

Dhaka Day by Day

No Cruelty to Defenceless Children, Please!

by Gemini Wahhaj

Only a few days ago, a team of well-dressed camera crew descended at Dhanmondi lake with some funky looking equipment. They took out the camera from its box and set up the tripod, monitor, and other exciting looking accessories for some test shooting.

"Shoot that beautiful tree," said the ladies. "Oh look, some dating couples!" exclaimed another excited voice.

"What cute children, swinging from those trees," said the ladies.

Thus shooting began, amid much excitement. Passing rickshaws stopped to see the action. Some Dhanmondi teenagers halted their dad's car for a closer look, hoping to spot a famous film star or two. And of course, those cute children hanging from the tree soon descended and gathered around the camera also.

"Hey you," yelled the cameraman as soon as he noticed them, "clear out."

The kids scattered a little to congregate again at a respectful distance. They stared mesmerised at the 6-inch colour monitor that duplicated the very sights around them. They rubbed their noses, scratched their bare tummies, and adjusted their multi coloured checked lungis, never taking their eyes off the monitor.

Suddenly the camera swung and a kid got in the way.

"Hey you, rascal, Go away," yelled the cameraman, "or I'll fix you."

His voice rang out so loudly that even his own team started a little. The children moved away, a beautiful magical day ended abruptly.

It is not uncommon for Bangladesh adults to yell at street children. They may curse, scold or even hit a Tokai for being in the way of a car, a child kuli for being too slow, or a young ven-

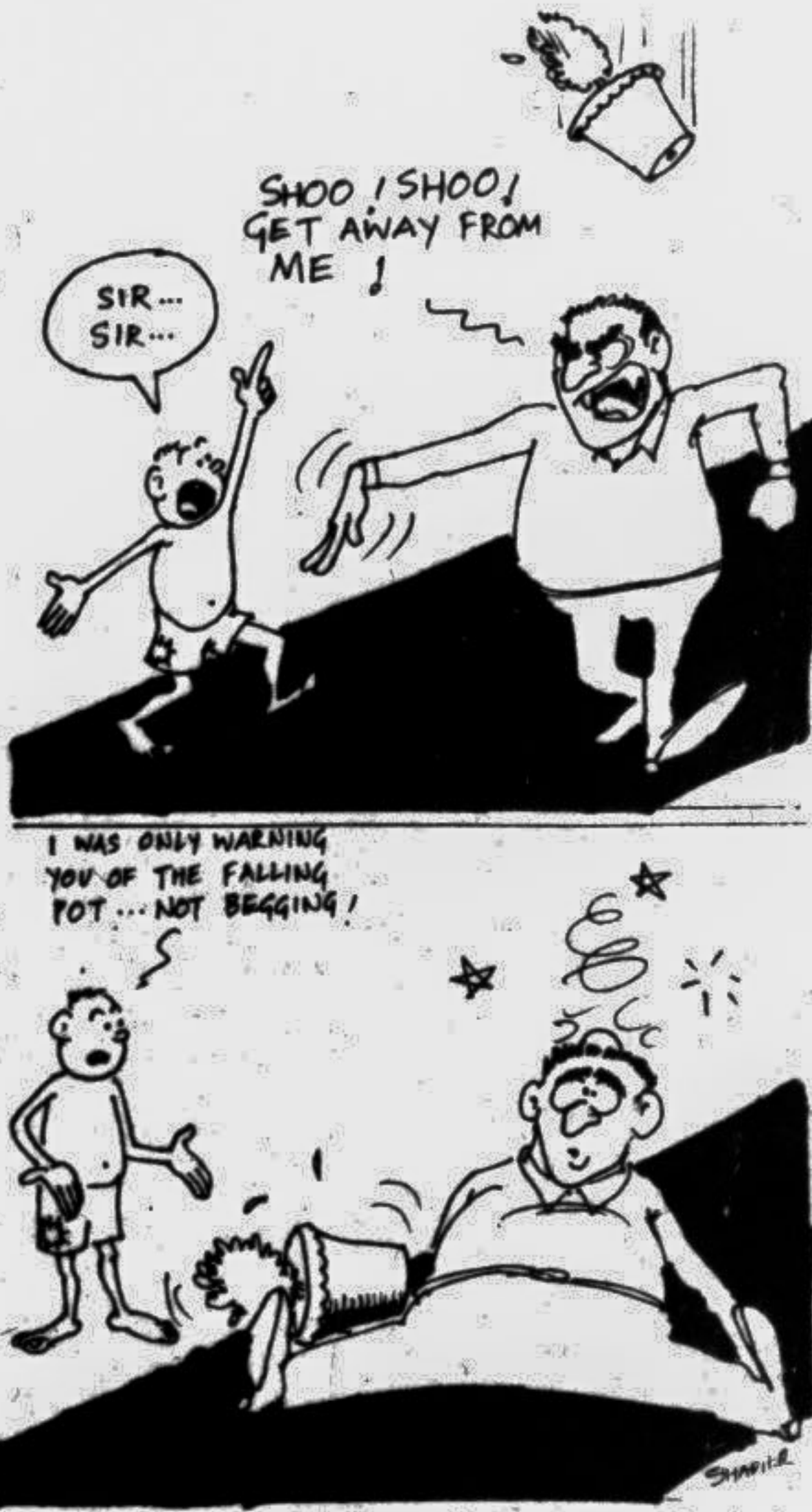
dor for asking a taka too many. Child beggars are subjected to such indiscriminate harshness, that who knows, they may be psychologically impaired for life.

