

# LIVING

## Patronising Painters with Open Arms

by Fayza Haq

**T**HE Ambassador of France, Mr Jean-Michel Lacombe, and his wife Madame Mariam Lacombe, had held an exhibition of three reputed artists Jamal Ahmed, Khalid Mahmud Mithu and Kanak Champa Chakma at their residence.

Mr Lacombe, giving his reasons for holding the exhibition, said, "Since I arrived in Bangladesh I found that there is lot in common between Bangladesh and France. As I am here to improve the relationship between the countries, I had an exhibition in a rich heritage," he elaborated.

He continued "Jamal, Mithu and Kanak are well-known in France and I have known them before coming to Dhaka as they have been well-acquainted with the Paris art lovers for several years. Shahbuddin has been making a living for ten years. Jamal has been to Paris several times. I sent Ifthikaruddin Ahmed two months ago, and I am well acquainted with La Grande Chaumiere which has been a training school for painters of

French luxury industry. Big French firms like Cartier, Dior and Chanel have contributed to this. This is to promote French culture, and the money will be given to an orphanage. Prices will depend on the bidding of the auction. I had arranged for the 45,000 francs, which we got from the performance of the "5 O'clock Jazz Band" which played in Dhaka, to also go to an orphanage. We plan to have Menie Gregoir, a well-known journalist who has helped change French soci-

ety's attitude to women in the 70's, to come and give a lecture at the Alliance Francaise.

At the day long exhibit, one could see Kanak Champa's "Red Cloth" with a girl sitting down in a traditional red "khadi", and a yellow "lungi". The sky and river at the background in white and grey, were an ideal setting for the subject.

In "Carrying Water" one found a girl returning from the river with a vessel on her hips, in a red "lungi" and a blue blouse. The artist had used grey, green white and mauve for her delicate composition.

"Besides Karnaphuli Lake", presented a woman ready to have her bath, with her clothes and traditional jewellery

spread around. Once again the bright colours of the Chakma people had been highlighted. In "Dreamy" a girl was depicted as walking in a deep forest. There were soft delicate washes and highlights as in all her other paintings.

"The Rhythm of Ranganmati" showed the idyllic mountains and stream of Chitragong again. It had a figure against the grey mountain the white sky, and the orange-and-blue plane.

In Mithu's "Music" was a "dotara", the well-known folk instrument, with a tambourine in front. At the back was a writing that said "Practice of music should be done in time." Grey and beige had been used with texture work in brown and black.

His "Boat Race" depicted two boats racing against each other. What caught one's eyes were the multicoloured clothes of the people along with the drummer working away frantically. The waves were beautifully delineated in strokes of grey and white, with the sky nearly merging with the water.

Mithu's "Baul" brought in two drummers and a stringed instrument player. There was an inscription to be found in this painting too, and this urged the people to begin a new life. The figures were dark and stood out against the partially pale background. The tone work in all the three paintings was admirable.

In Jamal's depiction of boats, fishermen, river and riverside, the artist had dark brown people with idyllic depiction of nature. Fishermen's nets were highlighted just as were the ripples on the water. The paintings were mostly grey, beige and white, with touches of green and red where the figures came in. He had also painted people hurrying to take shelter after a storm on another canvas.

He had delineated ranges of boats too with people in them in his works. Although all Jamal's works were impressionistic yet one could feel the immediacy of his subjects and forms. He had often used dark shades but there was an air of optimism in all his paintings.

The exhibition of the works of the three young painters was an instant success. It is not often that artists are encouraged by dignitaries in the manner Mr and Mrs Jean-Michel Lacombe had patronised them with open arms.



The French Ambassador Mr. Jean-Michel Lacombe seen with his wife, the three artists and a guest

France in the Paris Town Hall and one at my residence."

"Bangladeshis are great poets but it is difficult to translate poetry. Painting, however is a universal language. My wife Mariam studied art, and this helps me in dealing with artists," he stressed.

