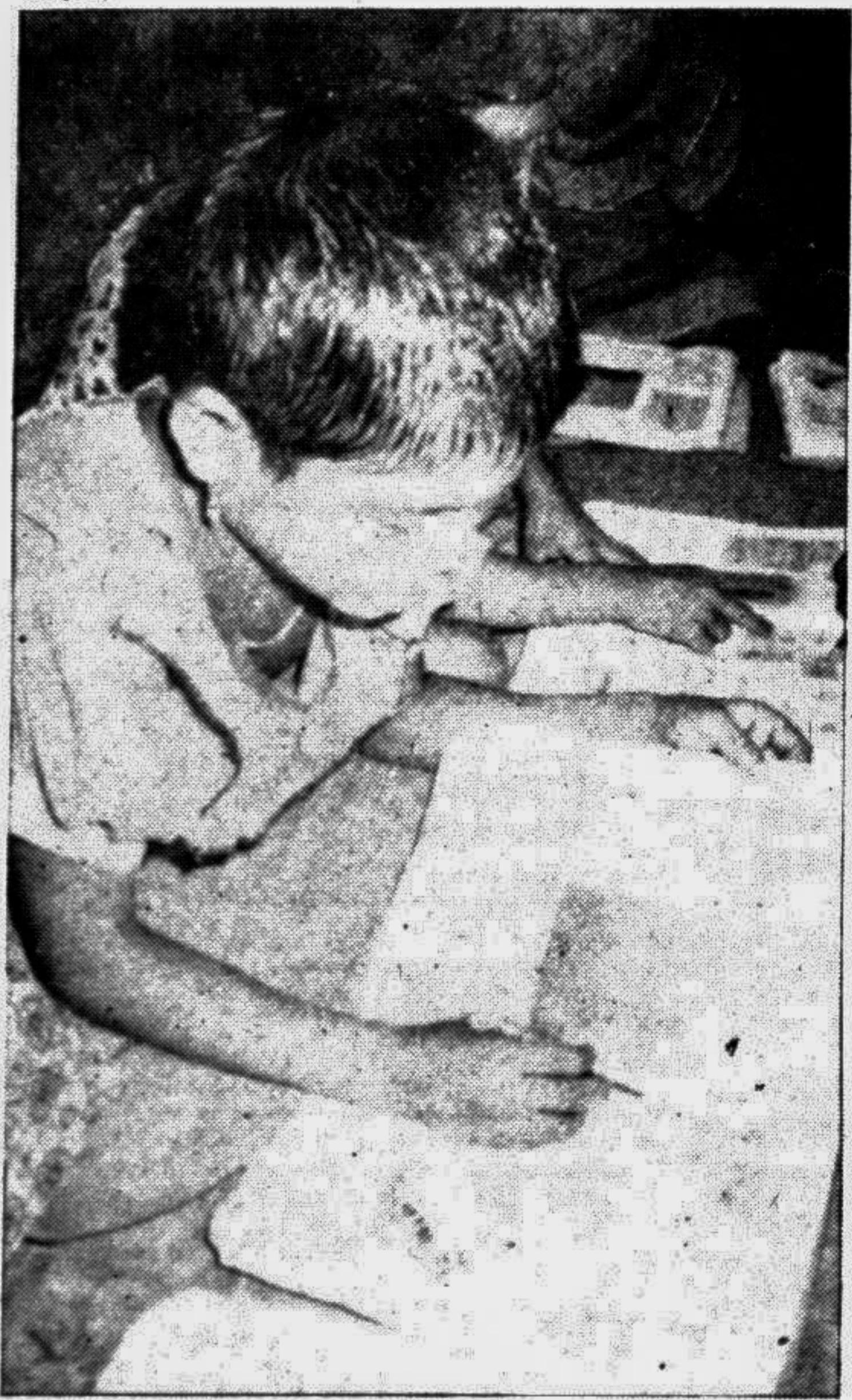


## A closer look at Child Labor

by Shenaz Rahim

THE United Nations and all of the major super-powers are strongly against child labor. Some countries have even boycotted the products of factories which employ children. However,



No doubt education is important but it is also prudent for every child to learn some skills, essential for job prospects.

these countries should look at the other side of the matter, for they fail to see the immense good child labor does for underdeveloped nations.