"Hey you," a healthy looking housewife in a katan admonishes a child beggar. "So what if you don't have any arms or legs, you can still earn a living! You kids that beg, you're just earning money sitting down." She herself doesn't look like she's done a day's work in her life, but that's beside the point.

These adults aren't necessarily the inhuman monsters that the Bichitra writes about. They aren't sadists that kill off their child servants. These adults that we're talking about here are very nice people, possibly your aunt, or father. Perhaps you yourself have yelled at a child at a bad moment.

Who's to stop you? These children have no guardian who'll come after you. No parent will sue you for the psychological battering of their loved child, or for the permanent scars this child will carry around for life. Just think back, don't you still cry when you remember an unjust scolding in your childhood, an unforgettable harshness? Won't you think just a little before you inflict the same on a defenceless little child?

It is a universal rule that no party other than parents and teachers can punish a child. Even parents and teachers are taken to task for inhuman cruelty in some countries. Granted, no such laws are exercised in Bangladesh. But what is a law without a moral? You're in charge of your conscience. Before you lash out in rage at the next Tokai, gently remind yourself that you have no right to.



Visitors at the second national miniature art exhibition at city's Gallery Tone yesterday. — Star photo

Nat'l miniature art show begins

By Staff Correspondent

The second national miniature art exhibition began yesterday at the Gallery Tone in Dhanmondi.

Sayed Ahmed inaugurated the show and distributed prizes among the winners of the 2nd Tone National Miniature Art Awards '94.

The All Media Best award for painting for the second year running was won by Zamirul Islam for his exquisite water colour entitled 'Gloomy Zarina'.

The top award for graphics went to Rafi Haque, while Shaker Shaswath's 'Kea Athithi' received the Best Sculpture award.

The prize-winning works and the remaining competition entries constitute the exhibition, which runs till April 6 and will remain open daily from 10 am to 8 pm.

Prize-giving ceremony

National Professor Shamsul Haq has said that the grow-ups should appreciate the children for their endeavour to solve the problems and create a better collective future for the nation, reports BSS.

"Our children have historically achieved many outstanding feats. We must emulate them," Prof Haq, a former foreign minister of the country asserted while speaking as chief guest at a prize-giving ceremony held here on Wednesday for a children's art competition organised jointly by Nabadiganta (Japan) and the Hunger Project, Bangladesh.

The topic of the competition which was open to children below 11 was: "Self-reliant Bangladesh: challenges and solutions."

Obituary

Ruhul Ameen, Bar-at-Law, of Dhamura Mia Bari, Barisal died of cardiac arrest in London on March 28. He was 75, says a press release.

His body will arrive in Dhaka today by Biman at 9:30 am. *Namaz-e-Janaza* will be held in Banani Jame Mosque after Jumma prayers.

Late Ruhul, who was practicing Law at Old Baily, London, for last forty years, left behind his wife, a son and two daughters.

