

# TEENS and TWENTIES

## Our Toiling Friends!

# 'Working does not Mean Going Astray'

by Mozammel Kabir

"ALL work and no play makes Jack a dull boy" — a very appreciable piece of quotation for us student lots. But unfortunately our grown-ups don't seem to appreciate it as much as we do; they think (or at least sound like) that the only "work" for a "model" student should be to "study" and nothing else.

In that case, I think, in honour of our grown-ups, we could dare to rephrase the quotation as "All STUDY and no play makes Jack the PERFECT boy". Now! that should lower their temper a bit, I hope. Oh Boy! Grown-ups are really a bunch of fastidious people! Aren't they?

But times have changed and so have people. The new generation has a very different concept about life itself and about learning. To them the concept of a model student as a person who should be standing waist high in voluminous books and stick one's nose hour after hour into them is simply prehistoric — a thing of the past.

They believe "anyone" who devotes his time and thought in learning and collecting knowledge should be regarded as a student. A kind of knowledge that would not only open one's vision about truth and wisdom but also prepare him rightfully to face the harsh and cruel world ahead.

This knowledge can be gathered in many ways, besides books everyday chores and gaieties, convivial conversations, jobs and responsibilities might convey tonnes of information that are worth learning. An interested soul shouldn't find it hard to pick them up.

Recently an increasing number of students are choosing to get themselves entangled with the "real world" by involving themselves in various kinds of employments. Their job choice ranges from tutoring, waiting upon customers in restaurants, performing the role of a sales person in shops, working as secretaries in offices to professions like teaching in schools, working as sub-editors and reporters in newspapers, modelling and so on.

They believe they are not only earning some money of their own at this early age (15-20) but also experiencing and learning new things more than they could have if they hadn't joined the club. "It makes you smart; you really learn how to talk to people and that's very important" suggested one devoted being.

The average income of a working student ranges from Tk 2000 to Tk 15000 per month depending on the type of job he is busy with and the amount of time he is giving for it. An "average" like that isn't something worth ignoring, they are, in a sense, contributing to the country's GDP. Most of these students work irrespective of their parents financial conditions. Their income may as well have some contribution to their family's needs, for in most cases they finance their own education and hence they unburden their

parents, partially, earlier than usual. Besides, thus they all do waste some money in trivial ways like buying a rather expensive piece of clothing or eating in a luxury hotel for example, but they all agree "the conscience seems to taunt one with less vigors if it's one's own money that is going down the drain."

Generally all our working friends have arranged so that their jobs do not interfere with this formal education and social duties. At times, inspite of their whole-hearted effort, things might get meddled up but that is fairly rare. Their working hours range from 3 to 7 hours, which do not amount to much if they utilize the remaining hours of the day with due description.

Besides, they simply avoid wasting time in idle gossip and such trivialities which they used to before — for now they have something of much greater importance to do something which grows their confidence, sharpens their intellect and improves their perspective of the reality and of course fills their pockets.

When queried about their working conditions the general reaction was "It is okay but of course there is always room for improvements especially the financial side". They also shared the feeling that a suitable working environment ought to be healthy and standard.

In addition's to this the atmosphere should be friendly and people should respect one for what one is. If not so, that job would rather suit a waste-basket well enough.

Another question, which most readers might possibly ask is that, why employers seem to have developed a general liking towards students? The answers is most manifest students, being young and adventurous, form the most honest and energetic working force of all. They are sincere and enthusiastic and try to enjoy whatever they learn. Their arduous for adventure make them bubble with such vigors that they always score beyond those people who join work just for the work's sake.

"Students" try to "study" whatever is interesting and they all present novelty. Besides this, most students have had a good polishing in school so that they are all well-behaved, punctual and decent lots which makes them simply marvellous.

But the society at large remains reluctant to appreciate such a prudent effort. This is because the beliefs of most people are based upon conservative principles. Their general view is that a student should not engage himself in any type of employment unless financial instability makes it absolutely essential. In addition to this people always turn a sniffing nose to the fact that girls are working and earning for themselves.

Besides, parents usually loose confidence upon their own power over their children once they become financially independent.



The real world; Where we are just stepping now. — Star photo

Hence they often refuse flatly when their children ask for their consent. Another conviction that reinforces their refusal is that once students go after money, they tend to move away from their text-book-education, although as most students will agree this is hardly the case.

The only thing we students can say about

this is that all these doubts and convictions are ill-based, since working students learn to live with a much wide reality — a reality which hardly fails to include family education and everything else. Working does not mean going astray. It only means that one is taking a rather different view of life.

## "Graffiti On the Walls!"

by Muneera

WALKING along the streets of this city, one cannot but escape noticing the illustrations on virtually all the walls around. No sooner is a new wall (or building built) is it covered up in bold letters, declaring political slogans, advertisements and other messages. Of these, political slogans are the most common ones. Since the number of political parties we have (and the number of opinions as well) is quite large, they take up the space provided by most of the walls. Sometimes messages are painted over with white to cover them, and display other ones. Mostly, these illustrations are carried out in the dark of the night, and very often one hears about the clashes that took place over two different groups over the ownership of walls!

