

TEENS and TWENTIES

Come Winter and It is Picnic Time

by Asrarul Islam Chowdhury

WITH the first day of November, a picnic syndrome will start to grasp the Dhakaittes. We will see buses (rather cacophonous buses) carrying people to their destinations — far from the madding crowd.

Dhaka has very little options open for recreation and on top of that the climate of the country is such that ventures outside the capital or within the capital are something next to impossible.

Incessant rain drowning the city or unbearable heat burning your skin, under these fussy circumstances travelling for fun is definitely a taboo. Our free mobility is only possible during the winter and that's the time for picnics. Picnics have become a part of our culture. Come winter or Friday or a holiday and families' friends, are all set for rejoicing, fun and merry making.

The present article attempts to discuss various picnic spots which Dhakaittes usually go to and also focus on some non-

popular as other spots in this region. Nevertheless, if you can, then this place is really a marvel. Most of the sites there have been built recently and there is also a pineapple garden from where you can get hold of some fresh pineapple juice. Really, it does give you a chance to get away from those artificial mineral waters when you are travelling. When a Bengalee wants something, he or she will get it. Regardless of all restrictions and high fees of entrance, Shafipur finds a lot of picnic parties during winter.

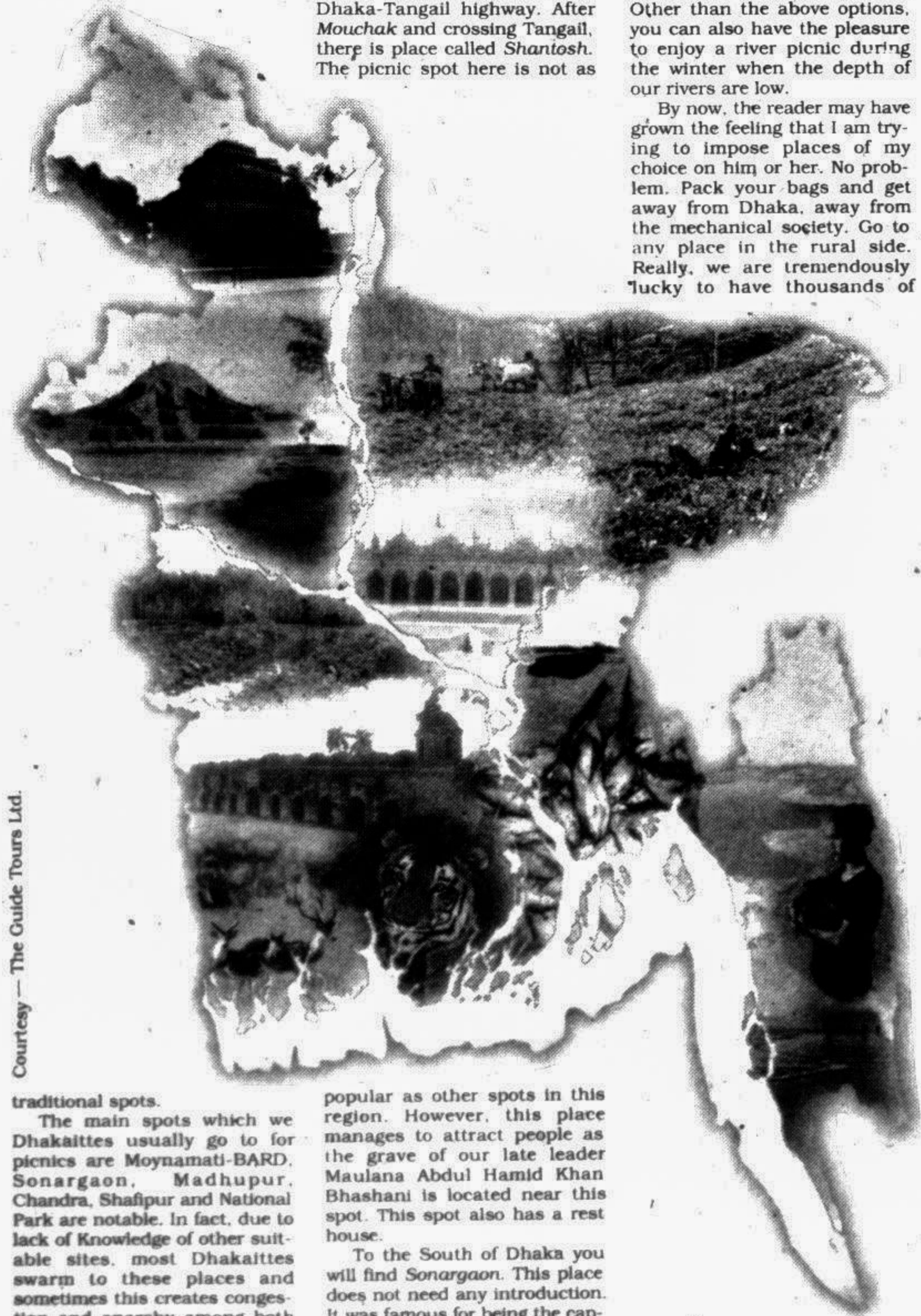
Besides Shafipur, you will find the National Park near to it. Entrance here is not as restricted as Shafipur. There is a rest house here and this area along with Shafipur is jacketed with our precious Shal forests. You will also find a lake. But we enjoy, others look at us with the hope that some left overs will find their way into their empty stomachs. Indeed, these are incidents which people usually witness at these places. It really does give one a bad conscience.