His *qul* will be held tomorrow at his son in law's residence (House-6 B, Road-67, Gulshan) after Asr prayers.

'Basanta Mela' in Khulna

KHULNA, Mar 30: A week-long "Basanta Mela" began here today at the Zilla School premises, reports UNB.

Some 250 stalls with different handicraft items have been on display in the fair.

Chehlum

Chehlum of Alhaj Sufi Nurul Haque will be held at his residence at 137, Nazir Road, in Feni, at 11 am today, says a press release.

Late Nurul Haque, a noted social worker, died on February 22 last.

Aarong rural craft shop

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ANNOUNCEMENT

KLM regrets to announce that due to circumstances beyond its control the introduction of the third flight scheduled to operate every Saturday with effect from April 1, 1995 has to be postponed till the end of October, 1995.

We sincerely apologise for any inconvenience caused to our valued passengers and travel agents.

For more information please contact:

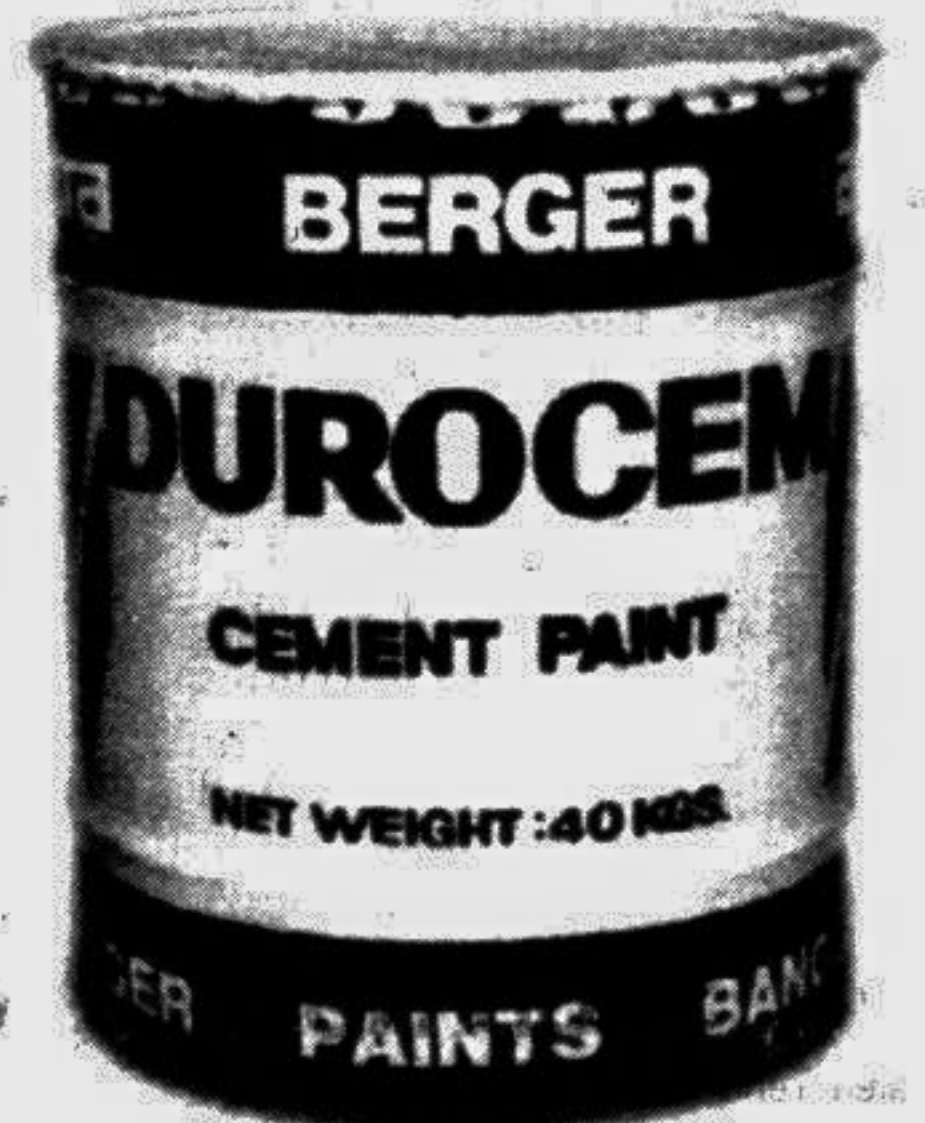
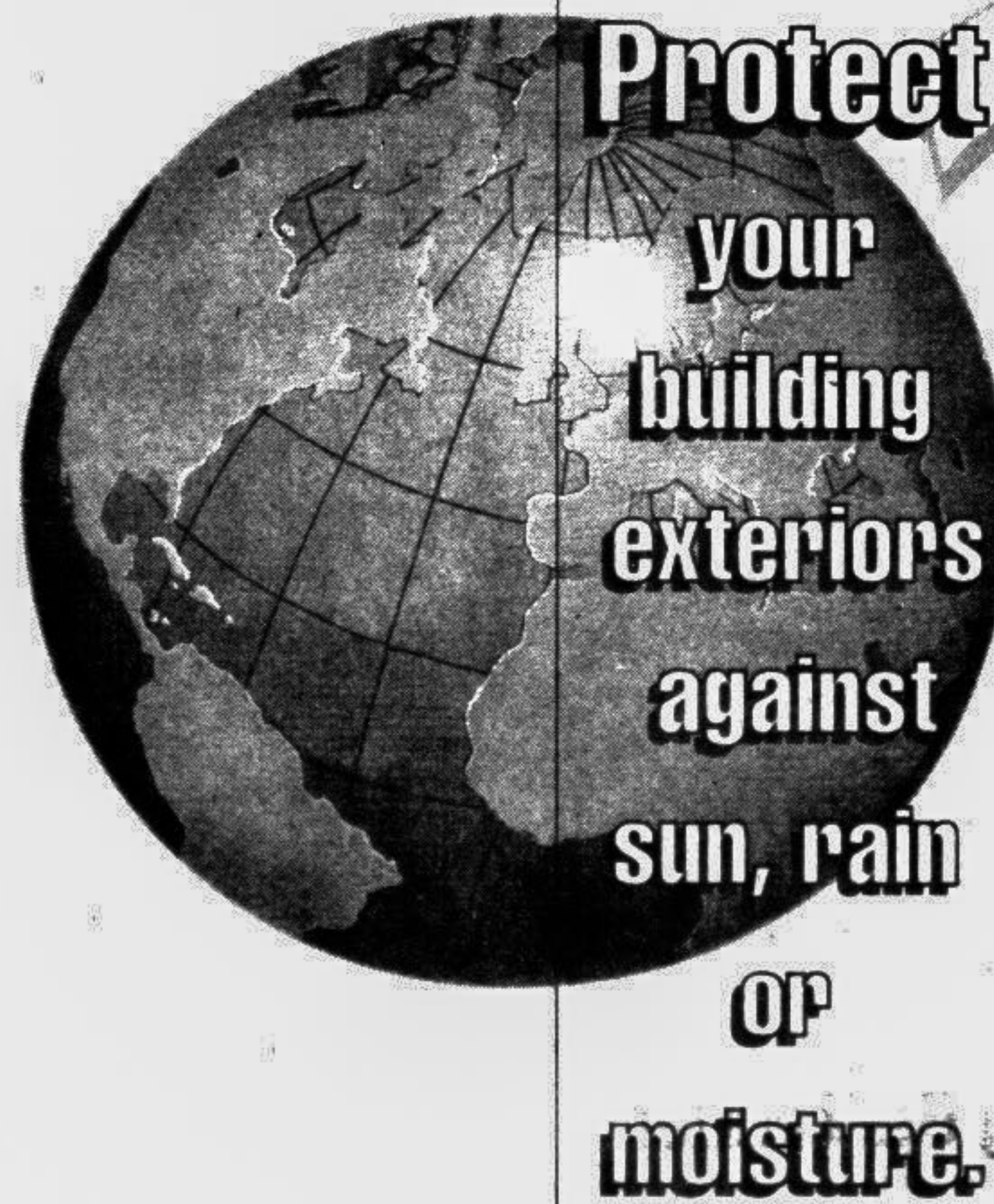
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