

LIVING

WHEN you enter someone's house for the very first time, the element that is bound to draw your attention is the interior decor of the house and when it comes to decorating one's house the main element is most definitely the furniture.

Brighten up Your Home with the Right Furniture

by Lavina Ambreen Ahmed

An individual's personality reflects in his/her home i.e. — the arrangement of the furniture, the colour coordination of the furniture with other things. All these little details collectively helps one to figure out what a person is like.

Looking back into history, one will find that the need for furniture was realized during the world's oldest civilizations. The ancient Greeks, the mysterious Egyptians, the Roman Empire, the grand English royals and not to mention the illustrious Mughals and maharajas took a great deal of trouble and care in designing their furniture and making them unique and original.

Now furniture is not as decorative as they were once upon a time, rather, has become more simple and practical, adapting well with today's life style.

Furniture can be made out of wood, steel, wrought iron, cane, plastic and other materials. There are many furniture shops throughout our metropolises, catering to the customers' demands.

In Elephant Road alone, there are quite a few furnishees like, "Antique" and "Evergreen". These shops offer a wide range of designs. Prices of the furniture depends on the quality, size, design and also the originality of each piece, say, for example, a table set, complete with six to twelve chairs might cost anything from Tk 5000 — Tk 100,000. Same go for sofa sets, a single table costs Tk 2500—Tk 15000 and a single chair is about Tk 300 —Tk 1200. The price of beds ranges from Tk 5000-Tk 20,000, depending on whether it is a single or a double bed. Wardrobes, cupboards, chest of drawers costs about Tk 12,000-Tk 30,000 or more and wall units,

side boards can be bought within the Tk 2200-Tk 50,000. A dressing table will cost Tk 5000 —Tk 20,000.

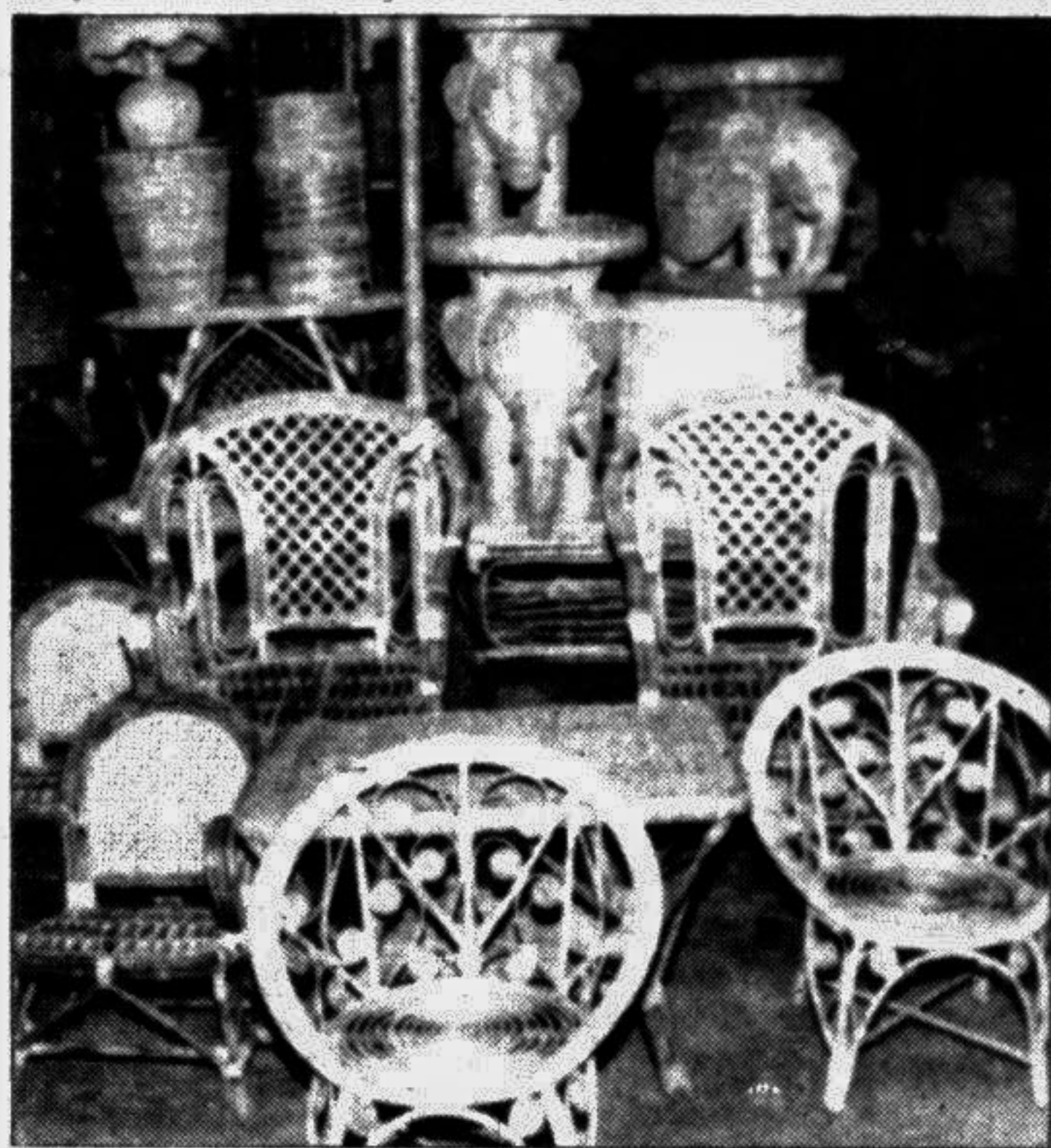
Another place, which is popular for furniture shopping is Gulshan Market No. 1, "Royal," "Shahnewaj" and

