



## For the love of a country

"YOU can't be serious," said Amma with shock. "It's way too dangerous for you. You're too young."

"But, anybody above the age of twelve is allowed to join the army. Everybody's joining."

"Who's joining?" None of your cousins would even dream about joining the Mukti Bahini. Look at Tarek. He hasn't asked to join the army, now has he? Only the uneducated children are leaving at such a young age."

"Just because none of my cousins have joined, shouldn't limit me from doing what I want to do. What's wrong with showing my love for my country?"

"I tell you what's wrong, brother," I thought as I sat huddled in the hallway. You are Amma's only son. She couldn't bear to be separated from you, and you know that. She's gone though so much lately, you can see that from the lines on her face. Why must you torture her like this? There are so many ways to show your love for your country, aside from fighting. Even though I do support the Joy Bangla campaign, I, along with many other people, disagree with the methods used by the Mukti Bahini.

"Please, Amma. Nothing is more respected than dying for the independence of your country," pleaded Kamal Bhai.

"No, no, no. I can't bear losing my only son. The tone of her voice signalled that the conversation was over. Told you so, big brother."

Even though my brother was not with the Mukti Bahini in a physical sense, he was with them in spirit. Everyday, he swallowed in all the information he could find and then regurgitated it to me. This was rather convenient because I didn't have to read the newspaper for myself -- Kamal Bhai would tell me everything.

by Sadia R Chowdhury  
To be continued

## BANGLA CLASSIC

# Kutti Mama's Denture

by Narayan Gangopaddhaya

I declared, with a touch of pride, that my youngest uncle replaced his original set of teeth for a set of false ones. Kebila reluctantly responded, "So what, all my uncles have false teeth. Big deal!" A moment later he inquired, "Why do all uncles go for false teeth?" Hablu had an answer coming up. But Teni da, who was chewing a matchstick, interrupted. (Now Teni da, our senior friend, had this obsession with chewing, and anything from rasogollas (sweets), to chocolates, to nuts, to matchsticks would do. Just as long as he could chew them.)

"What is it that you were saying about a set of false teeth?"

he asked.

"Well I was just referring to my youngest uncle's newly acquired set of false teeth," I replied.

"What news to share?" started Kabla, when Teni da roared "Stop babbling. What do you guys know about having a set of false teeth? My 'Kutti Mama' (youngest uncle) Gajogovinda Halder, whom the British Lords call Mr Gajogovinda, knows all about them, although he doesn't have them with him any more."

"Why did they come out again?"

"They were taken away," Teni da answered, his nose held high, with a sort of regal

teeth," he cried, in pain.

He was quivering in agony for three whole days and spent each day on five pints of milk and a few dozen glasses of orange juice. However on the third day the lords asked him to go to a dentist. That did the trick, for the mere mention of the dentist almost made him faint. With the help of some broken English he tried to voice a veto. But 'nothing doing'. The Lords asked for it and it had to be done.

"Kutti Mama hates dentists because of the experience his Grandpa had. His Grandpa once visited the dentist, who himself should have visited an optician."

The doctor, instead of working on his tooth pulled at Grandpa's nose, despite protests from him. Anyway Kutti Mama had to surrender to the directives of his bosses. Therefore he went to the dentist with a broken heart, humming a religious Ramprashadi classical. The dentist pushed him into a chair and without any inquiries, began digging into his mouth with his 'electronic brushes'. Then he brought out a small hammer and checked the strength of the teeth by hammering them hard. Finally, he deduced, 'All your teeth need replacement.'

And indeed they did. 'Come back a week later and you'll get back your teeth, the replacement I mean,' said the doctor.

The new denture looked fine. In fact they served his purpose well, except for a slight problem. Half of what he ate stuck to them, which he chewed, at leisure. Things were going smooth until one day his bosses

know how the British are — they just cannot sit idle. 'Mr Gajogovinda! we want to go on a hunting trip, tiger hunting to be exact, and you are coming with us.'

Now 'Kutti Mama' is not that fond of tigers. They are not deer that you can eat. Instead they make you their dinner. 'Kutti Mama' bates to visualise himself on someone else's dinner table. Moreover tigers stink, and their characters are not good either.

