "Stroke of Midnight", "Blind Vision", "The Object of Beauty", "Savage Sisters", "Women's Mobile Van", and so on. These are movies are bound to demoralize our youth. The named of such types of movies are still seen in the

will to one and sundry? The above questions need answering on the part of the appropriate authority entrusted with the responsibility of supervision of video shops in the country. I feel pained when I come across a room where parents, along with their young sons and daughters, enjoy a Hindi film whose most scenes re-

our youth from possible ruination. It is an open secret that exhibition of blue films is often encouraged in many places in the country by a section of people. They carry this illegal business under the very nose of the authorities. To stop this illegal and anti-social activities, in the name of entertainment, is the pressing need of the country.



pages of the weeklies. Besides, almost many English films have some exciting aspects which are also harmful for the younger generation. Now a question arises as to how these adult movies video cassettes enter our country, and subsequently the video shops, and then these are then rented out to the video movies viewers. Another question is, are the video shops owners entitled to keep adult movies in the shops and rent them at

main full of objectionable images. Truly speaking, it is beneath the dignity of parents to watch such questionable films together with their children. Moreover, in most cases, boys enjoy adult movies through VCR in the residence without the knowledge of their parents, and thus are gradually spoilt in the growing stage of their lives which is lamentable. What is the use of keeping a VCR set in the house? It needs to be thought seriously to save

Our social atmosphere must be kept free from all types of questionable video cassettes business. We should follow our own culture and enrich it with more effects and cares, and not by blindly following western culture. We should bear in mind that western societies, in spite of making enormous progress in superior knowledge, science and technology and enjoying the taste of improved living standard have not been able to make their

COOKERY

Broiled Steak

Grilling steak 2 tablespoonfuls at least melted butter 1 in. thick (allow 1/2 lb. per person) Salt and pepper

First get the grill really hot so that the met is seared quickly, or it may be tough and dry. Grease the meat rack and brush steak lightly with melted butter. If steak is 1-1/2 in. thick, it should be about 2 in. below the heat.

Allow 7-8 minutes for a rare red steak; 8-9 minutes for medium done, and 10-12 minutes for well-done steak, if meat is 1 in. thick. For 1 1/2 in. meat, allow 8-9 minutes for rare steak; 10-12 medium, and 12-15 well done.

Turn meat, seasoning with salt and pepper to taste, when half cooking time is completed.

Corned Beef Hash (for 4)

2 cupfuls corned beef Fat chopped into cubes 3 cupfuls cold cooked potatoes, chopped 3 tablespoonfuls 1 finely chopped 1/2 cupful milk 1/2 onion Salt and pepper

Mix together corned beef, potatoes, onion and milk. Season with salt and pepper. Melt fat and cook mixture until well browned, turning frequently.



Nonie Tao MTV VJ