

# HOPE

by Adnan R Amin

WHENEVER Rahmat ventured out on a rickshaw, his otherwise-useless head, would invariably start churning out very high-thought philosophies or realisations. Often he ended up pondering the deep mysteries of life and earth, while pedalling away obliviously through the dense traffic of the city streets.

The things he could do with all that money ..... all he had ever dreamt about. He could buy a taxi, or an autorickshaw; he could easily rent out a better place to live; and Rahmat realized he could buy new clothes for his children, send them school and fulfill all his wishes. The surge of joy he felt was overwhelming. This was his day. And Rahmat came to realize that the poor people in this world had a lot to live for. There were miracles like this, lying in wait everywhere, for them.

Two "You did NOT, I assume, steal this?" Rahmat's eldest daughter said with mocking reproach. The query drew out a chuckle from Rahmat as he fervently shook his head. He loved his two daughters very very much; especially as their mother had passed away six years earlier. He recounted his story to them to the merest detail. It was the most he could do to quench their curiosity.

That night as the trio retired to bed, Rahmat stroked and caressed the coarse pieces of paper. He smelled them. It gave him an air of power and authority to lay his hands over all that money. The daughters and he discussed what they could do with the money. One demanded that Rahmat was to buy her some new clothes. The other asked for some books. Before he dozed off to dreamland, Rahmat decided he would immediately get some gold ornaments for his daughters — for their future. A ray of excitement and hope glimmered in his eyes.

Three The woman was astonished. She could not still believe that the wary-looking rickshaw-puller had brought back all the five-lakh taka she had lost. It was amazing! Rahmat himself was amazed too. It had taken all his willpower to come back here. The woman had seated him on the expensive sofa. She offered him cold-drinks and snacks. And after Rahmat related to the story for the second time, in the last twenty-four hours, she thanked him again and tried to hand him a thousand takas. Refusing in his most genial manner, Rahmat walked away.

The previous night, Rahmat had lived awake pondering whether he should keep the money. Instantly, he knew it was wrong. It wasn't though as if the realization had not dawned on him previously — yet in order to find an excuse to keep the money for himself, Rahmat wondered if the money was meant to be kept by him. But soon he came to understand that despite the fact that the bag was almost a blessing in disguise, they did not live for such miracles in this world — but for the ray of hope that came with it.

As the lady got down from his rickshaw on reaching her destination, Rahmat saw a very handsome young lad emerge from something, a house which could be regarded next to only a palace. When the lady noticed the smiling young man approaching last, she at first gapped at him, and her jaws dropped. Then she gave an exhilarated cry and literally ran over to hug the man, almost knocking Rahmat down in the process. She even forgot to pay the fare. So when Rahmat asked for it, she smiled apologetically and explained that the man was her son who had returned from Ukraine after seven years. Rahmat couldn't care less about the blabbering but at the end it seemed to be worth listening to as he received a ten-taka bonus.

Only after he had come a long way from the house, Rahmat noticed a plump handbag lying on the footboard. He had turned his head sideways for a turning and then almost sensed its presence — not really seeing the thing now — as he picked it up Rahmat felt he was in a dilemma. Deep down inside he knew to look inside would be wrong, yet we all know about curiosity killing the cat.

Slowly Rahmat unzipped the bag. And he stood there awestricken. For how long? Maybe a minute, maybe two. But it seemed like ages before Rahmat realized what he held was a bag full of crumpled — new, five-hundred taka notes. There were at least ten bundles inside. Rahmat felt his heart soar which eventually culminated in a pretty loud exclamation of joy. Rahmat was exhilarated beyond any limits.

## What Is Radium?

RADIUM is a radioactive element. Let us see what "radioactive" means.

Elements are made up of atoms. Most atoms are stable, which means they do not change from year to year. But a few of the heaviest atoms break down and change into other kinds. This breakdown or decay is called "radio activity".