"Tigers... sir, very bad sir... I not like sir," he said to the Lords. But as you know them they will not take no for an answer, they carried 'Kutti mama' by all fours and headed for Duarsa Jungle.

It was a deep, dark forest. You hear the elephants in the night, tigers growling, the suckers falling from tree tops like rain drops, monkeys making faces at you, and of course, without asking for permission snatching away your shaving brush. Yet the Whitemen went into the jungle to kill a tiger. They insisted on taking Kutti Mama. But Mama saved his skin by pretending to be sick. They left him in peace.

No sooner had the Whitemen left, Kutti jumped up from his bed, devoured one dozen bananas, two full size breads and a jar of guava jelly, and then went out to the bungalow's lawn to read Mahabharata.

He sat down beside a small fall, the birds twittering there, a cool breeze blowing and Mama with a full stomach

was enjoying the mood very much. Suddenly he heard a growl. He looked up and saw a tiger on the other side of the fall. Without a second's thought, Mama grabbed the huge Mahabharata, and ran for the nearest tree. He sat on a high branch with the book under his arms.

The tiger leaped towards the tree and sat under it, waiting for him. At one point, it growled in order to scare him, when suddenly the book slipped out and fell on the tiger's head, precisely on its mouth. The tiger was knocked out for a few minutes, stunned by a 12 kg book. Then he fled for the jungle he came from.

Mama, after waiting for a few minutes to make sure that it didn't take him again by surprise, climbed down from the tree relieved. What he saw on the ground was all the '32' teeth of the tiger, and the book lying beside them.

When the Lords returned he produced his achievement and said, "Tiger teeth!"

The Lords were stunned. "Where did you find them?" Kutti Mama pumped his 24 inch chest to 32 inches and said, "I wanted to the mountain sorry fountain. Tiger come, I do boxing, I do boxing. All tooth broke. Tiger cut down (meaning tiger cut marlo)." From then, Kutti Mama became the hero of the hunting team. The Lords treated him exclusively during dinner.

On the next day, they tried to take Kutti for hunting again. "You gotta go. You are a big pahan!"

Kutti argued, "Sir my body paining from tiger boxing. I do rest today."

The Lords conceded, "Alright, alright, you stay."

Today, Kutti mama was careful not to go out in the lawn. He sat on an easy chair in the veranda with his Mahabharata.

"Orra, growl!" Kutti mama, shocked with the

abrupt growling, looked beyond the netted frame of his veranda. There it was. The tiger. It was growling so pathetically that Kutti was sympathetic instead. The tiger opened his mouth and showed Kutti the sad state of his gums without teeth. It was flat like a desert.

The tiger was now literally crying. "Growl... ugh... oogh... growl," as if to say, "You have taken all my teeth... I can't eat now. What am I gonna do?"

But Kutti Mama never trusted a tiger. Even a tiger without a teeth. He fled to his room and shut the door. The tiger sobbed for a while and walked off to the jungle.

On the next morning, Kutti Mama was washing his set of false teeth in front of a window singing, "I'd better die in such a full moon night..."

He was ignoring the sun light and thinking about moon light. It was very natural that he did not see the toothless tiger watching him from a bush near the window. The tiger was watching him intently — how Kutti Mama brought out the set of false teeth from his mouth and was brushing them.

When Kutti mama completed brushing the teeth and was about to insert them into his mouth, the tiger roared, "Growl... growl," as if to say, "I got it."

The tiger jumped into the room through the window. "Ti-ti-tiger," screamed Kutti Mama and nearly fainted.

The tiger did nothing much. He took the false set of teeth and inserted it into his mouth. Kutti Mama saw this with his own eyes. The set of teeth perfectly fit into the tiger's mouth. The tiger then stood in front of the mirror, saw himself and laughed. "Gha ghaw ghaw ghaw." He gently picked up Mama's toothbrush and tooth paste and jumped out of the room through the window.

Kutti Mama later described this act of the tiger as "Winding away."

Teni da stopped his story here. He looked at us with contempt. "Therefore boys, don't try to tell me cheap stories about false teeth."

