

TEENERS and TWENTIES

Stop Treating Parties like Pick-up Joints

by Lollipop

such a rave you can be sure to have a good time surrounded by non-threatening, friendly young things like you. But cruise along to the wrong bash and you're in for a bruising. There are plenty of pitfalls for women who just want to

rant staff and the numerous guards failed to notice the women's predicament — they were probably too frightened to get beaten up. Only one young man expressed concern for the women's safety, after the drunk had left.



have a fun night out. Three friends in their early twenties spent Tk 300 each for a party organised at a restaurant. When they arrived at midnight, the place was practically empty. So the young women headed straight for the buffet table to pass some time eating. But matters got worse — it looked as if all the local mastans had walked in. No one bothered to vet these fishy characters since the organisers were pretty desperate to get more people. The young women, being the only all female group, were an easy target for harassment. A man carrying a can of Foster's walked up to them, "You are bhery lovely," he slurred in English. The restaur-

Despite this incident, the girls decided to stick it out a bit longer because they had paid so much to get in. To ward off the enemy and ensure their own safety, the girls grabbed on the stainless steel dinner forks. The stranger who had previously tried to help them, approached their table again. This time the pseudo-savior revealed his true colours, "Umm. Are you girls waiting for your dates? If you aren't, would you like to dance? It's safer on the dance floor." The young women looked at each other in disbelief — didn't anyone have pure motives at this party? Did this "savior" set up the whole scene just to come up and "rescue" them? And

besides, it wasn't safer on the dance floor — sleazy voyeurs were loitering around watching a couple jive, as if it were a dance sequence in a Hindi film.

The other women at the party weren't altogether reassured either. One of the girls seemed quite nice and friendly until she asked, "Would you like to meet my cousins?" pointing to a table full of grinning young males.

By this time, it was clear to the three women that their Tk 300 investment was a turkey. Apparently, the party was organised by someone different than the last one. In Dhaka, the type of crowd tends to vary according to the organiser's reputation. But unless you are a regular at the party scene, it is difficult to find out the details. In this case, the restaurant didn't even know the organiser's name or telephone number.

Parents may regard the whole episode as confirming their worst fears. But the problem isn't with the concept of partying. Young people who pick up on trendy styles from their Star-TV idols, are all dressed up with nowhere to go. Restless youth who don't do sports and are stuck behind their desks, need an outlet for their excess energy. Dancing the night away beats wrecking concert venues.

You can't blame the young for wanting to live it up a little. And why should this be the realm of the very rich? Parties organised at restaurants are ideal for those who don't have giant mansions to host their own do's. What we need is better vetting of people allowed into a party, stern security, cheaper ticket prices and safe transport arrangements, so our young adults can have a good time without harming anyone. And we need to stop treating parties like pick-up joints. In the meanwhile, no matter how innocent you are, be prepared to make on sacrifice. If you start going to parties, you will officially become a "fast and loose" person whom no one will marry. Isn't there anything we can do to change this perception?

The Commercial Revolution

"Advertisement is Your Right to Choose"

by Trisna

Do you remember, once upon a time, not too long ago, we used to turn off our television sets whenever the commercials were shown? But now, we, the same people anxiously sit in front of our sets, waiting for the boisterous and monotonous programmes to end and the commercials to begin. What a change of mind!

Well, it's not that the programmes have become worse than the advertisements but it is the advertisements that have become better than expected and that too within quite a short time. Thanks to the ad firms for saving the television sets from becoming mere boxes and providing us with such entertaining commercials. Thirty minutes with Aly Zaker, one of the people who deserve the credit for bringing in this change, gives us information about how this was possible within five years!

Where there is a will, there is a way — and the will is not created by itself, it is a corollary of few other things in the market place. Although the will was always there, it was yet not possible, five years ago to produce good commercials. "Five years ago, the competition was not as fierce as it is now," informs Aly Zaker, "people were not exposed to channels like Star TV and its other subsidiaries, boys and girls would not do modelling as they always had the suspicion that it was done by youngsters from not too well-off families." This suspicion seems to have almost vanished from the minds of the people now. "That feeling dwelled in them, until they were exposed to international media," Aly Zaker explains. He added that he thinks both advertising and manufacturing industries five years back were ten years behind and because of change in all these factors, within five years the standard of advertisements has gone ahead by ten years.