Each radioactive element decays or disintegrates by giving off rays at a certain rate. This rate cannot be hurried or slowed by any known method. Some change rapidly, others slowly, but in all cases the action cannot be controlled by man.

In the case of radium, this decay would go on and on until the radium would be finally changed into lead. For example, half a gram of radium would change to atoms of lower atomic weight in 1,590 years. After another 1,590 years, half of the remaining radium would change, and so on until it all became lead.

Radium was discovered by Madame Curie and her husband, Pierre Curie. They were refining a ton of pitchblende, which is an ore that contains uranium. They knew the uranium was giving off invisible rays, but they felt there must be some other substance there, too, much more powerful. First they found polonium, another radioactive element, and finally they succeeded in isolating a tiny speck of radium.

Radium gives off three kinds of rays, called alpha, beta, and gamma rays. Alpha rays are fast-moving particles of the gas helium. Beta rays are fast-moving electrons. And gamma rays are like X-rays but usually more penetrating. Whenever one of these rays is ejected, the parent atom from which it comes changes from one element to another. This change is called "atomic transmutation".

The largest deposit of radium-bearing pitchblende ever found is in the Great Bear Lake region in Canada.

## What is Radioactivity?

HARDLY anyone can grow up in the world today without hearing about — and worrying about — radioactivity. We know that testing of atom bombs creates radioactivity, which is why it is one of the greatest problems facing mankind today. But just what is radioactivity — and why is it harmful to man?

Let's start with the atom. Every kind of atom is constructed somewhat like our solar system. Instead of the sun there is a nucleus, and instead of planets there are electrons revolving around it. The nucleus is made up of one or more positively charged particles.