Translated by Chutu Khan

## Pahela Baishakh's Special Competition

AGE LIMIT : 11-13 yrs

(Class : V-VIII)

## TOPIC : LOST AT THE FUNFARE

ON the very day of Pohela Boishakh, you, along with your parents, arrive at Dhammondi mela. Your father, being generous this time, hands you a 100 taka note and allows you to spend according to your wish. But things go wrong! At one point, you are entangled in a crowd. You jostle against the crowd and somehow manage to get out of it. However, when you look around, your parents are out of your sight. What would you do next?

BEGIN HERE. Word Limit: 800 words ALTERNATIVELY, to participate in this competition, you may sketch a busy funfare. DEADLINE : Your article/sketch should reach our office by April 25, 1996. You may send it by mail, but we prefer you drop it at our Dhammondi office. THINGS TO REMEMBER : Write your full name, address, class and the name of your school, and don't forget to mention Rising Stars.

## Quiz Club

HERE are ten quizzes, all regarding Bengali culture, history, geography and Pohela Boishakh. Crack them, send your answers right away (by Saturday, 20 April, 1996) and win away the Quiz Club prize.

1. In 1994, Bengali New Year's day was held on .... April.
2. What does a bridegroom usually wear at his marriage ceremony?
3. In 1991 who was awarded the 'Swadhinata Dibash Purashkar' in literature?
4. Who was the first Prime Minister of Bangladesh?
5. The name of the largest lake of the nation is ....
6. Which part of the nation is least densely populated?
7. Annually which area receives the most rainfall?
8. In Bangladesh female-male ratio is : 100 : ....
9. Who was the last sovereign Bengali Nawab?
10. Ibn Batuta arrived in Bangladesh in ....

Answers for March 1.

1. Zero
2. Shawn Micheal
3. Salman Rushdie
4. Son of Odysseus
5. John Major
6. Aung San Suu Kyi
7. Bill Richardson
8. Suhrawardy Garden
9. 26
10. 24 February 1996
11. Los Angeles
12. Substances whose molecules are made of the same numbers of the same atoms, but the atoms are differently arranged.
13. Elastic Potential Energy.
14. Protein
15. Sana
16. Capital
17. Philippines
18. 1981
19. 1944
20. Spanish

## Seasons in Our Land

by Paula Aziz

OURS is the only country where nature dresses herself in six colours: Grishma, Barsha, Sharat, Hemanta, Sheet, Basanta. Rare is such variety and glamour the year through. In brief this is how nature reveals her beauty to us: Boishakh and Jaistha are the summer months. It is the season of scorching heat. The sun is so hot that sometimes it becomes impossible to get any work done. You perspire, you are thirsty most of the times. Ponds and lakes dry up and many villages suffer much from the scarcity of drinking water. Cholera breaks out in every place of the country in an epidemic way. The norwester blows sometimes in a terrible form. Summer is also a season of mangoes, litchis, jack-fruits and many other tasty fruits.

Then comes the rainy season which comprises of the months of Ashar and Sraban. In this season sky remains cloudy and it rains throughout the day and night. All the rivers, tanks, ponds and canals are full of water. Sometimes the rivers overflow their banks flooding many villages. Farmers plough their fields and sow seeds of paddy. It is the season of fishes. Fishermen have plenty of fishes to catch and there is brisk trade in delicious hilsa/fish. In some places malaria breaks out towards the end of this season.

The cloudy sky clears up at the advent of autumn which is basically the months of Bhadra and Ashwin. Nature is washed and clean; filth and dirt have already been carried away by the rains. The Hindus have their Durga puja in this season.

The late autumn or Hemanta is the season of dew. The golden paddy in the fields keep the peasants happy and content. The weather is simply charming because it is neither too hot nor too cold.

In winter nature seems to be a little dull. Winter is the season of fog and mists. Dewdrops also fall at night. When the morning light peeps through the mists, they look like glittering beads of pearl on the grass and plants. The sky remains cloudless and blue. It is a season of abundance. The prices of essential commodities fall considerably. A great variety of fish and vegetables are available at a comparatively cheap price. A special bonus of the season is juice from date trees and molasses made of it. Pausah and Magh are the winter months.

