

TEENERS and TWENTIES

'Hangouts of the Young People' Only a Little Love Could Change the World

TEENAGERS — the very word suggest youth, vitality, zest etc. Unlike the teenagers abroad, the younger generation here have hardly any place to go — no amusement parks or recreational facilities no discos.

One can find young people in the cafe Aarong Sipping away cokes with their friends or having an absolute nervous breakdown on seeing the prices! Aarong is quite popular with the young people; it is included and provides a beautiful view of the busy streets of Dhaka city's and one must not forget that for couples this is an extremely convenient place!

Most of the fast food stores like La Bamba are quite popular also, despite the fact that La Bamba keeps raising its prices. Both Star Kabab and La Bamba have the benefit of being centrally situated. All the schools and colleges are nearby and any chance any one gets to get out, he or she will definitely take the opportunity to go to La Bamba or Star Kabab.

A sip of the cool coke and a bite of the greasy yet delicious burger — what more can anyone possibly want!

The lake is also a favourite of the younger generation perhaps, because of the vague glimpses of nature one gets there, perhaps because of its secluding or perhaps because it is so different from any coloured restaurants. Girls and boys (some even in uniforms) can be found staring at the waters or vowing or shooting balloons or better still trying to figure out the intricacies of life. We must not forget the nuts or *chenabadam* and the tea we get here are so crude yet so delicious!

by Aliya F Khan



Ramna Park is also a favourite place for the youngs. All sorts of people can be found here and when one is young the discomforts of sitting on grass or being bitten by ants are nothing at all. The Sangsad Bhaban is quite popular especially during the evenings when no one has anything else to do.

Some people go there to study (so they say) among all the greenery, some go there to just pass the time and some go there for privacy and to ... their loved ones!

Shifting from these places if one move on to Gulshan then Kintuki, Rainbow, Dolce Vita are some of the places that are the favourite haunts of some of the younger generation. The thing that amazes me the most and undoubtedly what you are asking too is — where do they get the money? There can be several

replies to this question, younger people are becoming more and more aware of the need of pocket money. Now pocket money is not exactly all that popular in Bangladesh, some of us get it some of us don't. Well then what do the unlucky ones do? After much pondering I'm sure they realize that they have to work in order to get extra money, some boys and girls teach, others help out in offices, schools etc.

More and more of the younger group are becoming interested in working and having some extra money for spending on themselves or their friends. Some are fortunate enough to be able to just spend money without any work and I can almost see the look of envy on the faces of those who have to work for it.

But remember only those who do obtain what they want through hard work are, in the end, rewarded. Somehow

spending money on food and friends gives immense pleasure to these young people, those who have canteens in their schools and colleges consider themselves quite lucky, what can be more enjoyable than sitting in the canteen, eating *shingaras* and talking about the pairs involved in being young!

It's quite amusing to hear what they or we talk about. Mainly it can be called gossip, what has happened in school? What that girl or that boy has done? What scandals are happening in Bombay or America? How sad it is that studies are so difficult.

Then comes the part where they become bored and look around — Aha! They see someone they can pick on, so what do they do? They comment on his or her dress, shoes, looks, everything — starting from the head to the toes, when everything has been scanned and commented on, they start

feeling bored again. Then what to do? Ofcourse discuss about how boring life is? How steep the prices are. How can just one coke be Tk 10? And it goes on, conversations of the younger generation can be quite stimulating. It not only ranges on a wide variety, but its mixture of wit, humour, scandalous remarks and serious matters make it unique and perhaps a little more interesting than the older generation.

It's really quite sad to realize that there are only some places where the younger generation can 'hang out', but most of these places are nothing out of the ordinary, places like Big Byte, Pizza Lake, Yum Yum are also popular because they have sitting arrangements and ofcourse air conditioning, Dolce Vita, especially the one in Dhanmondi is also another favourite of the young.

On a hot summers day licking an ice cream and gossiping with your friend, what more can you possibly ask for? The other restaurants such as Chinese, Italian etc are much too formal and much too steep, so that's why the younger generation usually steer clear away from it, unless ofcourse fortune has bestowed a lot of good fortune and then it becomes affordable.

