

TEENS and TWENTIES

STEP right in! Step right in! Rush and get your "Chat-patti's" and "Fuchka's" on the doubles — the alluring call of the 'mobile' food-seller just hypnotises you. Then and there you give up all in that purse of yours and stuff your stomach with every item he has to offer.

That's no crime but, the only problem is that, in the long run the nearest toilet would be your permanent destination. That's right guys! These diabolic dump-foods are basically nothing but a gateway to hell. The interesting fact is that in our country we define burgers, sandwiches, hot-dogs etc as fast foods, whereas from the place of their origin, they're called junk-foods! While here, we call the mobile open-air, fly-infected foods as junk-foods. Let's see what's so special about these junkies.

From parks to palaces, in every road joint, at any school premises, near any cinema hall, you may find his cart offering the hot favourite, the spicy, mouth watering Chatpatti and Fuchka. It's really a wonder how this junky jerk manages to cut, cook, process, pile and sell as well as yell to his highest, all in and around his four feet by three feet contraption (and a booming business it is!). I think there isn't a single country-loving cockney who hasn't yet tasted such marvelous. Those brown coloured marble-like lentils, when cooked and served by experienced hands and added with various mouth-watering spices and a pinch of chilli-beans — Ah! Gluttony,

my friends! Sheer gluttony. Those 'Fuchka's' — hollow biscuit-like crunchy com- prende's with some magical munchy material inside them — are the best way to put a



Chatpatti Stand.

stop to a growing intestine. Some add another very popular item called 'Peppered Chilli-Bubbles' or better known as 'Jhal-Muree'. The parching rice is processed by mixing chopped chilli-bits, a good amount of oil (definitely not kerosine)

and a little this and that (?). They even use hand made mixture-machines which make an electric mixture-

rhythm of the shacking re- minds you of a tap-dancer tapping his way to 'Jhal-Muree Land'.

by Siraj-us-Saleheen Lovell

Catastrophic Cuisines

in various eye-catching colors of which red and off-white are most commonly used.

A brother of this family is the 'Nimki', having nearly similar attributes but different tastes. There are a variety of 'Nimki's' available for a jaw-crushing junk-food eat-out. One type is similarly coated with sugar as the 'Kadkad', but non-similarly shaped, more wider and bigger like a purse of a posh- woman. Another type is more small in size, looking like a rhombus (don't worry, I'm not gonna teach you geometry) and stuffed with salt instead of sugar. The contents may be different, but the taste is always fabulous.

Then there's the one called 'Piajoos', a small flower-shaped food red in colour and have a crazy crunchy taste. Its ingredients are a mixture of smashed lentils and little onion and chili pieces. They put them into a frying pan, boil-'em-in-oil, and wallah! Zee finest zunkee in zee world! You just love to hold those ultra-hot 'Piajoos' in your hand and keep looking at them as a mother looks at her cubs.

Around 'New-Market' and 'Neel-Khet' areas you'll find floating hawkers selling a new trend of junk-food. These are 'Kheechuri's' or 'Biryani's' or the original 'Kheechuri/Biryani' is that, these road-side hypnotizing goodies are said to be left-

overs from various commu- nity centers. Hey! look, I had no intention of kapoofing your appetite, but that is the true fact, 'cause there's no other reason for such rich- foods to be sold at such a cheap rate. The most aston- ishing factor is that, during lunch time you'll have to stand in a queue for a single plate.

It is said that if you're, for any reason, furious, the best medicine is to bite-away a packet of Chick-pea's bought from those hazy-eyes hawk- ers who, in any park, pop-out in front of you from nowhere like the Genic of Aladdin. Well, I don't know about anger, but they sure are a good thing to pass away time, especially, when you're in a park with you're most beloved one (?). These tiny little ball-shaped peas, are an effective weapon in a cin- ema-hall or theater where, when everybody's so mesmerized in the act, you just jab away and produce a sound loud enough to find every disturbed, peturbed and angry eye focusing on you.