other Walt Disney cartoon characters painted on them, beautiful wall units, book shelves of various sizes, racks, kitchen cabinets, wall hangers, trolleys, glass tables and lamp stands. Whatever you want, you'll find it there. But as the

convenient for business, but, the shop offers one a vast array of furniture, which are chic, plain and at the same time trendy. From richly varnished wooden pieces like beds, tables, chairs, sofa sets, wall units, shelves, wardrobes, dressing tables, mirrors to even trays, candle stands, flower pots, small wall hanging devices. A lot of time, imagination, and hardwork goes behind each and every piece of furniture among all their items, a hexagonal golden-brown varnished table, a glass table standing on six exquisitely carved wooden wheels, oval shaped Victorian mirrors, regal sofa sets, simple yet elegant chairs and trays and flower pots bearing delicate wood carved designs are a few of their specialties. The only problem is, that the furniture available there are a little on the expensive side, but considering the intricate patterns and skilled labour the price might seem quite reasonable enough to some.

For those of you, who by now, have given up the idea of buying furniture because of the cost and probably contemplating on taking up carpentry as a serious hobby, read on, there is good news for you. There are some shops over at Neelkhet, opposite of the Neelkhet High School, where one can get reasonably good furniture at a bargain price i.e. beds at Tk 2200-4000; wall units at Tk 3000-8000; table Tk 1800-4000; chair (single) Tk 300-500; sofa sets at Tk 4000-10,000, and chest of drawers Tk 2500-5000. These furniture might prove to be ideal for those starting a new life.

There is another kind of furniture that has been very much in use for ages now, both



A cane furniture shop

Shahnoor" and "Kumu" are some of the shops situated in the furniture section of the market. Besides the usual furniture one can also get other latest items important for household purpose and also hundreds of showpieces to decorate one's abode — white, or brown coloured chest of drawers for children, with Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck or

furniture sold at Gulshan are both foreign as well as local, the price is often far beyond the reach of common people.

If you are one of those people who are not satisfied easily and if you are longing for something with a little difference, then your best bet should be "Tantuni Emporium". Located in Dhanmondi Road No 16 (new), not only is the location

at home and abroad. Yes, cane of wicker furniture. Located in Green Road is a row of cane furnishees. From chairs to even decoration pieces a person can get anything he/she desires, provided it is made out of cane. A single cane chair costs about Tk 350-800, a single box sofa, Tk 1100-1500, while a cosy three seater sofa set with table costs Tk 4000-5000, bed Tk 4000-6000, chest of drawers or shelves costs Tk 1500-2500. Also, other things such as baby cots, swings, magazine racks, flower pots, baskets, mirrors, lamp stands and many kinds of decoration pieces of all sizes and shapes are available there. A majestic looking cane elephant of several sizes, is one of their popular items. As the cane furniture is cheap and attractive to look at, the cane furnishees at Green Road attract many customers each day.