Mouchak is another famous picnic spot located on the Dhaka-Tangail highway. After Mouchak and crossing Tangail, there is place called Shantosh. The picnic spot here is not as

the west of the road, there is a picnic spot called Imam Garden Picnic Spot. Although, this place had been a picnic spot for a long time, it was not until recently that this place was renovated. However, the place cannot shoulder too many people. Family picnics can be done in this place.

To the east of Savar bus stand, there is a picnic spot called Rajahan. This place has a church. If you go there, may be, you will be able to meet the Bishop. Don't worry. He is not the terrifying Caribbean bowler Ian Raphael Bishop! Opposite to Radio Bangladesh, before Jahangirnagar University, there is a picnic spot at Savar Army Military Dairy Farm. This place is restricted and prior permission has to be obtained for picnics. Nevertheless, its infrastructural facilities are fairly good. After the Army Military Farm, there is a nice spot near the C&B (Construction & Building) office. There is also a good place near Ganashasthya Pharmaceuticals and opposite to Niribhul Housing Society. Other than the above options, you can also have the pleasure to enjoy a river picnic during the winter when the depth of our rivers are low.

By now, the reader may have grown the feeling that I am trying to impose places of my choice on him or her. No problem. Pack your bags and get away from Dhaka, away from the mechanical society. Go to any place in the rural side. Really, we are tremendously lucky to have thousands of



Courtesy — The Guide Tours Ltd.

traditional spots. The main spots which we Dhakaittes usually go to for picnics are Moynamati-BARD, Sonargaon, Madhupur, Chandra, Shafipur and National Park are notable. In fact, due to lack of knowledge of other suitable sites, most Dhakaittes swarm to these places and sometimes this creates congestion and anarchy among both picnic parties andurchins who reside there.

If you start from Dhaka towards the Dhaka-Aricha highway, then just before the Jatiya Smriti Shoudha, you will come across a tri-road. This is the road that people usually use. The right turn from three on is the Dhaka-Kaliakoir road which goes towards Bangladesh Atomic Energy. After that you will notice Baroipara. Its speciality is that it is a part of our Shal forests. Most people who go to this venue may encounter some inconvenient experiences of picnic sports in this region.

If you leave Baroipara and think that you want to go to some other spot you may go towards the Dhaka-Tangail diversion. To the right of the diversion you will find the National Park and then Shafipur. To the left of the diversion, i.e., towards Tangail, you will find Mouchak, then Shantosh and towards the Mymensingh road, Madhupur. The picnic spot at Shafipur is a picnic spot which is maintained and controlled by the Ansar Academy. Entrance is restricted and one has to obtain prior permission to visit the

popular as other spots in this region. However, this place manages to attract people as the grave of our late leader Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani is located near this spot. This spot also has a rest house.