There is nothing wrong in being a model. However, although these channels seem to have lost most people's support, Aly Zaker says, "as far as opening up the whole world to our population, one cannot deny the contribution of these channels."

that there has historically been a lack of people here, who are creative and cooperative. He boldly confessed that he disagrees with someone who would say that in Bangladesh there are far more creative people than in Bombay. With a sad, but true example he

with good looks, and carriage while intelligence seems to be the most important factor. Aly Zaker explains, "a handsome, good-looking man, can also be a dumb fellow and it may not be possible to bring out one second of worthy modelling out of him." According to him, more westernized, influenced, education has made the younger generation smarter, more intelligent and open, in their approach to life.

Matters of the Heart

I am a young man of 20 years, serving in a special profession. When I was in class IX, I saw a girl who was visiting my Cadet College. Ever since, I have been in love with her. The problem is that she is two years older than me. Other than that I have no problem. I have tried very hard to win her heart but she does not like me. Presently, I am working and she is studying so there is no problem and I am determined to get her. How can I prove to her that I really love her and win her heart?

Anonymous
First of all, if your affection is based on a chance meeting when you were very young, it could be no more than a "crush". It is not realistic to think you "love" someone without really knowing her. The fact that she is older than you should not bother you, there are many couples (some even married), where the woman is older. As long as you two are compatible and have the same wave lengths age should not matter. As for winning her heart, this is a difficult thing to do if love is not reciprocated. Find out why she does not like you. If it is another guy then the best thing would be to forget the whole

thing. If it is something about your personality or the age factor, you can always try to convince her of your sincerity and willingness to adjust. The rest is up to Fate. Good Luck!

I am a B Com student. A beautiful girl has declared her love for me. I would like to respond positively. The problem is that she is healthier and taller than me. A friend told me that we would be a very odd looking couple if I accept her proposal. I am suffering from indecision. Please advise so that I can be relieved of my suffering.

Anonymous
You should feel flattered that the girl has taken the initiative to show her affection for you. If you really like her just go for it. If the fact that she is 'healthier' than you, bothers you why don't you start working out and eating sensibly to build up your body? Unfortunately, you cannot do much about height at this stage.

It should not, however, matter if you both feel equally attracted to each other. In any case, stop listening to what other people have to say. Just go with your heart.

Bombay, the city of dreams, is now the place where Bangladeshi teenagers are making their dreams come true. No, not by joining the Hindi films, but by modelling in local ads that are made there. In fact, most of the attractive commercials are made in Bombay and so it is obvious for us, the audiences, to ask why it is so? Aly Zaker says that lack of advanced technology and a dearth of creative individuals are some of the obstacles. In an over populated country like Bangladesh, he sadly

proves his point. "We had a film animation machine in Film Development Corporation (FDC), ever since the birth of that studio, it was the first and indeed the most modern animating machine available within the country but there wasn't a single person who could handle it and as a result it just rusted and now lies useless." Modelling, however, is not just an exposure of a pretty face but also intelligence. The agencies now prefer educated young people as models along



Is it possible then to have an advertisement that has beautiful models, a mind blowing jingle, attractive places and eye-catching creativeness but yet is not "perfect". Yes, it seems so because Aly Zaker considers an ad's selling power to be its basic objective: not its beauty. Rather than getting compliments for an ad, he would prefer someone to go and buy the product after seeing his advertisement.

In increasing this selling power, arises the competition between advertising firms. How an ad works on television or in cinema halls is indicated by the sale of the product at the end of the day. If the product does well in the market then the responsible firms deserve the credit for doing a good job and vice versa.

But again, advertisement is not the only factor that can make a product succeed or fail in the market-place, he said. Well we are almost unaware of how successful products are in the market place but it is true that it is their advertisement, that is keeping Bangladesh Television alive.

In our next issue Alzal Hossain of Matra will express his views on the same topic.

Funny Memories Pleasures of Growing up

by Shamsad Mortuza

She was mean, she was cool. She was Miss Gunpowder — our Civics teacher in class eight. One day, with her usual aura of fear and terror she entered the classroom. She placed her *futanika dibba* (vanity bag) on the table, crossed her hands and went on her usual search. The search for the guy without home-task.

A cold look accompanied by a suspicious but gentle smile caressed all the faces. We, showing best of our reflexes, started churning the definition of democracy and seeking divine help. My sixth sense told me to maintain a 'goody-two-shoes' face. I knew, a moment's nervousness would be the end of the road. One needed to be extra smart to outsmart Miss Gunpowder. Bubbles of pride were shaping up as the look passed me without any sign of danger. I congratulated myself.