Furniture is not merely a tool for beautifying one's home or flaunting one's wealth, but has become an essential part of our every day life. Spending money on furniture is always a good investment as it is one of the most durable of all material things.

Everything else goes out of fashion, yet, though furniture style changes from time to time, it can, live through generations. When you are planning on buying furniture, do some serious thinking before rushing off to the furnishees keep in mind your budget and consider things carefully. Create your own look, instead of following a trend or striving to get the exact look of the "modern home" from the latest issue of a glossy magazine. Have a clear idea of what would suit your home or better yet, what would suit your personality. After purchasing the right furniture, give your home some colour, add some personal touch — get the proper curtains or use cushions, carpets, rugs, paintings, vases or show pieces to liven things up and voila! Without too much of an effort you too, can have a beautiful home which you can be proud of.

Living the Twilight Years

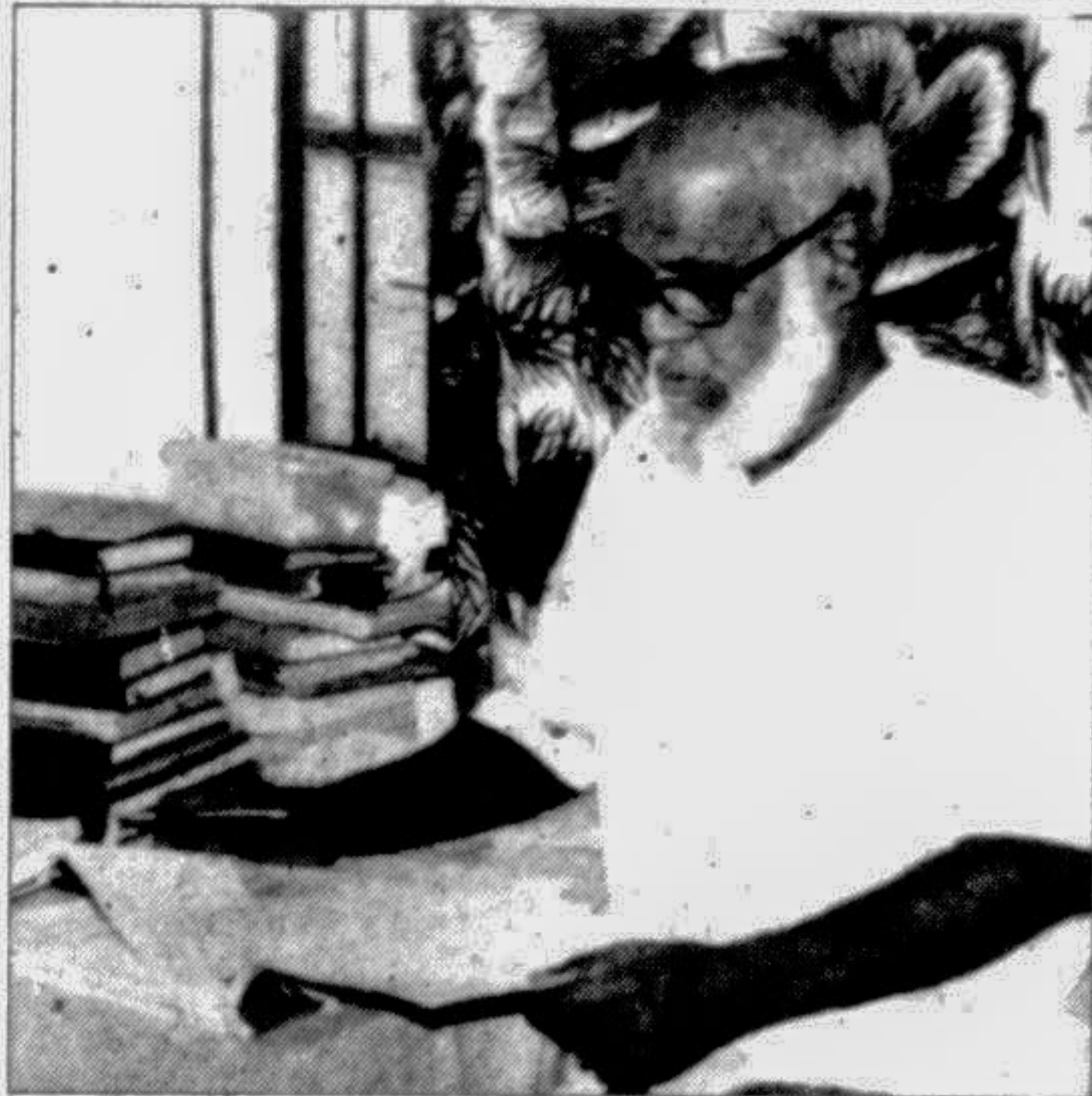
by A S M Nurunnabi

RETIREMENT is essentially an intensely individual and personal experience. People react to it in very different ways, depending upon their mental attitudes and personal philosophy of life. Soon after retirement, many people suffer a sense of deprivation. They are cut off from a deeply established way of life, the familiar daily round which for a long time brought

