

RISING STARS

For fun and entertainment where could we, the children, possibly go? Of course the stadium to watch football matches, in life threatening conditions or to watch other sports events. At times we venture to those prehistoric cinema halls, which screen mostly cheap movies, or even as far as Dolce-Vita to have ice-cream. That's it, that's supposed to include entertainment and fun.

Oh! lets not forget those routine and stereo typed crazy bazars or 'Meena Bazars' as they are called. But are these really entertainment? No, never. Real entertainment is in the verge of extinction, and we all are just sitting back and waiting or watching. Poor us! We don't want Disneyland, but at least we can hope for a decent, exciting children's park. People might say that

we grow up and go to parties or have whatever fun those adults have. No, Never. *Shishu Mela* is an answer to our prayers.

Shishu Mela is what children deserve. *Shishu Mela* is a new children's park, situated in a serene atmosphere in *Shyamoli*. The over all view of the park is bound to impress anyone, while the interior is immensely captivating. The colourful atmosphere, innovativeness and the willingness to impress is clearly visible. Even the tickets of the different games is impressive.

Shishu Mela made its successful start in the month of February. At present, it has six items for children. Out of them, the *chuck chuck* train and the *Rocking boat* are the pick of them. The *chuck chuck* train train is as unique replica of the real one and the

Children's Park

"We Don't Want a Disneyland"

by Trisna and Rabeth Khan Photos by Sk. Enamul Haq



Shishu Mela: one of the very few fun places for the children in the city. There should be more Shishu Melas in the capital.



Rediscovering childhood!

there is the *Shishu Park*. Yes, there is, but its hard to be entertained there. Modernization, lack of security is sorely missing so does that mean we are to be bored forever until

exciting part is it travels through a horror tunnel. Yes! You got that correct.

The horror tunnel is really frightening. To add perfection to the atmosphere, there are

spine-chilling laughs and suitable lighting arrangements. There are also some monstrous figures, which might come near you and suddenly touch you to say 'hello'. So readers, beware. Another interesting item was the "Rocking Boat". A replica of a boat hangs and swings to and fro sending its passengers into delirium while for the rest of the items, it is for the readers to find out.

Apart from the colourful display, there were a lot of other things that made *Shishu Mela* different from any other children parks. It is very clean and the atmosphere excellent. Talking to two teenagers Arif and Hasan, they said that, it was the best park and demanded more items. The parents of all the children, voiced the same opinion. *Shishu Mela* is an ideal place for kids to visit. They underlined, that they felt safe with their children in *Shishu Mela* than in any other place.

The readers will also be happy to know that there aren't any 'Jhalmuri Alas' to bother you. But that doesn't mean, you have to starve. There are different food stalls selling delicious items. The shops include a fast food shop which is surrounded on all sides by water. The only way to go is by a small bridge. There is a Igloo Ice-Cream parlour to quench your thirst and exhaustion. Ad for traditional food lovers, there are the mouth-watering and crispy 'Futchkas'.

Apart from all the positive approach, there is not enough space to extend it further. When Dulaluddin, an employee

at the ticket counter was asked about the extension, he informed that they were thinking about it and sought help

from the Government. We all hope that the Government will look into the matter seriously for the sake of children.

No matter small or big, *Shishu Mela* has made the children all smile and created a remarkable example for others to follow. Take a hike to *Shishu Mela* and relish pure entertainment worthy of your time.



If the parents are here, then the children can't be far away.



Chuck! Chuck! Into the horror tunnel we go!

with our children to keep them as safe as possible, continued a worried mother.

Apart from the pestering tea-sellers and beggars, there are also people who stare in such a manner, that if looks could kill, thousands would have been dead by now. People littering, spitting, smoking and couples mistaking the place to be Crescent lake are visible all around. Among these unhealthy circumstances the children — whom they call the future, plays.

But people still visit these sort of parks, why? Because, apart from *Shishu Park*, there is no other place for children's entertainment', replied a father. But nowadays we often see group of guys gathering in front of *Shishu Park*. They may be hijackers and some even go inside and create some kind of a chaos. It's true

children in this country, not even on the television, the parents prefer bringing their children to these parks, rather than making them bored and idle at home.