In the cycle of seasons the spring occupies an exalted position. It is called the king of all the seasons. It is rich in colour, beauty, music and fragrance. With the advent of spring nature puts on a lively appearance. It is surely the spring that offers the largest number of variety in sights and sounds as well. These, make people forget those gloomy winter days and help prepare for the toilsome period of tilling, sowing and ploughing in the months to come.

## PCTV

SUPPOSE you have become tired of working with the computer and are craving for a break and a few hours of good television entertainment. Well for that you won't have to buy a TV anymore. Because American and Japanese scientists have invented such devices that can work as a computer and a TV set simultaneously. This was first manufactured by the apple organisation. Japanese Panasonic company has already marketed PCTV.

## Blood Test in a short time

AMERICAN 'Baylor college of medicine' has invented a system of blood testing which will take less time than the ordinary enzyme determining system.

In the ordinary and accepted system it takes about 12 to 14 hours to get the result but in this modern method it will take less than two hours to get the results. This system is being used by many hospitals in the USA.

Courtesy : Anandamela

## DISNEYLAND

Written by Shazaad Ahmed

Reported by Osman Farhan Al Haroon

THE legend of Mickey Mouse has crossed over countless boundaries, his appeal shared by children and adults alike. The larger-than-life cartoon character is one of Walt Disney's greatest innovations, a product of limitless imagination and creativity.

The epicentres of Walt Disney's creations are Disneyland and Florida's Walt Disney World, and the global appeal of his characters has transcended the American culture, making a crossover to Europe and even Asia. And while most of us can only dream of ever coming to contact with a world of such splendour, this dream became a reality for a young man who had the privilege to visit the place referred to by many as the Dreamland of the World.

The first stage of his visit started out with a tour of Epcot Centre, the first establishment of Disney World, a fantasy exhibition which recreates the Jurassic Age of dinosaurs and other prehistoric life-forms. Pavilions entitled Spaceship Earth, Wonders of Life, Universe of Energy and The Land each displayed its individual world of fantasies but none could surpass the pavilion entitled Journey into Imagination, a vast exhibition of theatrics both entertaining and overwhelming to the human imagination.

The World Showcase is another example of Walt Disney's amazing creativity, giving on-lookers the chance to experience the exotic and varied cultures and life-styles of countries ranging all the way from Mexico, China, Morocco, Nor-

way, France and Germany, right down to the United Kingdom.

The second stage of the tour was a stop at the park entitled The Magic Kingdom, supposedly the best Disney World has to offer: The Magic Kingdom, the homeland of the fabled Mickey and Minnie Mouse is divided into seven entertainment centres shown to visitors either by a boat ride or a journey by bus. A Jungle Cruise at Adventure land is an eye-opening display of the African culture, demonstrating tribal rituals and depicting life-like animals from elephants to crocodiles, while Pirates of the Caribbean, as the name signifies, is a meticulously detailed and rehearsed recreation of war at sea.

Disneyland also joins the 'trend' of combining entertainment with education. Tomorrow and for example, was a display of the latest and future innovations of science and technology, giving spectators the distinct feeling of being on a school educational trip.

The last stop, Fantasyland epitomizes the global appeal of Disney World with a vast display of life-like dolls, each set representing a particular culture in language and attire, singing the tune 'It's a Small World', a welcome gesture for people from all walks of life and from all parts of the world. The multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-faceted quality of the tour is an invitation to get a taste of Walt Disney's fabulous, enduring creation: the richness and the sheer joy of a perfect land called Disney World.

## Wales, My Love!

by Asrarul Islam Chowdhury

I remember the days  
When I was young  
And was in Wales.  
Oh how I long for those  
happy days  
So innocent was I  
No matter what  
happened  
I never used to cry.

Oh please do take me  
back there again  
I'd really love to go  
To smell the forget-me-nots  
And climb the hills at any cost.  
Such a nice place Wales,  
you are  
Although, from myself,  
you are very far.

Wales, listen to me  
I still madly love thee  
You'll always be  
A second home to me.



Kaal Boishakhi by Prathama Komal Nabi