Well that was really a junky journey wasn't it? Though these junk-foods are sometimes hazardous to health as fleas perform open- air concerts on them, still they've been a tradition in our country for a long time. Who wants to forget a tradi- tion? I don't know about you, but certainly not me. Some- times you have to break the rules for good health, other- wise life would be as cold as the North-Pole.

Be Junky and be Jolly.

Long Cherished Foods of The Old Town

by A B M Jaber Hossain Bipu

BAKARKHANI:

AMONG all the foods of old town the Bakarkhani is the most favoured precept. It is made of flour and soya- bean oil. This unusual, almost biscuit like special of old Dhaka is done in an oven or furnace where the raw materials are spread to the terrigenous deposit and the sides of the oven. When it is prepared its belly is sliced into three cuts to make the steam go out of it, as a result it becomes very crisp.

I am very much fond of these crisp Bakarkhanis, so, now and often I have to go to *Islamia Bakarkhani Bakery* on Nazimuddin road in old Dhaka. At the bakery four people are engaged to knead the dough for baking and two for the actual baking the shop offers this delight from 8 am to 10 pm. Every day two to three thousands are made to sell, while orders are also taken in large amount.

My request to those who haven't yet taken this is that please come to old town and try these out with *kabab* and you'll come again for sure.

HAJI BIRIANI:

ANOTHER long standing commemorative food of old Dhaka is *Hajir Biriyan*. Its name and fame is from the Pakistan period, and till today it maintains that status. Served in a bowl like packet made out of dry leaves, this Biriyan has a taste of its very own.

Now, this hotel belongs to Mr Haji Golam Hossain and this family business of his continues from his grandfather's era who had established it long ago. It stands on the middle of Kazi Alauddin road.

I wanted to know about the top secret of their business but he didn't give vent to me. But there is a leak though, they use *mustard oil* instead of using *ghee* or *dalda*. They don't sell half plate, and a full plate costs Tk-40 only. They start selling around the evenings and continue upto 11 pm. This particular shop needs no sign board or sort; when it's business time, people, like bees automatically find the place. It's ambrosia to many, and even has fans in Middle- East, England, India.

FARUK TEHARI HOUSE:

TEHARI is an aristocratic food of old Dhaka as well. Usually Tehari is a spicy *polao*, sort of gourmet that has pieces of mutton in it. The famous *Faruk Tehari House*, near the police line at Narinda in the old town, serves a full plate of Tehari at only Tk 16, half plate at Tk 8 and single plate for Tk-4. I am rapt in thought when I think how they make profit by selling at such cheap rates. The answer is from the simple economic theory, "when supply of a commodity increases then price decreases, and when the demand on that commodity increases the price increases." As a result of this balance in the supply- demand graph the price of *tehari* becomes cheaper than that of other old town specialities. Usually, the demand of it is higher during the winter than the summer. The rich and the poor, all are the consumer of this popular food.

MAMA HALIM:

THOUGH *Halim* is an old town food but it has gained much popularity among the residents of the new town, as well. A well-known Halim centre at Kalabagan, opposite to the bus stoppage proves the above fact. Here *halim* is prepared in the usual recipe of various pulses but with extra spices, fried onion ginger, *podina* leaves and some liquid sour added to it to make it more tasty, delicious and simply fantastic.

Halim is sold in clay bowls called *shora* and the price varies depending strictly on the size of the bowl.

Hard Drink Hangovers

THE writer would like to assert that all informa- tion produced in this article in no way reflects his personal experience (hic!). To the best of his knowledge, he is a mature, sound human being whose character has been repeatedly compared to the Taj Mahal, a delicate yet flawless structure.

The author would also like to convey the thought that this article was stridently forced upon him as an assign- ment (under severe protest from him as you may imagine), and the wicked smile, at the time of accepta- tion, was in no way an indica- tion of his incrimination but rather was due to his having his teeth fixed earlier that morning (hic!).

The author would also like to take this opportunity to thank his bacchalian friends (oops!), who are not actually his friends and with whom he has no relation whatsoever.