Sad but true, children 'have' no place where they can go and enjoy themselves with hundred per cent safety. Hence when a four-year old sings 'chholike peeche kya hai' we look at the child widening our eyes. But at a situation like this, those films seem to be their only entertainment.

Opening big parks instantly may not be possible but if the children's parks were made non-smoking areas, maintained regularly and a few responsible policemen were kept to stop those loafers, then they would at least be safe for the kids who risk their life for the sake of entertainment.

Shishu Mela holds on excel-



Why can't we go to Shishu Park every day?

that these parks are much inferior to the *Shishu Park*, but at least here, there is the least risk of life,' he explained. Many even claimed that there being no other way of amusement for

lent example and of similar atmosphere and if other children's parks are like this, then may be we can all be happy, entertained and relaxed for a change.



Papa, please decide.

It was 8:30 in the morning, and almost all the students had arrived at school. The bell rang for assembly, and the students formed lines according to their classes. The Vice Principal came, stood on the steps, and glared down at us haughtily.

Not being able to bear her fierce glare, most of the sixth and seventh graders looked down and started examining their shoes. It was the turn of two very unfortunate seventh-graders to recite the 'surah' of the morning prayers. They mumbled it out as fast as they could, while the Vice Principal's fierce burning glare landed upon their necks, searing their flesh, whenever they made a slight mistake.

After assembly was over, we marched into our respective classes, and as we did so, the prefects, who stood posted at almost every corner, checked our uniforms and shoes, soon found quadrillions of faults, and threw harsh, reproachful glares.

After we went into our classroom and settled down, the class-teacher came in and took the attendance. The bell rang again, and the first period began. In the first class we had Physics. (What a horrible subject to start the day with!) The Physics sir walked in. For some strange reason, unbeknownst to us, the Physics sir hates the blackboard and chalk. So all the three eighth-grade classrooms are equipped with a "white-board" for his exclusive use. He never forgets to bring his multi-colored markers. Anyway, he started to write

A Day in the Life of an Eighth-grader

by Anonymous

The day described here is Tuesday, 1st March, 1994 A D (Described as Experienced)

something about Newton's laws of motion on the white-board and after he finished, he started to give us a lecture on them. By the time he was half-way through, half the class was dozing. The dozers jerked to life at the sound of Sir shouting at one of the students for having the audacity to talk in his class while he was talking. "You tiny boy of fourteen!" he yelled. "What bloody smartness do you possess that you dare interrupt me?"

After Physics we had Maths, which is taught by a quite young but short-tempered female teacher. She started off class by rubbing her hands and gleefully informing us that half the class had flunked in the previous Maths test. (Despite her glee, I detected, or at least I thought I detected, a speck of disappointment in her countenance, the reason probably being, I presumed, the unwilling and reluctant acknowledgment of the fact that the other half had passed.)

In the shocked silence that ensued, while the class contemplated on how they'd done in the test, I noticed that she had produced a hideous grin of shark-like proportion (exposing to view all her yellow teeth), presumably at the very juicy thought of flunking us in the exams as well. After the initial shock of the students had expired, and life had

returned to them, she started teaching us the Factor theorem and the Remainder theorem, occasionally screaming at us to "shut up" and giving us one of her "go-to-hell" looks that are just too familiar to us.

After Maths, we had English Language. Unfortunately, our Language teacher, unlike the Maths teacher, does not have the stamina to endure us for 40 whole minutes. She hesitated at the door before entering, and checked in her handbag, probably, I presume, to see whether she had brought a packet of aspirins or not. Not feeling very sure whether she wanted to incur another nightmare or not, she walked into the classroom hesitantly, and set down on the teacher's chair. Then she made a slow survey of the class. People were screaming at each other across the room. (Recently our class teacher prepared a horrendous seating arrangement, so now whenever someone wants to talk to someone else, he or she has to shout to get the message across, which is one thing the class teacher hadn't thought of while making the seating arrangement.)

The Language teacher just sat and watched, feeling like the UN in Bosnia, utterly useless, helpless and absolutely pathetic. She made a few futile attempts to teach us, but all her efforts were in vain. When she finally succeeded in gain-

ing a tiny fraction of our attention, she started to explain the difference between the definite article and the indefinite article. In a few minutes, she realized that it was no use trying to teach us. So she started to threaten us saying that the next day, she would take a test of this without explaining it. The bell rang just then, and she left, thankfully.