To the South of Dhaka you will find Sonargaon. This place does not need any introduction. It was famous for being the capital of this region during the reign of Isa Khan. A lot of legends are interwoven with this place. Besides her historical value, Sonargaon is famous for her museum and picnic spot. But the most attracting thing of Sonargaon is the handicrafts and pottery display centre. Can you get a glimpse of our ancient pride, our handicrafts and potteries, you can also have the privilege to watch them being made in front of your eyes. The experience is as old as civilization, yet new as the moment.

After Sonargaon, near Comilla, there are two other picnic spots, Moynamati and BARD. Moynamati is famous for her Buddhist monastery. You can have the opportunity to see relics of one of the oldest educational institutes of this sub-continent. Besides a picnic spot, there is also a museum there. BARD is another picnic spot not far away from Moynamati.

On the Dhaka Aricha highway, opposite to Bank Town, there is an old picnic spot at Karnapara. Although, this place is old, it has failed to attract a lot of picnic parties over the years. After Karnapara, just before the Ganda bus stand, to

spots which are ideal for picnics. Those of us who have gone to picnic spots, must have some sort of bad experience withurchins living in these spots. True, we go out to picnics to "escape" from the noise and hassle of the city, but we should also realise that the "have-nots" are the ones who we deprive. Indeed, one man's happiness is another man's sorrow. Seeing hungry people at picnic spots makes, at least me, realise how lucky I am to be a part of the "haves"! It does give you a bad conscience. Did you know that by the time you have finished reading this article, many people of spaceship earth will have died from hunger related causes? We should practice some degree of austerity at both micro and macro levels.

In spite of all problems Dhakaittes have to face in order to reach their destinations, they will swarm to picnic spots this winter. So, dear Dhakaittes, happy hunting for new picnic spots this winter but do try one of the above spots. If you don't have time or energy to search, then go to any of those popular spots. After all, you do want to get away don't you?

THE teacher's dull monotonous voice dragged on through the hot summer noon. The students stifled yawns and checked their watches. Another 10 minutes to go. No, probably 20 minutes as 'honourable' professor always gets carried away with his marathon lectures, much to the students' disappointment.

Fighting to stay awake some looked outside the windows. The scene that stared back at them was very familiar. Students scattered everywhere out in the open, laughter and gaily filled the whole atmosphere as if beckoning one to join the fun. All of a sudden they feel like caged animals, trapped within four walls.

Yes, this partial picture of an institution is, of our very own, once (decades ago) 'Oxford of the East' — Dhaka University, more precisely the 'Arts Faculty'.

That the Bangladeshis, especially the youngs, like to gossip is never more true till you've entered the DU campus. Ask any student what he/she likes most about his/her institution, the spontaneous reply is likely to be the 'addas'.

While our friends and relatives studying abroad have a tough time keeping up with both their academic and social life, we, here at DU, have life easy. The only time an average DU student realizes that he/she, is a 'student' is perhaps a month or two before the final exams — then he starts cramming up! If an outsider or a newcomer in town sets foot in the campus at the 'prime time' (11 am - 1 pm) he might be momentarily confused, thinking he has come to a gala fair of some sort.

Carefree students can be spotted everywhere on the campus premises, squatting on the fields, sitting on the low boundary walls, under the tree shades, at the 'Aparajeo Bangla' monument, on the steps of the main building, not to mention at the library area. Their booming voices can be heard all the way down the corridors and at the numerous eating joints i.e. Campus Shadow, 'DUS' and TSC.

Not even the blistering heat nor the fear of getting in the middle of sudden violence can keep them indoors. One might wonder what these young

Life at the Dhaka University, Like a Picnic Everyday

by Asterix

hearts find to talk about all day long? The answer is anything under the sun — excluding academic progress, that is, from music, TV, movies, books, jewellery, clothes to the pretty girl nearby there are no dearth of topics for the students. If you want to know the juiciest tidbits in town, try the food stalls there. You will be surprised at how much information you can gather up from those places.

A picture of DU campus



would be incomplete without the numerous michhils (processions), rallies, meetings, discussions that take place almost every other day through the teachers and the students are hardly distracted by them. Classes and animated conversations go on at the usual pace, as the mike, close to the 'Aparajeo Bangla', blares on. The loud slogans of the student politicians passing by with their endless demands, protests and allegations can't

believe a girl can refuse them. So, instead of accepting the blunt refusal, the gentlemen, they continue to pester the girl, planning to hound her into acquiescence.