Ouch. Something hurt me on my chin. I reached for the sore, there was solid steel. In agony, I looked back, there was Rashed at the third bench, grinning. I saw Rony's antenna ball-point with magnetic head. I looked back to Miss Gunpowder who was then concentrating on the last benches. Rashed realised the significance of my painful look at the powder keg. I found him in clasped hands. All the eyes behind me were focused on the board-pin which made itself comfortable in my chubby chin. I read the fear in their faces apprehending the crucifixion of Rashed.

The good angel in me intervened. Rashed was spared for the day. I covered the pin all through the class and the

surgery was done later on. The blood tinged pin was given to me with honour. It was found that Rony, the guy next to Rashed, had put the pin ahead of the antenna pen. It was on his inspiration, Rashed simply wanted me to remind me of democracy with a mild love-touch. Who knew my chin was so magnetic towards board-pins.

Our favourite tiffin time sport was Rescue. It is a chase-and-hold game with a lot of excitement, speed, fun, not to mention the dirt and danger.

Naturally, our games teacher who was appointed to confine us in traditional games, did not like this 'dirty' game. For obvious reasons, with his slim cane and big belly, he became the regular third party in the game, adding extra colour and fun to it. He used to chase us but in vain. We continued to attend our fifth period without any button on the shirts or without any mood to listen to the class lecture.

One fine afternoon, Mr Games teacher came to the class and made the announcement of the century. The school was going to have an inter-class Rescue Competition, and interested players were asked to be in the field immediately.

We jumped to the idea. Leaving the maps on the board we went to the field, and stood in a row. Eek! The magic cane started working on our back. All we could hear was, "Rescue? Rescue?" The game was over from then on.

Bailey Road — the Safest Area in Dhaka

by Syed Nageeb M Ali

Photos by Enamul Haque

schools. He feels it is these institutions which make the road more prominent. Stardust and Audio Spot agreed with the opinion of the other shopkeepers. All of them abhor the group of teenagers hanging around in front of the shops and, for one, do not blame them. When I asked two female teens, they confirmed the fact that these groups are troublesome for girls. They stated that at night, it

groups. I talked to a few people waiting outside the play. They told me that it is the theater that gives Bailey road its importance due to its links with literature and culture. But he had a fair share of complaints which I was more than happy to note down since everyone else proclaimed the road to be heaven. He talked about the traffic problem and the absence of a proper parking space. He also told me that



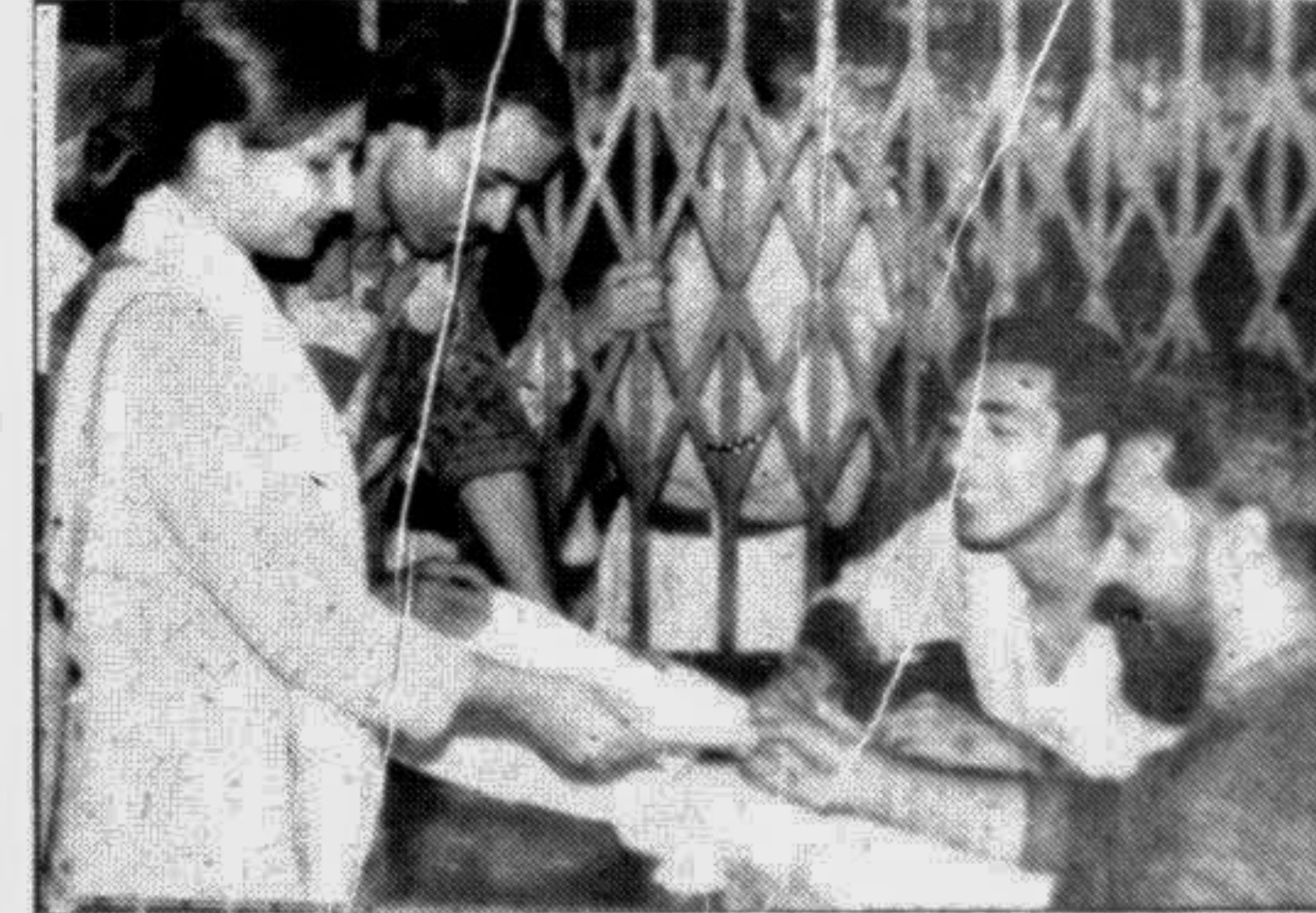
He loves me he loves not. I wish I could decide which one to pick.