Buildings too, don't escape the eye of such painters and one often finds even the second or third storey of a building painted in bold colours and figures. Messages displayed on such walls are not much pleasant most times, frequently proclaiming such violent messages as "we want blood — we want revenge!"

Advertisements are another media who are rapidly coming into competition for wall space. Names of private colleges, clinics etc are often displayed in bold letters, with their addresses below:

some newcomers into the area are most obviously misled into thinking that the wall is of the same!

If, after all these, some walls are spared from splashing paints, then they are "posted — up". Often opponent parties stick up posters to illustrate their slogans.

Then ofcourse there are more practical use for their bricks hold together. Mostly in areas surrounding "bastees", the walls are used to dry balls of cow-dung, which are used by the poor for fuel. Some landlords, nowadays hardly bother to paint their newly plastered walls.

"Whats the use?" they say. "Its going to be painted anyway with slogans."

Recently, my uncle was very worried about this happening to his new wall. The day after his wall was plastered, we woke up to find it covered up in bold brown letters.

"They got you alright mama!" I told him.

"Nah kid, look again," he told me.

This time I read the Bengali inscriptions. Apparently he had painted the wall — in the dark of the night, in verses from Tagore, proclaiming the "vigour of the youth."

"At least," he said, "My wall has a better and healthier slogan than the others." I could not but agree!

# The Independence War of Bangladesh

THE independence war of Bangladesh resulted in much bloodshed and sorrow as well as a sense of pride among the people of Bangladesh. Innocent people were brutally murdered because of what they believed in and what they stood for. Many people died during protests and rallies for unjust reasons. Others simply gave their life away for the love of their country and the dream of their freedom.

Before India and Pakistan became free nations in 1947, they were all one nation. This big nation, consisting of what is known today as India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, was ruled by the British and was known as British India. When the Indians started a movement for freedom, Muslims demanded a separate country for them.

Mr Jinnah was initially a member of the Congress Party, the main force behind India's struggle for independence. Due to differences with the other members of the Congress, Mr Jinnah resigned and formed his own party called the Muslim League.

The main aim of the Muslim League was to form a separate nation for the Muslims in India. This meant that British India would be partitioned. The division would be based on Muslim and Hindu majority areas. As a result, in August, 1947, two new nations were created, India and Pakistan (East and West). East Pakistan, which was separated from the West, by the Indian mainland, was a part of the province of Bengal in British India. The people in the East spoke a different language and were also culturally different from the West Pakistanis. Besides, Bengal was far removed from the Arab mainland and Islam. Bengal had acquired a kind of flavor of its own through the influence of Sufism, a philosophy that borrowed many ideas from the mysticism of the Hindu religion.

Soon after independence, East Pakistan began to realize

that it took more than religion to build a nation. Language became one of the key issues of conflict between East and West Pakistan.

As a consequence of Mr Jinnah's declaration, the Bengalis of East Pakistan launched a series of protest marches started as early as March, 1948 and culminated

in the Language Movement in 1952. Four students died on the 21st of February, during a protest rally. These deaths were condemned by the East Pakistani leaders. This issue became the rallying cry for students as well as politicians. This was the first secu-

lar issue to be raised in the otherwise orthodox Pakistan. The West Pakistani authorities realized that it would be difficult to contain the wrath of the East Pakistanis and it finally accepted Bengali as a second state language.

Language wasn't the only

problem that the national faced. The East Pakistanis accused the West Pakistanis of economic exploitation. East Pakistan claimed that West Pakistan was not giving them their fair share of money for the products that they produced and exported, like jute. Badruddin Umar, an author of various books on the liberation of Bangladesh, writes, "Central and provincial Governments, which were dominated by the civil servants totally, neglected the improvement of the external economy of East Pakistan and this was one of the important reasons why private investment in East Pakistan was almost negligible during the first decade of Pakistan."

1970, fair and democratic elections were held for the transfer of power of the nation to the elected party. To the West Pakistanis' surprise, Awami League, the leading political party of East Pakistan, led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, won a sweeping victory.

Unfortunately, the West Pakistani politicians refused to transfer the power that had been controlled by them since independence, over to the elected party.

On March 7, 1971, Sheikh Mujib made a historic speech, in which he stated, "Ebarer sangram muktr sangram; ebarer sangram shadhnotar sangram." (This struggle is for our emancipation; this struggle is for our freedom). This line brought out the warrior in almost every man and woman who heard him. It was the symbol of a dream for a new nation. The address was followed by a non-cooperation movement, which paralysed the government. The people of East Pakistan refused to allow the government (which according to them was illegal) to function.

## An Appeal to Our Leaders

# Do not Deprive Us of A Golden Tomorrow

by Rabeth Khan

LOTS of promises were made at the time of independence to make Bangladesh a paradise on earth. But unfortunately that didn't happen. Selfishness became an integral part of our society. People began to care less about their motherland and concentrated more on their self-comfort.