There was a time long ago when if questioned about the concept of VAT69 the youth of Bangladesh would innocently reply that probably it was the Pope's telephone number. Not any- more. Today one third of the youth are already drunkards, the other one third is thinking of drinking which leaves the other one third con- demning the first two thirds. Which is where I come in that means we're in big trou- ble. Hard drinks are becom-

ing quite common among to- day's uncommon youths. Drink and be merry seems to be their motto.

Some drink because they have a particular bend of mind that dictates their in- clination towards the socially unacceptable, some drink because it's the "in" thing to do and still others drink be- cause they like it. But what- ever the cause may be the fact still remains that this phenomenon is getting quite commonplace. This is particu- larly true about the Varsity going youths.

Nowadays hard drinks are available at an astonishing number of places. The array of hard drinks available are also phenomenal. Careful in- vestigation reveals that "local pubs" are very common in Dhaka. These are known to a select few and are frequented by the poor and the wealthy alike. There are also quite a few bars in Dhaka which have a reputation of being "safe" (which usually means that certain police officials go there). But obviously intoxi- cation can be a very expen- sive habit if one is inclined towards these "safe" places too often.

I once heard a story of a certain person of a certain hall of a certain university who was an avid drinker. When partially inebriated he had the reputation of calling *chanachurwalas* and asking

them with a hint of serious- ness in his tone, why they did not keep *Kalajams* with them as that was the pride and glory of Bangladesh?

Another time he was seen in the bathroom of that cer- tain hall minutely examining his face, shaking his head saying that he had grown thin. He was standing at the wash basin looking at the wall where the mirror was sup- posed to be, except that it wasn't actually there.

I had the fortunate oppor- tunity to meet him when he was sober (which people tell me is as rare as finding a penguin in Africa, which is rare indeed). I asked him why he drank and he replied after thinking over this crucial question, "Why does a dog do what he does when he sees a lamp post, because if he didn't do it nobody else would, because a dogs got to do what a dogs got to do. It's the same with me". This an- swer certainly didn't clarify anything but surely it hinted at the sheer genius of that character.

As you may have noticed I have not ventured into the moral or ethical viewpoints of the drinking phenomenon. After all who am I to judge what is right and what is wrong. To some it is an un- pardonable sin. To others it is as natural as picking a nose (one's own nose, obviously). Personally though, I still prefer picking my nose to hard drink hangovers. (Hic!).



Our famous Italian hotels.

— Star Photo.

They Were on the Stage Again!

by Inam Huda

AFTER a long time, the youth of the city had the chance to see a live concert last Thurs- day as the authorities have finally allowed such a pro- gramme amid tight security.

When I entered Hotel Sonargaon's ball room, I thought I had mistakenly en- tered the "green channel" without my passport. The guy asked for the necessary docu- ment which says "Nebula Concert 1995, Price-Tk 1000". I showed it to them. Then, when I was about to pass through the metal de- tector gate, some of the Nebula guys pushed me aside, "Move it. The Minister cometh!"

The very important Minister passed. To me, he is just a politician, but to the organisers he is the king! Because, he can cancel the concert at any moment on various excuses like drugs or violence.

Last winter, the authori- ties cancelled a concert about to be held in Gulshan on the grounds that both the audience and musicians take drugs openly in such shows. The worst part is, certain young boys go there just for violence and evr teasing. The authorities had argued with the organisers of such con- certs that people do not at- tend these programmes to listen to music, but for drugs and violence.

After a long process of persuasion, Nebula was able to put back musicians on stage. This concert, particu- larly by Miles, Little River Band and Feelings, opens the door for future concerts as it ended without any violence— although, sometimes, the audience very unfairly booed at the performers just for fun. Inside the banquet hall, the concert stage was sepa- rated by a make-shift curtain. The assorted speakers,

which blew over a thousand watts of sounds, stood almost as high as the ceiling. Although there was arrange- ment for 900 in the audi- ence, some 300 to 350 seats were vacant. "It appears to me that the organisers failed in their publicity," a major cassette producer, who was invited to the concert, told me.