we should seek to find a satisfying and purposeful role in life which will make retirement a rewarding experience.

In time retirement brings its own routine. Most of us are inevitably creatures of habit. As we can please ourselves in any manner we like in retirement, the routine can be more flexible than that imposed by the disci-

Good health in retirement is dependent on three crucial factors: physical, mental and social well-being. When retirement comes with its more leisurely pace of living, lessening of stress and release from the rate race, people tend to use even less energy than they did at work. They need fewer calories in order to maintain a steady weight. Yet few think of reducing their daily intake of food.



A pensioner passing his time reading books

pline of work. But it is worthwhile trying to establish some kind of routine, however flexible it may be, rather than being completely haphazard in our ways. Above all, we should fight against what is aptly described as "scrap-heap" syndrome. There is danger in meekly accepting the stereotyped role of the pensioner. Those who retire successfully create new, purposeful roles for themselves which are not dependent upon their retired status. The status as a retired person may be made merely an incidental to some other role which will restore the sense of purpose which one lost on retirement.

A retired person has no defined role. The title bestows no new set of standards or pattern of behaviour. No rules are laid down or objectives set out. It is a label that covers the whole spectrum of society and provides only one link — the accident of age.

Loneliness could come unless a conscious effort is made to seek new interests and to establish friendships outside the home.

Where paid work is not available, voluntary work can provide satisfying personal relationships and the opportunity to make a worthwhile contribution to the community.

It would certainly be a barren time if a glimpse into the future shows that a retiree has just sat back in his retirement and let the rest of the world go by. To sum up, there are six basic needs for a happy retirement: a) Good physical and emotional health; b) Adequate income, above subsistence level; c) Suitable accommodation; d) Congenial associates and neighbours; e) One or more absorbing interests and f) An adequate personal philosophy of life.

Understand Him

by Sylvia Saleem

A woman offers a man two things far more important than perfect bodily statistics: allure and comfort. Flirtation, adventure, mystery on the one hand, and warmth, companionship, appreciation, sweetness, domesticity — a refuge from the world — on the other. One attracts, the other holds, and happy is the man who finds both to his measure in the same woman; clever the woman who develops these two aspects of her femininity so that she wins and keeps the man she loves.

One of these alone is of little use. A woman who offers nothing but thrills may hold a man by nervous tension, but she will never make him happy — nor for that matter will she be capable of being made happy by any man; while a woman who is all sweetness and comfort is a bore who will soon find her man wandering away in pursuit of some provocative but worthless creature purely for the sake of contrast.

Toughening up as a result of bitter experience will never cure

a pain or prevent its recurrence. It will merely help block out all possibility of future happiness. The only answer is to examine yourself, see just what you are giving and then make sure that you offer what you want in return, for in the long run you always get back exactly what you give and the odd exceptions are not worth worrying about, though they may hurt you most. So give excitement, thrills, if they are what you want, or gentleness and comfort. Best of all, if you are ever to get the most out of life, ever to be a complete person and have lasting happiness, give both.

Fortunately, every woman is an actress at heart. Every woman who can de-inhibit herself sufficiently to vary these two sides of female nature to suit the man she cares for will get results.

There need be nothing insincere about such behaviour. It can be accompanied by the deepest feelings, and add richness to them, for it implies a development of sensitivity, a

heightened perception and appreciation of your companion. It takes a great deal of observation, tact and subtlety to sum up a man and see when you have gone too far in one direction and then change course.

A woman can be uninhibited, original, mystifying in conversation; scented and provocative in dress; she can tease and intrigue her man according to her mood and his, so long as she lets him know that she is fond of him. If she shows him tenderness as well she'll have him twisting happily round her little finger.