It's quite pathetic that we have no amusement parks no place to just be with our friends and have some privacy. May be if people started thinking more about the younger generation and less on their money making schemes of big restaurants, Bangladesh will have places where every one can go and just enjoy themselves like they should or act their age!

THE great human race. What a miracle of nature we are! How intelligent, how powerful, how different we. Homo sapiens are from all the lower forms of life. We are the ultimate form of evolution (?) — how our minds work! We proudly acknowledge ourselves to be great and good but are we indeed such?

Yes, we are civilized, we have enough resources to share, to live comfortably and we can find solutions to most of our problems. We claim to be rational human beings and we put on a show of being such. But how do we explain ourselves when we act no better than uncivilized, ruthless animals.

When we look about us and witness the ugliness of a part of man's nature, we are shocked and ashamed. Then we question ourselves — what is the difference between us and the vicious animals belonging to the jungles.

Comparatively, how much more rational are we when we murder millions for a flimsy plot of land or when we savagely slaughter each other during riots. Which part of our nature do we express when all our suppressed selfishness, hatred, prejudice come to life? Do we forget to love and forgive? Lets look at some of the things that comes not of love

(I) War: A child of about three or four is standing near the still body of a female lying on the middle of an empty street. The body is covered in blood. The child's only pos-

session is the ragged teddy it clutches. The shooting may start again and luckily, the child may die of a bullet and not of starvation ... (II) Murder: There is no sense of shame, guilt or regret when the man tells the police how his relatives had assisted him in killing his wife ... "I had asked her whether it was to be her life or the dowry ... she chose the former ... ha! And she wanted to see her daughter for the last time ... She deserves what she got ..."

(III) The man who crouched on the floor of the ware house was 25. He was wishing he had never gone into politics. If they murdered or crippled him, what would happen to his mother and sister? One of the three men walking up to him carried a knife. The victim had seen one of those before and he knew what it was used for. He also knew that they wouldn't let him die in the easy way ... they'd probably cut his veins.

(IV) The rickshaw was slow and it was getting late. The passenger was thankful that she had worn no jewellery. There were four or five rough looking men swagging in the middle of the otherwise empty street. The girl yelled when they stopped her rickshaw and pulled her down. While one held onto the feeble old rickshaw puller, one pulled at her dupatta; and no one heard her pleading cries ...

The examples above are only a feeble attempt to show what happens all over the

world, each and everyday. News of such occurrences are only the reported cases and millions of such other unreported cases go by without notice. In this world at some time or the other, acts of violence, terrorism and cruelty are occurring without fail. Disputes about emotional issues like religion, race, colour and language could easily be solved using patience, tolerance and understanding. If only it were kept in mind that there is nothing greater and more sacred than humanity, peace and prosperity would reign the world.

It is unimaginable what love can do. Love can save starving people; it can prevent animals from becoming extinct; it can prevent deforestation; it can give orphans homes, it can prevent war, murder and love is the most powerful instrument for peace and happiness. Love for mankind does not go unnoticed for so many great people have received honourable awards such as the Noble Peace Prize.

Love is indeed the only thing that can make the world go round. If we loved ourselves, all creatures big and small and if we truly loved life itself, we would get back double the amount of love we gave out. All religions emphasize followers to love mankind and undoubtedly, 'He who loves all life-forms is serving God himself' (— by Buddha). It costs nothing and it pains none to love others but only a little love could change the world.

GUESS!

CAN you guess who they are? If you can, write down the name of the series they star in and the name of their character that they play. And send us the answers right away!



The Rest of Your Life Without Cigarettes?!

by Aditi Mubin Chowdhury

THERE is no easy way to give up smoking. For most, it is a struggle, requiring considerable self-control and determination. Unless you are convinced that you really mean to quit smoking, your attempt will fail.

It helps to have a strategy for giving up. It is best to decide about a week in advance which day you will actually quit (Q-day). Make a note in your diary and tell everyone about it. You may even manage to persuade a workmate, friend or some one in the family to give up with you.