is impossible for them to walk on Bailey road because of the cat-calls and obscene remarks. They love Bailey road but it is this aspect of it that makes it nearly unbearable. The owner of Swiss also hinted that on every evening, he faces this type of problem. But then this harassment is all too common in our decadent society.

Now allow me to talk about the cultural link of this road, namely the theater. Every day there is one play or another being enacted at that venue. It certainly attracts much attention as is evident from the crowd near the area during the evening. The plays are done by both amateur and professional

the auditorium is very old, and must be modernised. The interior is crowded during plays and that diminishes the otherwise thrilling experience. The man said that the government should take some action to improve the traffic system and build a new modern auditorium.

I should mention the views of a very important man of Bailey road — the "Chatpat" seller. He has been on the road for twelve years. He thinks it is a very important area and very secure. He also admitted the presence of a few rowdy crowds of young juveniles. But he likes the fact that many youngsters hang around the



Theater, evening special in Bailey Road.

area but that is because if they didn't, the businessman would be utterly broke.

All the developments, unfortunately must have some adverse effects. The traffic problem is the most major one. Every day, at 12:00, the road is jammed. Why? Because all the schools' morning sessions end at that time and so the students are on their way home.

Due to the chaotic motion of rickshaws, the road, for all practical purposes, is blocked for an hour. Where there is room for three lanes, there will be five lanes. There is no proper parking space, and hence, all the vehicles are parked on the road, making the situation worse.

Proper parking must be facilitated in order to make the traffic run smoothly. I do not solely blame the rickshaw pullers for Bangladesh drivers also break all the rules. From the leftmost lane, he will do a right turn. This leads to a state of mass confusion. I believe some traffic police officers should be assigned to Bailey road. But don't we all know how ineffective they are? All major roads are bound to be dirty, and Bailey road is no

exception. There is uncovered waste lying on the road everywhere. And on a rainy day filthy puddles of water form and there is an offensive odor in the air.

Unfortunately, this is perfectly normal for a country whose roads are flooded every time it rains heavily. It is absolutely imperative that a proper sewage system be constructed. One comforting aspect of Bailey road that I am compelled to mention is the presence of public latrines. As a result, the street, well rather the walls of Bailey road are much cleaner than those of other parts of Dhaka.

The crime situation of Bailey road seems to be under control now. Mugging takes place on the road very rarely. All the shopkeepers maintained that Bailey road is the safest area in Dhaka.

Well, that's about all I know about Bailey road, my home. It has been fun describing it but I really must be going now. I have to pick up a movie from Stardust, a beef-roll from Swiss, a heavy-metal tape from Audio Spot and flowers for my Mum (it's her birthday today). Hope to see you on Bailey road.



I am not going to think about hygiene now, this is good!