"Often Bangladeshis express doubt about the future of their country. I think one good thing I can do is to make them proud quite rightly of their present artists. This is why I am also having archaeological cooperation in Mahasthangarh. The French come as a team of ten, who arrive in winter and go in summer. They have been doing this for several years. The excavation is to prove to the world that Bangladesh has centuries. Even Picasso, Van Gogh and Utrillo went there."

"For me to come to Bangladesh is a home coming," Mr Lacombe added. "I have been brought up in Calcutta and Darjeeling, as my father was in the foreign service, and I have got used to the life style in this part of the Sub-continent. My first posting was in New Delhi in '71, a special year for Bangladesh. I am quite at home with the culture. I don't speak Bangla but I am acquainted with Hindustani. I understand a lot of Bangla words with Sanskrit origin. It is almost a year since I came in December."

Mr Lacombe proceeded to talk about the future. "My next venture will be an auction sale

## Keeping Children Fit

by Sylvia Saleem

**D**RESSED strictly in accordance with the weather, children should be able to enjoy their activities without being too conscious of their clothes.

Pretty dresses and smart suits are fine for visiting or for special occasions, but for play, children should be allowed to get dirty and be suitably clad for it. Tough material such as denim is most practical for trousers and stands up to frequent washing.

Winter clothes must be windproof; this may mean lining knitted garments. On the other hand, take care your children are not over-clothed. Too many layers restrict their movements so that they cannot keep naturally warm.

Synthetic fibres are a blessing for busy mothers for their good looks and their easy laundering, but the non-porous ones are unsuitable for wear next to the skin. Wool is still the warmest and cotton the coolest material, especially for the very young.

Never allow trailing clothes that could catch fire. This means pyjamas for both boys and girls and flame-proof net for little girls' party dresses.

Care of young feet is vital in preventing foot troubles in later life, so see that both socks and shoes fit comfortably. When buying new shoes, insist that both the feet are measured and check frequently for length and width.

**Care of the Eyes**

A child's eyes are wonderfully flexible. But when they are inflamed, when he complains of headaches or is blinking excessively, when he screws up his eyes to look closely or holds his book too near his nose, he may be suffering from eyestrain and he certainly needs a doctor's attention.

The experts agree that television viewing within reason is all right for children, provided they sit at least six feet away, with their eyes on a level with the screen, and that the picture is steady and not flickering.

**Guard Those Teeth**

The popular snack foods are the great menace to teeth, particularly when newly erupted. Sugar and foods containing sugar — sweets, fizzy drinks, biscuits, chocolates, and lollies — are the chief offenders.

Dental decay is caused by germs acting upon food remnants lying around and between the teeth. Crisp, natural foods — apples, celery, or carrot — to round off each meal reduce the risk of decay by removing food particles.

Do not allow endless nib-

bling of sweets, and make a strict rule not to allow any food or drink once the children have cleaned their teeth in the evening.

Join in with the daily teeth-cleaning drill, morning and evening, so that they will be less inclined to dodge it, and teach them to brush up and down, not across. See that they all

meal, brown bread, raw fruit, vegetables and butter will keep the bowels healthily regular. Remember the importance of plenty to drink — too little fluid is one of the chief causes of constipation.

**Growing Up**

Somewhere between the ages of nine and eleven a girl has a

way many years ago by answering the toddler's first questions about babies, leaving the door open for further discussion as the need arose.

**Preventing Infection**

Many of the common infections — coughs, colds, sore throats, measles and mumps — are spread by droplets, so to avoid infection the only way is to keep your children away from them, particularly those children, under two.

Bowel infections, including food poisoning, are usually due to transmission of infection from the bowel or from a septic place to the food by way of the hands. A few infections, possibly polio included, are carried by flies.