For a few typical working days before hand you should restrict yourself firmly to only those cigarettes you really need to smoke. A good idea is to keep a smoking diary of these 'necessary' cigarettes, noting the time you lit up and what you were doing. This will be useful later when it comes to devising tactics for fighting off temptation.

The night before Q-day, ceremoniously light up for the last time and throw or give away any remaining cigarettes. Try to remind yourself again of the benefits of stopping and tell yourself that tomorrow you will be a non-smoker

(despite your craving for a cigarette!)

Q-day:

STUDY your smoking diary and decide how to cope with today's difficult situations. Try to think of ways to break routines, to distract or comfort yourself. Do not think about tomorrow, just think about getting through today.

These hints may help you: - If you miss something in your mouth, try substitutes such as chewing gum.

- If you feel awkward without a cigarette to occupy your hands, find something to play with: coins, a bunch of keys or a pen or pencil. Do whatever you can to change your daily routine so that you are not being tempted constantly if you enjoyed a cigarette with a cup of tea or coffee, try switching to soft drinks or fresh orange juice.

Keep away from places where people are smoking. If you tended to smoke when you were relaxing, keep yourself busy with a variety of practical activities, and spend as much time in the open air as possible. Make smoking a little more difficult for yourself. Buy

just one packet at a time and make it ten rather than twenty. Hide your lighter or matches, or leave them at home. Do not smoke in front of children. Do not accept cigarettes from others. When you reach for a cigarette, stop, look at your watch and wait for a while before taking it out of the pocket.

Cut out your two least favourite cigarettes of the day. Each week cut out two more. Start saving the money that smoking would have cost you and plan a treat for yourself at the end of your first month as a non-smoker.

Take each day as it comes and do not worry about facing the rest of your life without cigarettes. Keep reminding yourself why you have stopped smoking and try to invent new ways of coping with difficulties you encountered the previous day.

It may be difficult at first but many ex-smokers find that after a few days things get much easier. I had a few friends who were chain smokers but now they have turned into ex-smokers. If they can do it I'm sure you can as well. Good Luck!

O SOLITUDE

*O Solitude, if I must with thee dwell
Thou must fetch the water from the well.
But thy heart is so hostile,
It dost scare me to say,
If I liveth with thee
I shall never smile or play.
Thou canst not see, nor feel, nor hear
Thy deathly air I breatheth full of fear.
For here without anyone else but thee,
I dieth of loneliness.
Though thou art nothing,
But the imagination of me.*

*Thou art a hound greedy and hungry,
Thou followeth me wherever I go.
I tryeth all the time to escape
From thy jaws wide, empty and agape.
Spareth me this time, Solitude O great
And thou shalt have thy reward.*

*Why are thee so cruel and evil?
What have men done to thee
To deserve the treatment thou giveth them
With no knowledge of how much hurt thou provoke.
So now I pray and God's help I invoke
With hope that thee shalt not kill me.*

*For after me there shalt be men
Who like me have no one in whom to confide
But only thou who care not what they say.
Thou shalt be able to have thy fun
As there will be plenty for you to enjoy,
To persecute and torment with thy tyranny.*

by Adeeb Ali



Forbidden Thoughts

by Kazi Khaled Arafat

IM to blame
I confess I broke your rules
You're right in calling me a fool
I'd blame me if I were you
I blame me when I am I
So lynch me
And I'll help you see
that justice gets done.
I shouted my forbidden thoughts from the rooftops
But now I know they weren't worth sharing
Cuz yours and mine didn't coincide
Now I don't know where to hide
I have a conscience
And that conscience wants to commit suicide
No obligation
And I know you'll return the favour likewise
When I achieved control
Counterfeit pleasantries are easier to take
Than my censored ideas
and dogmatic and opinionated perceptions
Why couldn't I see you're always so correct
Please forgive me forgive me for saying what I think
I'll keep them bottled up next time
so please leave me a next time
And I promise, you'll never, ever again
Have to suffer from the nobody
Who says what he feels should be



Simpsons — The colours of American lifestyle.