Serious relationships too blossom amidst all this chaos and confusion. Here's an example of a successful match-making attempt: A young man and a woman shows interest in each other, two friends from both parties come forward and act as mediators. Once the in-

roduction is over, the would-be couple is left alone to get acquainted for sometime, while the others keeping their fingers crossed and voila, a new romance is born! The ecstatic matchmakers shake their hands and are thanked profusely by the new couple in appreciation.

Besides the students, the others who roam freely on the campus are the large number of Chawallas (tea-sellers) chocolatewallas and the flower

monument is one of the sights to see, right along with the zoo and the museum. Donned in glittering outfits, they proudly take snaps at the monument. Hmm, its about time the DU crowd thought twice before to using the magnificent creation merely as a political platform and a chat spot.

Campus life is hardly dull. If you are observant, you might get to see the informal live performance of a unique and original fashion show performed by none other than the students. Boys in weird getups and girls clad in silk, chiffon and flamboyant garbs parade around the grounds in high heels, providing free entertainment for the crowd of on-lookers.

Humanitarian organizations like, Sandhani often frequent the campus in search of gallant blood donors, one wonders why a solemn and praiseworthy mission is carried out with so much fooling around and joviality? Also, it's a little fishy as to why the organisers are keen on getting more female donors.

Sometimes the pleasant scenario changes within seconds and gun shots, explosions vibrate the campus. The horrified students then run helter-skelter, lying on the ground feeling as if they are witnessing a scene right out of a war movie. An experience that often prove fatal for so many students.

As the sun goes down, the tired students decide to call it a day and leave the campus. The commotion slowly gradually dies down only to begin in at the adjacent TSC. DUS area and continues till 8-9 pm.

Disadvantages might be many, but still there is always a mad rush of students crowding the Deans' offices every year during admission time, wishing fervently to be a part of the esteemed institution. After all when all is said and done majority of the DU students enjoy their duration there and consider that period as the best part of their lives.

The writer wishes to state that no offense was meant intentionally. Therefore it would be advised to take it in good humour.

So You Think You're Clever

Here's a quiz that is likely to tie you up in mental knots for an hour or so. Afterward, you can repair your shattered ego by trying some of these leasers on your friends. If you make only five mistakes or less, you're exceptional. But any mortal with the normal complement of brains should get 8 to 10 right. There are no holds barred, so read ever word carefully.

1. If 3 cats can kill 3 rats in 3 minutes, how long will it take 100 cats to kill 100 rats?
2. I have two current coins in my hand. Together they total 55 cents. One is not a nickel. What are the coins?
3. A little Indian and a big Indian are walking down a path. The little Indian is the big Indian's son. The big Indian is not the little Indian's father. Who is it?
4. Which is correct: 8 and 8 are 15, or 8 and 8 is 15?
5. Is it legal for a man to marry his widow's sister?
6. A monkey is at the bottom of a 30-foot well. Each day he jumps up three feet and slips back two. At that rate, when will the monkey reach the top of the well?
7. Take two apples from three apples and what have you got?
8. I have two minutes in which to catch a train, and two miles to go. If I go the first mile at the rate of 30 miles per hour, at what rate must I go the second mile in order to catch the train?
9. The number of eggs in a basket doubles every minute. The basket is full of eggs in an hour. When was the basket half full?
10. A shepherd had 17 sheep, all but nine died. How many did he have left?
11. A customer hands a cigar clerk a five-dollar bill for two dollars' worth of cigars. The latter has no change, but gets some next door from a drug clerk, who gives him five one-dollar bills for the five-dollar bill. The customer leaves with the cigars and three dollars in change. An hour later the drug clerk rushes in, saying the five-dollar bill was counterfeit. The cigar clerk gives him a good-give-dollar bill. How much did the cigar clerk lose in money and cigars?
12. What is the smallest

number of ducks that could swim in this formation: two ducks in front of a duck, two ducks behind a duck, and a duck between two ducks?