But a number of dudes told me that a lot of people could not attend the concert because of the costly ticket. The organisers, Nebula Associates Private Ltd Co, told me that the price was made high because of the over head costs and also it would filter out violent ele- ments who destroy the concert environment.

The concert opened with the performance of Feelings, led by James (or Gems). With superb lighting and fogging devices, the rock and roll roared to the ears of the young audience who had been longing for a concert like they see on channel V.

Performance of Feelings was good, if not great. The sound mixing of the concert was mid-tone biased. The voice of Gems (or James) was slightly distorted, (though the songs mostly did not require a fine tuned voice.) The guitar performance was great, but was hardly individualistic in style. A major flaw of this group is that the performers did not communicate with their audience directly.

Little River Band (LRB) proved their skill during their performance by any standards. They wasted no time tuning their instru- ments, and soon made the crowd dance.

Amid severe metal music, LRB boss Ayub Bacchu made a point to communicate with his audience—which proved to be an effective measure to control them as well. They

began with "ghumanta sha- har" and dominated the spirit of the audience for the rest of the afternoon. Bacchu is a natural performer. Although many of LRB's songs lack melody to my ear (on cas- sette), I "devoured" the whole performance.

LRB performed their songs one after another, without any break. Plus when they started playing their super hit number "Shet Tum",

ing after a long delay. They began with " *pertham pre- meri mato* " — which instantly had the audience singing along. But in the next three acoustic performances, which included " *Rim Jhim Brishti* " and two English numbers, the audience be- came impatient. After four acoustic songs, Miles began playing electric/electronic/ sequenced live. After two more songs, the audience

aspect of Miles' performance. Firstly, the acoustic session was not appreciated by the audience who boo-ed them unfairly at one point. The second pathetic part, for which everybody should have had boo-ed but nobody did, was the pre-recorded music (not in all songs). To make the matter worse the drummer "pretended" to play the drums-while you could hear sounds of congo or maracas (played by ghosts) along with the "extra-clean" sounds of snare, hi-hats and bass drums (specially during *Dhiki Dhiki*).