In a country like Bangladesh, with 80% of the population below the poverty line, holding a job at a young age (this usually means about 11-16 years old) teaches the less fortunate the skills they may find useful to their future. They may even earn promotions as the grow older, securing the means of earning in the highly unstable situation of the country. Idealists argue that these kids should be in school, getting the kind of education that will bring them success later on. Perhaps the parents are forcing them to work, depriving them of their right to learn.

That is a good point, but an impractical one when applied here. So few children actually go to school, that is unrealistic to even consider it. Good schools are limited to those with money, and the government schools are of a poor standard, and do not give vocational education. It would be more beneficial for them to get job skills and technical training along with their education. After all a haphazard education won't do much for their careers.

Besides job experience, many factories are providing after-hours schooling to their employees. So even

though people complain that these children are being worked in sweatshops with long hours and bad conditions with no thought to their welfare, they may be wrong. They do menial work that adults do

I have always found the smoke from motor vehicles absolutely nauseating. And as I was seated very close to the engine room, I was constantly inhaling plenty of that. The journey had turned out to be rather boring and tedious. So, reluctantly I got up and looked for a cigarette vendor. He had taken up the habit of smoking occasionally a few years back. It was a very bad habit, yet terribly hard to get rid of. I was travelling alone, returning from a business tour. And as I failed to get a train ticket that day, I decided to return by a launch.

Lighting my cigarette, I sat down and glanced quickly at the bag I was carrying. It hadn't been stolen till then. I let out a sigh of relief. Actually the environment seemed to me a bit...er...sinister. The crowd was noisy, and the smoke and the non-stop rhythmic swaying of the vessel was gradually inducing a feeling of sickness, deep inside my stomach. And I felt forlorn and miserable.

"Excuse me — but do you happen to have a match?" a deep voice suddenly broke the monotone. "Yeah — here." I growled as I handed the guy my match. And as a looked up to see him, I saw an old man in worn attire. His face, despite being solemn and grave, bore signs of weariness and a tempestuous life. He lit his cigarette and sat down just beside me. Under my keen, sleuth-like observing eyes, his appearance seemed to be giving away recent financial difficulties. The expensive muffer wrapped around his crone-like neck had obviously seen better days. But now he wore worn out rags, and his shoes seemed to have only the soles left. As the man I had been placing under keen scrutiny previously started to speak to me after introducing himself as Md Mohsin Miah, I discovered — in spite of his unimpressive looks, he was a pretty much learned person. As we conversed further, I found out he was also a very pious man. And thus I spoke cautiously from that point. I actually was not very proud of my religious viewpoints, which were somewhat atheistic. But as I listened to him intently, I grew rather interested. As he came to the subject of religions, Mohsin Miah was saying that though there was a notion, amongst the atheists, that religions

## Realization

by Adnan R Amin

were man-made and were entirely psychological, they were actually like crutches. Religion can give a person peace of mind. Likewise crutches also give us something to lean on. So if religion really does help people, then that must mean they are leaning on something

and mistakes which God allows us to make in the same way a parent or a good teacher allows us to make mistakes — because personal experimentation, error, observation, trial and results are the best way man can truly experience and discover the things they are



that actually does exist. I was absolutely mesmerized by this time.

"You know — there's nothing in this world as evil? It's just love, trust and hope everywhere. Evil is just the absence of the above mentioned things. Evil is prevalent only when God, and the love of God is defied and ignored. Human suffering is not caused by the evil in this world, but by man himself. Most of our sufferings result from human ignorance

meant to learn." He spoke the words at a stretch. Then pausing for a brief period, he continued — "Atheists and non-believers are in a way like the mutinous sailors in Columbus's crew who had assumed that they were without any doubt, heading towards nothingness, doomed to disaster and annihilation, when they were actually heading towards the 'new world.' Saying these words, he gave me a sarcastic look and started to puff away at his cigarette.