13. We all know there are 12 one-cent stamps in a dozen, but how many two-cent stamps are there in a dozen?
14. A boat will carry only 200 pounds. How may a man weighing 200 pounds and his two sons, each of whom weighs 100 pounds, use it to cross a river?
15. A set of ten books is arranged in orderly fashion on a shelf. Each book has 100 pages, making 1000 pages in all. A worm starting on the first page of the first book eats through the last page of the last book. How many pages has he eaten?
16. The archaeologist who said he found a silver coin marked 645 BC was either lying or kidding. Why?

Answers

1. Three minutes. It takes each cat three minutes to kill each rat.
2. A 50-cent piece and a nickel. The other is a nickel.
3. Mother.
4. Neither: 8 and 8 are still 16.
5. Only dead men have widows, what?
6. On the 27th day. At the end of the 27th day he had ascended 27 feet. On the 28th day, he reaches the top.
7. Two apples, of course.
8. Too bad you missed it. You used up all your time going the first mile.
9. In 59 minutes. If the basket is full in 60 minutes, it was half-full a minute earlier, or at the end of 59 minutes.
10. Nine.
11. Five dollars, two in merchandise and three in cash.
12. Three ducks in a row, one after the other.
13. Twelve.
14. The two sons go first. One brings back the boat and Pappy rows over. Then the other son returns for his brother.
15. He ate 802. Look at a row of books on a shelf. You can see why the worm didn't touch 99 pages of the first and 99 of the last.
16. How did anyone know Christ was coming in 649 years?

Courtesy — More Tests and Teasers

Trips and Tours You can Take and Make This Winter

CLOSE your files and put a full stop to work — at least for a while. It's time for fun and gaiety. Obviously you know winter is here — time to take a break and take things easy. Relax a bit. Surely you have plans already buzzing in your head to get away from all these long working hours and mundane daily chores. Moreover its time you give yourself that special 'treat' you promised your loved ones so long ago.

Bring out that adventure in you and take these few tips and suggestions into account. The Guide Tours Ltd. one of the leading tour operating companies, is offering you exclusive options to enjoy this vacation better.

Half Day Sightseeing Every — Sat, Sun, Tues

Normally this tour will be in the morning and last for three to four hours. On this tour you will see a little bit of this fast growing city. The trip includes visit to few places from among, Sadarghat (river front), Nawab's Palace which is also known as Ahsan Manzil or Pink Palace, Lalbagh Fort, Star Mosque, Armenian Church, Dhakeswari Temple, National Parliament Building, National Museum and Baitul Mukarram Mosque. The price per person for this tour is adult Tk 500, child Tk 300.

Full Day Sightseeing Every — Sat, Sun, Tues

The first part of this tour will be similar to the above mentioned.

After completing the morning session you will be taken out of the city either to Savar about 20 km North west of Dhaka to visit the National Mausoleum there or to Sonargaon 25 km to the east to visit the old (500 years)

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capital of Bengal. Price per person for this trip is adult Tk 800, child Tk 500.

Day Long Sightseeing and River Cruise Every — Wed

The first part of this tour will be similar to the half day sightseeing but shorter.

At around 12:30 you will leave Dhaka and arrive at Demra Ghat which is about 15

Evening River Cruise with Dinner Every — Thurs, Sun, Tues

This trip begins in the afternoon around 1600 hrs from Demra Ghat.

Cruising to the North following the Shitalakhya river, you will stop at Noapara village, can anchor at a nice place to enjoy the moonlit evening or take on swim in the river. Price per person for this trip is adult Tk 800