There is also a common allegation nowadays, that the present younger generation is irresponsible in nature and commit actions which have ill-effects on the society. And surprisingly the blame for their crimes goes to their parents. Yes, it is true that the parents of those young people are responsible but the most blame should go to the so-called learned politicians of the country.

The political leaders have turned the whole society into a complete mess. They are in literal sense using the younger generation to do all types of dirty political activities. The educational institutions have turned into a violent political warfare zone. The student groups of the government and the opposition party fight against one another and few are left to die. After their death, the politicians make big

speeches and send condolence messages to the bereaved family and that's the end of those unfortunate boys.

The educational standard has fallen sharply. The economic situation of the country has also gone into a state of doldrums. It is a common phenomenon that every time the opposition parties have to protest against the government, it is in form of long, continuous "hartals". Ever since the emergence of politics in Bangladesh, the government nor the opposition ever utilized the parliament in the correct manner. Both the sides have been elected to sort out their difference in the architectural wonders of Sangsad Bhaban. But instead they fought against each other, spilling blood and pushing the country into total darkness.

For the past couple of months, the frequency of hartals has increased in alarming manner. And in the near future, there is a plan of continuous, unabated six days hartal. There has already been losses of few crore taka and more is expected in the coming days. Education is affected significantly. Even the sports arena is suffering from

the influence of hartals. The West Indies Under-19 team is set to begin their cricket tour from the 11th of November. But the whole programme is in jeopardy because of the hartals.

We the student community and the younger generation earnestly appeal to the political leaders of the opposition sides to sit together and agree mutually to end the political impasse. It is said that the politicians of this country want to hand over power in the future to worthy youngsters of today. The whole country is looking forward to see an educated young generation, who will be able to take Bangladesh to great heights.

An earnest request to the leaders of the political parties is that, "Please sort out your differences without affecting the country socially and economically. And don't use the student community for wrong political purposes but instead give them a chance to shine brightly in the future." We, the young generation of today, want to be successful in every aspect of life.

We want to live. Don't deprive us of hopes of a golden tomorrow.

economic disparity became a major issue of discontent between the two wings of the nation. The Awami League, which, by this time, had dropped the word "Muslim" from its name was the main force behind the movement for economic independence.

The tidal wave in 1970 killed 168,000 people, and damaged the property and land of many East Pakistanis. Most of the money and aid that was sent by foreign countries to aid the restoration of the ravaged nation, never got to East Pakistan.

The President of the nation, General Yahya Khan who was in China during this devastating cyclone did not bother to stop on the way back to Karachi and visit the damaged East Pakistan. East Pakistanis were fed up of being treated like the minority when, population-wise, they were the majority.

In 1969, there were mass protests against two decades of martial law and authoritarian rule. This time, the West Pakistani-based political parties also joined the protests against the military regime that held usurped power and had ruled the country as a police state for ten years. The military regime had to yield to the peoples' demands for democracy. As a result, in

1970, fair and democratic elections were held for the transfer of power of the nation to the elected party. To the West Pakistanis' surprise, Awami League, the leading political party of East Pakistan, led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, won a sweeping victory.

Unfortunately, the West Pakistani politicians refused to transfer the power that had been controlled by them since independence, over to the elected party.

On March 7, 1971, Sheikh Mujib made a historic speech, in which he stated, "Ebarer sangram muktr sangram; ebarer sangram shadhnotar sangram." (This struggle is for our emancipation; this struggle is for our freedom). This line brought out the warrior in almost every man and woman who heard him. It was the symbol of a dream for a new nation. The address was followed by a non-cooperation movement, which paralysed the government. The people of East Pakistan refused to allow the government (which according to them was illegal) to function.

The arrest of Sheikh Mujib was followed by the Pakistani army crackdown on March 25, 1971. Tens of thousands of Bengalis were killed that night, and the rest, terrorized. Women were raped and then murdered. Intellectuals (professors, doctors and writers) were taken away from their homes by the Pakistani army and killed. Hindus and other minorities were special targets of army brutality. The Pakistani Army went from house to house ordering the people to pull down the flag of Shadhin Bangladesh (free Bangladesh). The flag was green with a red sun containing a yellow map of Bangladesh. The green signified the natural beauty of the nation and the red signified the emerging hopes of a new nation. Those who refused to take the flag down were immediately shot.

(To be continued)

## THE TOSS!



## Holiday

by Farhana Yusuf

ON a lingering, lazy summer day When the eastern sky glows with the sun's ray Sitting on the porch and stretching my limbs, With a heart full of beautiful schemes I look forward to enjoying the holiday.

The air is filled with the fresh scent of flowers The birds are humming far away The bees are buzzing, the butterflies hovering merrily Oh how they seem to dance with joy on this holiday

Life stretches on with its pathos and perils Time waits not for anybody It goes on like the river that flows Leaving so little time for a holiday

But one that is so pleasing, so unique and rare The human mind has a fascination for and handles it with care They plan and decorate it in such a way So as to leave a cherished memory of the blissful holiday.