As the launch neared its destination, Md Mohsin Miah got up and in his haste, suddenly dropped a very little bag onto the floor. Instantly a lot of cash, earrings and bangles and a moneybag were scattered on the floor. On seeing the imploring look on his face, I bent down and began to help him pick up the things. The sermon he had earlier given me had left me in a considerable amount of mental turmoil. Thoughts and regrets raged in my head. I had come to realize that skepticism was like a high wall that keeps things from entering the mind, good ideas as well as bad. I had always thought that skepticism was a virtue, a sign of sophistication and intelligence, as it protects people from the superstitions and nonsense in life. But now I felt all that time, perhaps I was being...rather...pigheaded, refusing to believe anything which was not proved, even though my instincts sometimes directed me otherwise.

Suddenly a voice brought me back from my dazed and tranced state. Mohsin Miah was leaving. After he had gone I gathered my things. I felt like I had gone through a mental metamorphosis. The incident had opened my eyes. I felt wonderful. As I decided to get another pack of cigarettes and reached for my wallet, I froze on finding it was missing. I searched my breast-pocket, bag, everywhere. But it was nowhere to be found. Suddenly the significance of a previous incident struck me. All that money and ornaments in the bag, the moneybag — were they all...stolen? I was sure my wallet was in my pocket just a few minutes ago. Reasoning thoroughly, I easily came to the conclusion. So Mohsin Miah was just a common pickpocket? And all he had said to me were premeditated and insincere? The peace of my mind was shattered. And I felt deceived and tricked. But then the realization dawned on me. Why should I relinquish the 'thoughts' that the man had evoked? If he wanted the money so badly — let him have it. In return he had left behind something far more precious. Soon peace and contentment settled in my serene mind. I looked out at the sky. The sun shone brightly. It was time to let a drop of sunshine wash over my weary mind.

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## Nature Watch

### The Endangered Tigers

By Galib Kabir

Hunted down by armed poachers. They specialise in the supply of tiger bones to Hong Kong and Taiwan through the golden triangle, where traditional drugs and wines are prepared from these imports. In addition to this, militants in the trouble torn Northeast, continue to hunt tigers to raise funds from the sale of different parts of the animals.

At present, more than half of the world's tiger population is found in India. A rapid decline in the number has therefore become a matter of global concern. An agreement has recently been signed by several Asian Countries led by India, to save the dwindling tiger population. Another agreement was signed by the Asian delegates attending the Ninth Convention on the ban of the international trade on endangered species.

Wildlife experts feel this agreement will boost the ongoing efforts to save the LORD OF THE JUNGLE.



The Majestic tiger — soon to disappear from the face of Earth?

## Quotes From Some Earth Dogs

compiled by : Kazi K. Arafat



Dark Angel

of 7 and 25, study hard and then get nothing.

### TESTAMENT

**Chuck** — I don't really get into bands who are into politics. We just sing about normal things like the environment and suicide. At the same time, we're not interested in doing songs about cutting your mother's head off.

**Lovie** — we feed off the audience if the audience is totally into it, we cap that vibe right away, and we give it right back to them. But if they're not giving us that energy we just play the show, and we will try to get into it as much as we can. We work hard every night, but it's better when the audience is there.

**Greg** — that's what we live for — playing live. Recording is cool, but we've all gained enough experience in a live situation to where I can honestly say that we're at our best when we're on stage playing in front of an audience.

**ANTHRAX**

**Scott Ian**: A lot of people think Anthrax is really, really big band but me, I still look at this as, we haven't even gotten started yet. I mean, compared to some other bands, yes, we're doing OK, but I don't look at us as being a big band. We certainly couldn't go out and headline arenas yet, we're in no position to do something like that.