Actually the Language teacher isn't as bad as she seems at all. She is a woman with proper principles (which sometimes backfire) and a passion for justice (which remains unsatisfied).

Then we had Economics. The teacher came in, fashionably late as usual, and started lecturing on markets and prices. After she had lectured for what seemed like eons, I noticed that a student looked at his watch to see how much of the period was left, discovered that only 12 minutes had lapsed, and started to pound his watch on his desk, presumably to make sure it was still working, which it unfortunately was.

After a while, some of the students, to save themselves from boredom, started a symposium on current pressing issues such as the leaving of our history teacher, the unfortunate probability of our Language teacher becoming our class teacher and other nerve wracking issues.

Then came break and then two consecutive classes of Art and Computer practical, both of which passed uneventfully.

After that was English Literature, and the teacher started teaching "Much Ado About Nothing", if there's anything more boring than Shakespeare, it's probably Rabindranath Tagore. Anyway, we made far too much noise than we should have, and provoked her into using her favourite combinations of nouns and adjectives on us. "A pack of laughing hyenas", "uncivilized barbarians", "drunken fools", etc were among them. She also frankly and explicitly expressed her opinion that we possess "heads full of horse-shit".

After Literature there was History, which was the last class of the day. The History teacher started lecturing on the after-effects of the First World War. (She is a no-nonsense, I-mean-business, 'I-take-no-crap-from-none' type of woman and she would have made an excellent vampire. If she happens to read this article, boy, I'm in a hell of a lot of trouble.) While she was explaining the section (in our history book, the chapters are divided into sections), she caught two students in the last row talking (which is just about the most serious crime a student can commit), and threatened to punish them. In

the silence that ensued, she gave them a look that was an amalgamation of an "I-mean-business" look and a "burn-in-hell" look.

Soon history class was over and the students thankfully ran out of the classroom, falling over each other in their common alacrity to leave the classroom. Thus consummated another day in the life of an eighth-grader.

How I thank thee.

by Samia R Islam

Oh most merciful God,
Oh most beneficent God,
How I thank thee —
How I honour thee —
For giving me such a wonderful life!

Oh most merciful God,
Oh most beneficent God,
You shower your blessings on me —
Just like rains of flowers;
You whisper in my ears —
Just like the laughter of little, innocent children;
How I praise thee —
For giving me such a beautiful life!

Oh most merciful God,
Oh most beneficent God,
Your blessings are like huge water bodies —
From which I cannot exit,
And for which I will remain as a debtor.

— That is only to you
Yes, Lord, only to you
How can I thank thee
For giving me such a beautiful and wonderful life?

Forgotten Past

by Tasin Ahmed

I can't recall my past.
I don't feel like remembering it.
Freedom came before my birth.
Came the horrified days of language movement.
I have seen nothing, I was nowhere.

What memories do I really have?
I didn't participate in the war of freedom
Nor did I join in the anti autocratic movement
Infact, then I was in my air conditioned room.
Trying to solve an arithmetical problem.

I didn't keep my mother in tension.
She didn't bade me goodbye with a cry.
Didn't request me not to go to the Liberation War.

When Nur Hossain was shot with the word —
'Democracy in his heart'
Just then I was drinking cold water
And reading newspaper, lying on the sofa.

I can't recall my past —
I don't feel like remembering it—
A past which hasn't turned me into a freedom fighter.
Nor made me a martyr of revolution.
That past should be forgotten.

I actually have nobody, nowhere
My past memories are only of defeats and failures.

'Just for you'

★ Dear Dolly,
Thinking of you in a special way on your Birthday. Hope, knowing that you're thought of in a very special way, will add an extra little bit of sunshine to your day, Happy Birthday.

From
Some one
★ Dear Natna.

Your latest poem was a gem. Please continue writing, as me and my friends are really getting fond of your article. Tasin

★ To Ahsan Latif & Sami Noor
Loved your short — but to the point article last week. I sympathize with your horror at the intimacy of sprouting 'affairs', completely. However, do think that this cannot be blamed solely on the influence of Star TV. — Prima