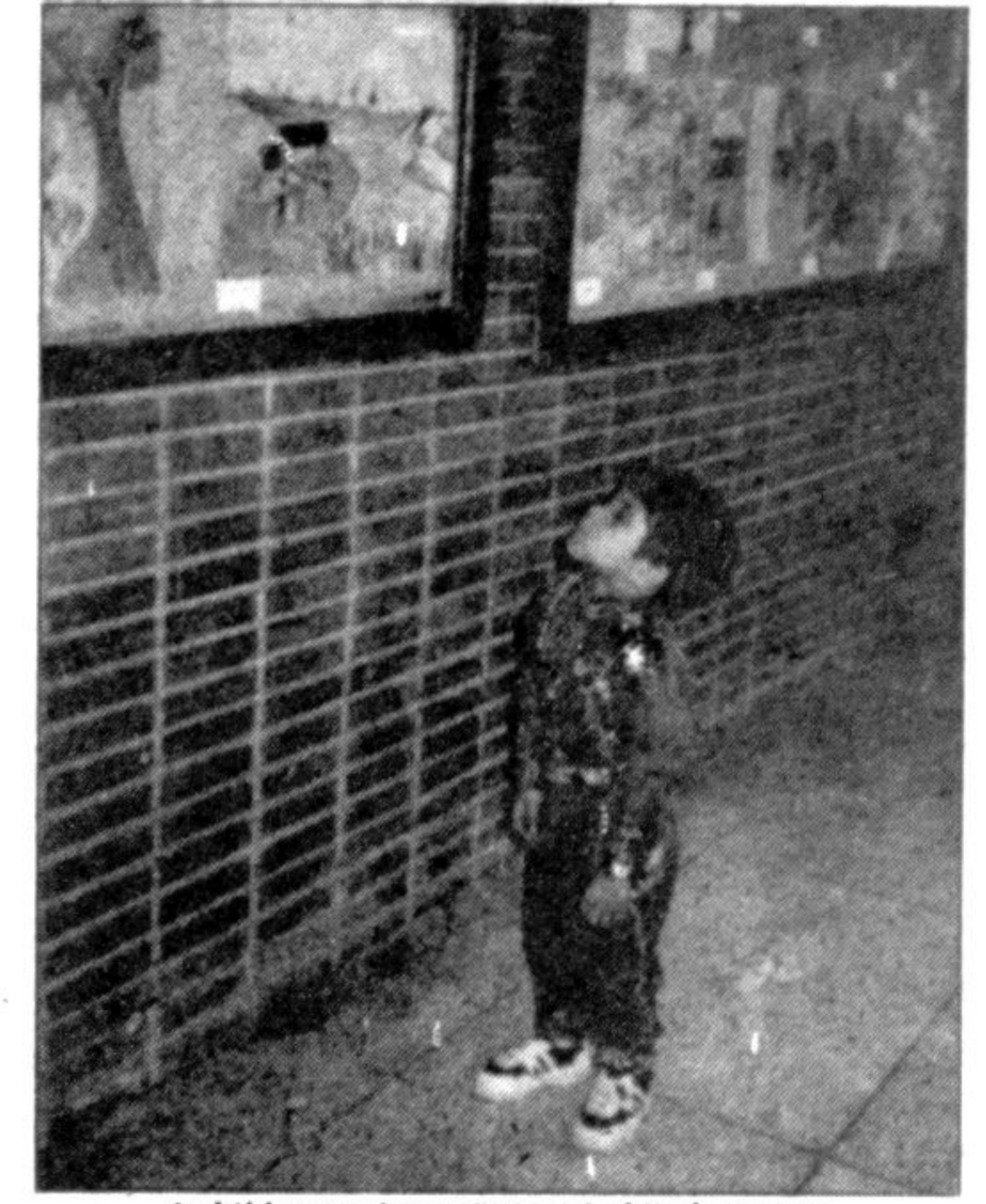
Every care must therefore be taken to keep all food covered so that flies cannot get at it — and preferably in a refrigerator — to wash your hands thoroughly after using the toilet and before meals or preparing food, and to keep any septic place on the skin covered up. Of course, hand-washing after using the toilet and before meals should be the rule for all the family.