Always emphasise your femininity, for that is where the magnetism between the sexes comes from. Take stern warning from the girl who is female but not feminine. Look to the French and Italian women, if you want a zestful life and your rightful appreciation as a woman.

Remember, though, that femininity is not passivity — the dumb blonde has long since lost her charm. An interest in life, in other people, in herself and her motives, in what's going on in the world, in everything around her — these things are the salt that brings out a woman's feminine flavour, and enhance all her other charms.

Cookery

Fish Kofta

- 1 cup (8 oz) ground fish
- 1/2 cup boiled mashed rice
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon ground garlic
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon chilli powder
- 1/2 teaspoon finely chopped green chilli



- 1/4 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon chopped coriander leaves

salt to taste

1. Any kind of fleshy fish may be selected for making kofta. In Bangladesh chitol and foil are specially chosen for making kofta.

2. Remove skin from fish. Rinse and drain water. Grind fish.

3. Combine all other ingredients and mix with the fish. Divide into 8 portions or wrap the ground fish with skin. Fry in deep fat.

4. Either serve hot kofta or make curry with the kofta.

5. Makes 4 servings.

Kofta Curry: Make paste of the ground spices similar to the recipe given above. Add 1/4 teaspoon of ground turmeric in it. Heat 1/4 cup of oil, fry 2 teaspoons finely chopped onion in it. Add the mixture of spices and 1/4 cup of water. Stir-fry for 5 minutes. Add one recipe of fish kofta. Simmer for 8-10 minutes. Serve with rice or bread.

Fish Korma

- 1 kg (2 lbs) white fish steaks
- 1 cup sour cream or yogurt
- 1/2 cup finely chopped onion
- 2 teaspoons ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon ground garlic
- 1/2 teaspoons ground turmeric
- 2 teaspoons ground coriander
- 6 cardamoms
- 2.5 cm/1-in piece cinnamon, 3 sticks
- 1 teaspoon salt 3/4 cup ghee or cooking oil
- 6 pared green chillies
- 1 teaspoon keora water
- 2 teaspoons sugar

1. Select carp, (ruí, katla), cod, haddock, salmon, white bream, steer, pangash (the two named last are available in Bangladesh) etc for fish korma. Steaks or butterfly steaks both are suitable pieces for cooking korma. Rinse steaks, drain water and pat them on absorbent kitchen paper. Mix with yogurt and marinate for 5 minutes.

2. Combine ground ingredients and mix in 1 cup of water.

3. Heat oil, fry onion till soft. Add the mixture of spices, stir-fry till water has been taken up. Add the fish steaks, cardamom, cinnamon and salt. Add water enough to cover fish. Puj lid on and cook till gravy thickens. Turn the pieces of fish steaks. Add green chillies, keora water, sugar and lemon juice (if desired). Keep over low heat until oil separates out.

4. Serve with boiled rice or pullao or porota.

5. Makes 10-12 servings.



A scene from a fashion show at "Sheraton". Courtesy: Photo Concern.



Dorothy Hammil, World Professional Figure Skating 1993 on Prime Sports



A scene from "The Man Upstairs" on Star Plus

Eternal Romance

by Shahabuddin Mahtab

RECENTLY, being transplanted to the Siddheswari area, I am now fortunate to enjoy the greenery of the Ramna Park in the city, which is a very rare privilege for a Dhakate.

For over a fortnight I had been observing a couple (the husband in his early seventies and the wife in her mid sixties) walking in the Ramna Park for about thirty minutes. From six-thirty to seven they sit together, almost holding their hands. Their very presence exudes serenity and happiness.

After having seen them for more

than a fortnight, I was emboldened to sit near them in the same bench. By being further emboldened after another fortnight, I asked the couple, how long have they been married, and whether their journey through life has been one of happiness, and if so what was their recipe for their successful companionship covering more than four decades.

The loving husband, asked the lady to reply to my query. The wife said that on the first night of their marriage, they agreed to four things. These were, they would never speak to each other in an angry tone or a

loud voice; never speak ill of each other; always share a double bed, and never stop talking to each other for more than twenty four hours. There may be many other recipes for a successful marriage, but the four needs that have been mentioned here are certainly good ones.

The couple leaves for their home at exactly seven am in their white sedan, waving to me, whenever we cross each other. The lush Ramna green offers peace, happiness and solitude to all citizens, who have the good fortune to reach there. But they are far too few.