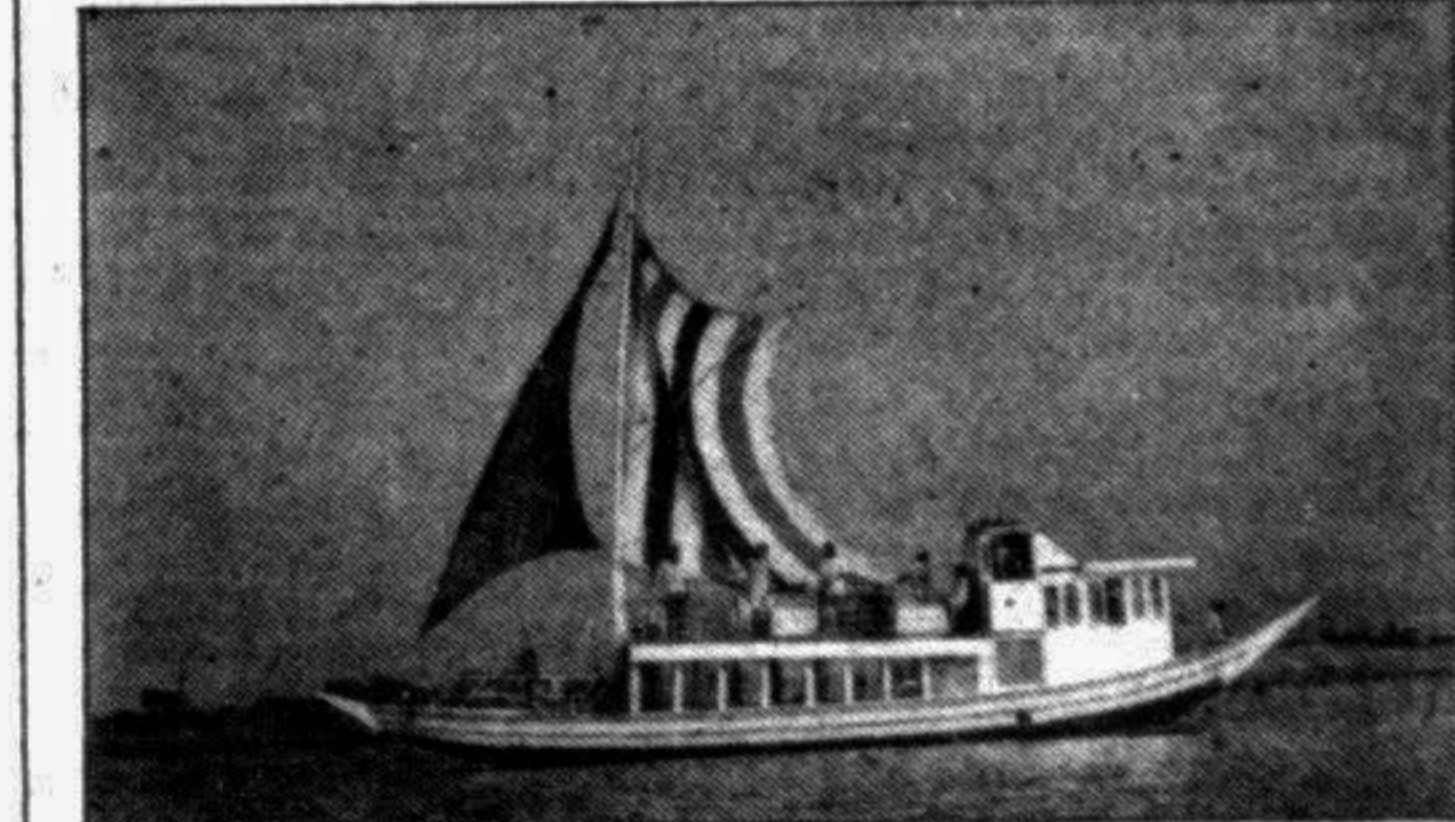
Full Day River-Cruise Every — Fri, Sat, Mon

The S B Ruposhi will cruise on Shitalakhya river. On this cruise you can easily see the dolphins around you coming out the water to breathe. You can also visit Murapara, there is an old Zaminder's palace there. At this point the cruising will continue towards north for another hour or 50 before turning back. On your way back you can stop at Noapara. Price per person for this trip is Tk 850 for an adult and Tk 500 for a child. Foods and snacks for all these trip are served by the Guide Tours Ltd.

Moreover the Guide Tours Ltd also offers you exciting trips to Rangamati, the Sundarbans forest, Sylhet and Srimgol, Cox' Bazar, Brahmaputra (Jamuna) river, Nepal and Bhutan.

Note: Other companies with similar programmes may contact us.

Compiled by R B Rashid



S B Ruposhi — a country boat with modern amenities. Courtesy — The Guide Tours Ltd.

km East of Dhaka to board the Guide's boat "S B Ruposhi" for the river cruise on Shitalakhya river. They will stop at Noapara village close to Demra to show you traditional and famous Jamdanaee weaving. You can also visit Murapara, the place with the old Zamindars Palace.

Price per person for this trip is adult Tk 1000 and child Tk 600.

Silver moon, silver river.