Fortunately many of the common infectious diseases are mild, and there is a lot to be said for getting them over before the age of seven or so, when they are less upsetting and produce less interruption in school work than they would in later years. This applies to chicken pox, German measles (particularly in girls before the child-bearing period) and mumps (particularly in boys before puberty).

Measles is less mild and, since children under two are especially vulnerable, they should be kept away from infection as far as possible. Inoculation against measles is available, but its efficacy (and after-effects) have not been fully tested, and some doctors advise against it. On the other hand, inoculations do protect against diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, polio, and smallpox, and parents should ensure that their children have these inoculations in infancy.

Booster doses for diphtheria and tetanus are given at school age, and a fourth dose of polio vaccine between five and eleven; it is now recommended that before leaving school all children who are susceptible to tuberculosis — proved by a Mantoux test — should be given the protection of BCG vaccination.

This sounds a large number of injections, and you naturally do not want your child to become a sort of pin cushion! But these are killing diseases, and inoculation means protection for your family.



A child surveying paintings in his class-room

rapid spurt of growth. She becomes taller and heavier and more womanly. Her breasts develop, her hips widen and hair appears in the pubic region and the armpits. A year or two later, she has her first monthly period. This is usually between eleven and thirteen, but can be as early as nine or as late as seventeen.

Boys are usually about two years behind girls in puberty development. Their spurt of growth usually starts at about thirteen, accompanied by the appearance of hair on the body and enlargement of the sexual organs. Then comes the scaling of the voice and growth of beard. You will, of course, prepare your sons as well as your daughters for these changes. Indeed, you probably paved the

visit the dentist at six-monthly intervals from three years upwards.

**Regular Habits**

Most children develop a regular bowel habit quite naturally some time before their first birthday. If you make it easy for them to visit the toilet at the same time each day, this regularity will persist. They may miss a day now and again, but this need not upset them so long as you are casual about it. A child should scarcely be aware of his bowels.

In some children, just as in adults, the bowels move only every other or every third day, but this is not constipation, so long as the motion when it comes is soft and easy to pass.

A varied diet, including out-

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## The Fun of Carpenters

by Parveen Anam

**W**E still like to think that everything we use around the house, in the form of furniture, is custom made, i.e. by a little man, hammering away for days on end with arcane tools which at times give the impression of having been distinctly left over from the days of the dinosaurs!

Of course, we can always walk into a little furniture shop and order what we need, to be delivered on a certain date, if we are lucky. Otherwise, happily to be at our doorstep about a couple of years from date of order by which time not only have we forgotten what we had ordered for but also hope it is not hopelessly messed up.

what your son had wanted for his tenth birthday, and had been denied him by an automatic father.

The hazards of the art of the carpenter are actually quite numerous. Here you are, home from a trip to the art gallery, clutching under your arm the latest on the art front and full of visions of a home transformed into a mini Louvre. You call your trusty Man Friday, to go across to the store, or the hut more likely, where the neighbourhood carpenter lives, to come over at a suitable time, to put up your painting purchases.

Catching hold of the chap is of course quite another story. He is never in. Either he is away on a project or is in his village home. The carpenters must be the only fellows around, who are always employed. The one trick I know for a fact which they use very frequently, is to take up simultaneous jobs with at least seven different households at the same time. Two days here, one and a half day there, half a day at the third place and so on. Unfortunately for him, time can only be stretched that much and no more. So he has you hopping mad, as he puts in an appearance for a couple of days, and then vanishes for four more, to reappear with a non-chalant expression with some story of a sick great-great-grandfather who absolutely had no chances of survival, without his tender and loving care.