**Charlie Benante**: I never

understood the drug thing. In

the 60s, it was one thing, people were experimenting with it but I think people have to grow up and mature — Are you so addicted that you'd kill yourself, end your life over it?

One of my friends got killed over a drug deal, still like that — it sucks. Scott Ian (again) I just don't understand why MTV has to have this kind of attitude, why radio has to have this kind of attitude. It's really kind of frustrating, cause we've done it for seven-eight years now without this kind of support but when you see these other bands who just come and in a year's time sell millions of albums.

Charlie Benante: When I was younger, I was a big kiss fan, and I was totally into the band and whatever they wrote about, whatever they sang about. Maybe it's because I kids really like the band, maybe they'll pick up on some of this stuff and they'll think it's cool.

I notice that a lot of bands now are starting to pick up on the same topics that we've been writing about for years. Some of these bands all of a sudden have become interested in the rain forest and other stuff. Like that. We have a laugh about it, because the year before that, they were writing about going down to hell and digging up your bones... talk about jumping on the bandwagon.

**MOTORHEAD**

**Lemmy** — I've always been into really outrageous stuff, so

they said. Soon they began to dig beside the grave.

Meanwhile, Linda and I were being feasted on by insects. We felt very tense. We wondered what the men were digging for.

They finished digging and suddenly vanished. Just then the whole graveyard became misty.

We came out of our hiding place and went near the hole. We saw a very ancient staircase. Linda suggested that we go down but I was very uneasy. Why would there be a staircase in the middle of the graveyard? We started climbing down the stairs. The staircase was steep and broken.

It was very dark and we dared not light our torch. I once almost fell but Linda helped me regain my balance.

The stairs ended abruptly. We saw a light ahead. We followed it and came to a room. There we saw the tall man and the other two men bending over a chest. The tall man opened it and we saw that the chest was full of precious gems. We did not know what to do. We just stood there until I thought we might call the police. We started

I'm fascinated by extremes in human behaviour. Extremes in anything. How people can throw themselves off the edge of sanity, and how they react to their surroundings once they've tripped that threshold of pain.

that's what I wanted to play. Having said that, we have never played fast for the sake of playing fast. We've always retained the blues influence which is missing in a lot of today's bands, I think. Wurzel — We've got a new generation of Motorhead audience out there who didn't know the band in the old days, so obviously. We've maintained something that attracts young people. Yet, we retain the other fans who've been with us for a long time. I hope we keep both. We don't intend to go over to mainstream rock, though.

I can't imagine not being in Motorhead now. I've been in the band nearly half my life. I wouldn't know what to do with myself if I wasn't in Motorhead. We have no choice but to keep going.

Phillip Anthony Campbell

Often, during soundchecks,

well just spontaneously start

jamming on some,

traditional jazz or something

(laughs)

I was in a cabaret

band for six years. I played the trumpet. The thing is a lot of

these new bands. They just

play fast for the sake of it.

They don't know why they're doing it, they just do it.

### DARK ANGEL

**Gene Hoglan** (on behalf of the rest of the band) — I think we're one of the few older bands who have progressed in the proper way. We're not writing radio songs — we're still kickin' it out, while at the same time we're making through a little more progress.

We don't mind when people say we're the fastest band in the world. I just don't like it when people say we are the self-proclaimed fastest band in the world. We've never gone around saying we're the fastest or the heaviest. We're Dark Angel, and this is what we do. To us, speed is not the most vital element.

Some people think I'm weird. It really all depends on what kinda mood I'm in when they meet me.

I like making people laugh, and like laughing to myself, so I'm usually cracking jokes. The only time I'm even depressed is when I'm writing lyrics! I save it all up and let it slurrage out... that's what the song Trauma and Catharsis is about.

I write a lot of short lyrics. I won't show them to anyone — I'm kinda insecure about that — but most of my lyrics come from my stories, only I don't like writing really gory lyrics.

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