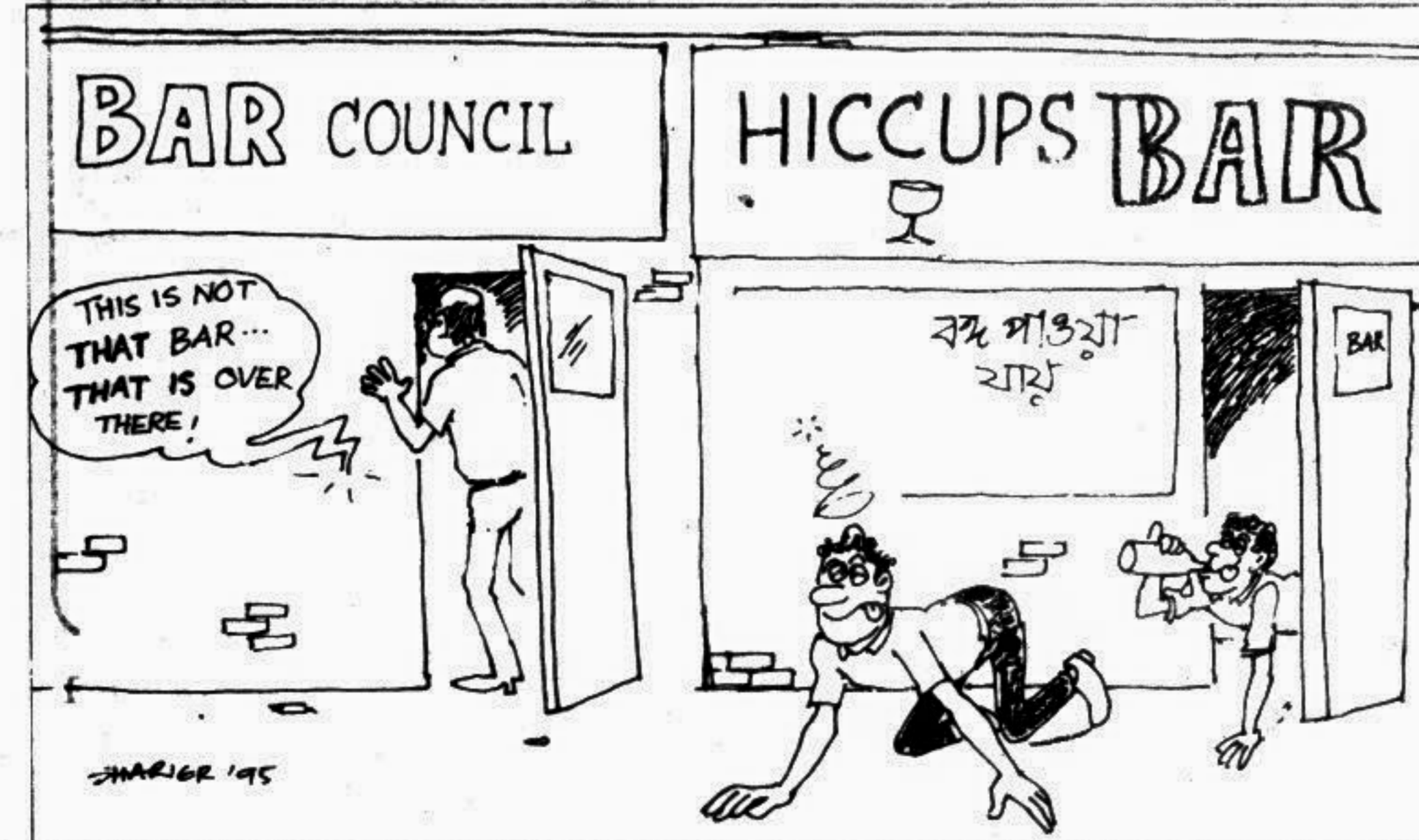
The celebrated key- boardist of Miles, Manam, unfortunately failed to get into proper mood. Miles has good potential and great ex- perience and it should share its musical experiences with audiences properly. But, yes, their performance was great otherwise. Balanced sound, good songs and good vocals.

The bottom line of the concert is that Dhaka has a number of good rock groups. But not good listeners. It's the bad listeners who had previously foiled concerts. Unless and until they give up their cheap mentality that a concert is a place to smoke marijuana, to tease (sometimes physically) girls (who also have a tendency to wear provocative dresses there) and fight, there will not be anymore concerts in the city in the future (unfortunately, the bad guys will not read this article). I urge the musicians in making the audience civilised by playing concerts at smaller venues with cheap tickets and also that something in- teresting can go on in the city in the future.



almost half of the song was sang by the audience. In total they played, very profession- ally, 15 to 16 songs, which included a few English num- bers. Miles carefully had planned for an acoustic ses- sion, when it began perform-

began booing, and bassist cum vocalist Hamin was compelled to express his annoyance saying, "Kindly wait. Let us play and listen to what we play. *Chand-tara* (a major hit number of the band) will be played in time." There was a pathetic



NOTICE
It is to inform our teenage readers that *Teens & Twenties*, your weekly exclusive section of *The Daily Star*, has decided to revive its favourite column, 'Matters of the Heart', from 20th October, 1995. So, we welcome your letters asking suggestions to your personal problems.

Florentine poet Dante
PERHAPS the finest — and certainly the most famous — of all Italian poets, Dante, was one of the spearheads of the Renaissance in Italy. He was a contemporary and friend of the painter Giotto (p.97). He appears to have studied at several seats of learning, such as Bologna, Paris and Oxford, to have fought in the wars between the Guelphas and the Ghibellines,

and to have been employed on state business. But he is of course celebrated for his *Divina Commedia*, a long philosophical poem telling the story of an imaginary journey through Hell, Purgatory and Paradise. In Hell he saw the Devil with Judas Iscariot on one side and Brutus and Cassius (Caesar's murderers) on the other. In Paradise he describes a pure association with Beatrice Portinari, the wife of a real-life nobleman whom he knew and loved — from a distance.