However, once he is there, you want him to start his task of hanging up the paintings and then your agony really begins. By the time he is finished, you are absolutely convinced, that either he is squint eyed or you need to see the eye doctor. For not only does he have the pictures upside down, he also has them wrong side out. And to add insult to your injury, one is hanging at a height of about eight feet from the floor, so that you need a ladder to go up there to see what it's all about or you need to bend to the level of a one year old, to see your favourite painting. Life suddenly seems complicated. Because

It is no secret that what we eat affects the way we look and feel, and that food is essential for a healthy life. Food is the fuel the body uses to give us energy and keep our bodies functioning efficiently. It also provides the building blocks for the growth and repair of tissues.

**Know your nutrients**

The main nutrients that must be included in the daily diet are proteins, carbohydrates, fats, fibre, and salt. In addition, a certain amount of vitamins and minerals are needed for the body to function efficiently.

Protein is vital for the growth, repair and replacement of tissues. It can be found in large quantities in animal products, such as meat, poultry, and dairy products, and in smaller quantities in fruits and vegetables, cereals and grains.

Carbohydrates provide energy for the body. They are found in starches and sugars. Not all carbohydrates are the same in terms of health; re-

## Eating for Health

fined, or sugary, carbohydrates should be avoided while the amount of complex, or starchy, carbohydrates should be increased in most people's diet.

Fat, which is the highest energy food, provides fatty acids that are essential to the body's metabolism, but some fats are better than others. A healthy diet should be low in saturated fats, which are primarily found in red meat and dairy products. Monounsaturated fats, have little effect on the health while polyunsaturated fats appear to have a beneficial effect.

Fibre is important because it aids proper digestion and bowel action and may reduce the tendency to intestinal and bowel disorders. All dietary fibre comes from plant products, such as fruits and vegetables, cereals and grains; it is not found in animal or dairy products.

Salt, or sodium, is essential to life to regulate body fluids. The average person eats about 10 times more than is necessary, and too much salt can lead to high blood pressure in certain people.

Vitamins are chemicals that help regulate metabolism and convert carbohydrates and fat into energy. The body can store excess amounts of some vitamins but others, such as vitamin C, are not stored in the body and must be replaced daily. Minerals are essential for regulating body fluids and the balance of chemicals within the body.

They are found in both plant and animal products. Both vitamins and minerals are found in a wide variety of foods, and if you eat a well-balanced diet you should not need any supplements.

**Proteins**

Proteins are needed for the growth, repair and replacement of body tissues. They are found in pulses and cereals as well as in meat, fish and in dairy products.

Try to avoid eating too much beef, lamb, and pork, which have high fat contents. Instead eat fish, poultry, and vegetable protein sources such as nuts and grains.

**Fats**

Fats are a concentrated source of energy that provide more calories than any other food. Saturated fats are found mainly in animal products, dairy products and eggs. Monounsaturated fats are most commonly found in poultry, margarine and olive oil. Polyunsaturated fats are found in fish, corn and safflower oil.

**Carbohydrates**

Carbohydrates are a major source of energy but eaten in excess they are stored in the body as fat. They are available as natural sugars and starches present in cereals, grains and root vegetables. Eat unrefined products such as wholemeal bread and brown rice, and green and yellow vegetables and potatoes.

**Fibre**

Fibre is the indigestible residue of plant products that passes through the digestive system unabsorbed. While fibre contains no energy value or nutrients it is important for a healthy bowel action and adds bulk to the faeces. It is also thought to help protect against some forms of heart disease.

**A balanced diet**

There has been much discussion and debate about the balance of protein, fats and carbohydrates that is needed for a healthy diet. It is now thought that 60 per cent of your daily calories should be obtained from complex carbohydrates (those from starches rather than sugars), another 20-25 per cent of your calories should be obtained from fats, and 15-20 per cent of your total daily calorie intake from proteins.

Most foods provide more than one nutrient, so eating a varied diet will ensure that you



Prabha Sinha and Surendra Pal in "Saaya"



Arpana Sharma and Shibani Vazir in "Khoobsurat"



Autumn fashion. Courtesy: "Anokhi"