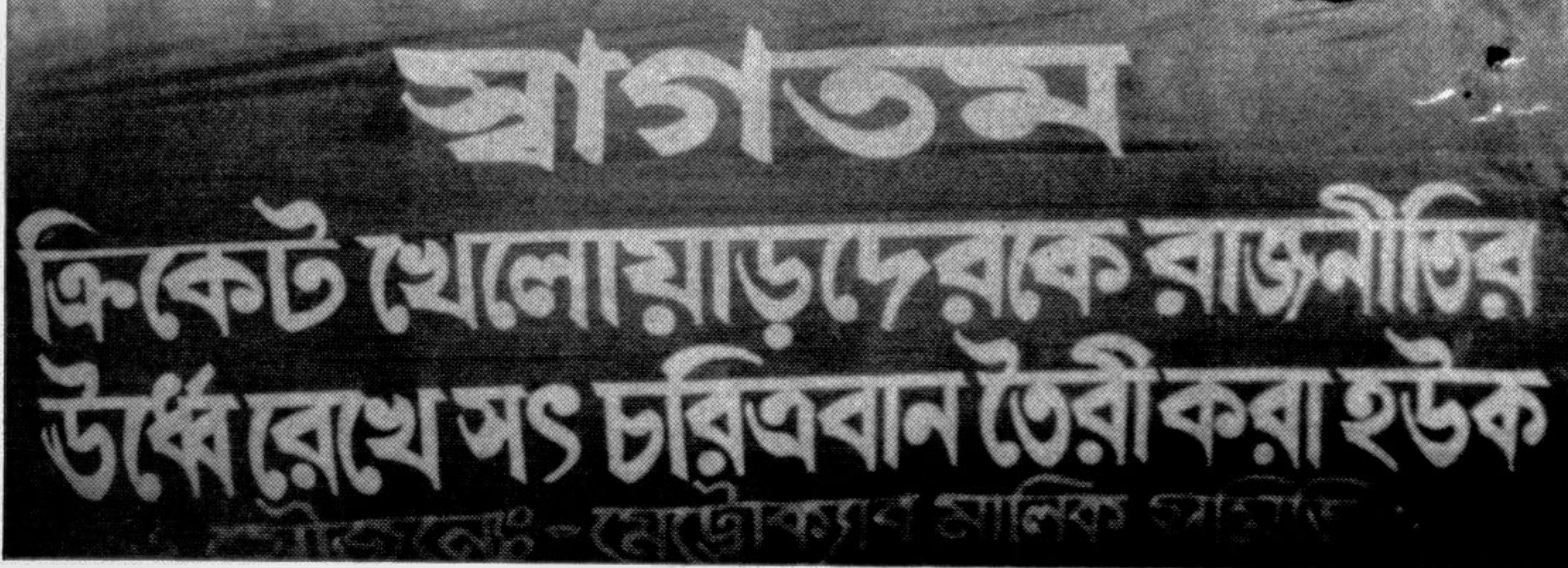
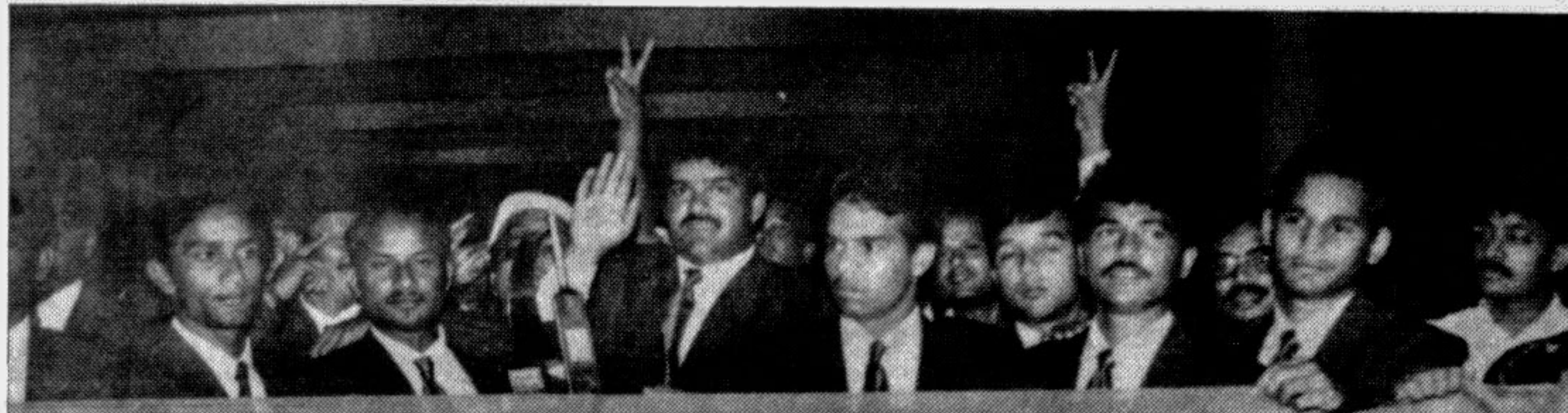
Radioactivity occurs when something happens to cause the atom to send off one or more particles from its nucleus. At the same time, the atom may send out energy in the form of rays (gamma rays).

Now some elements are naturally radioactive. This means the atoms are constantly discharging particles. When this happens, we say it is "disintegrating." When particles are sent off, the element undergoes a change. In this way, radium — which is naturally radioactive — sends off particles and disintegrates into other elements until it becomes lead.

Scientists have now learned how to produce artificial radioactivity. By bombarding the atoms of certain elements with particles, they could make those atoms begin to disintegrate and thus become radioactive. The bombarded atoms would thus send off energy. That's why these machines are called "atom smashers."

# Bangladesh Made the 'Sheiks Dig Their Own Grave'

by Ishrak Ahmed Siddiky



ALAS! Bangladesh cricket team has done something to cheer about. It was our maiden victory in any international cricket tournament. Though two years back they won a 7 nation cup back in Malaysia.

With this win Bangladesh once again proved that they are dangerous from time to time. The 12 team ACC meet started a week or two back. Six teams in each group competed in the Round Robin League. Bangladesh was the only unbeaten side at the meet. Malaysia once again proved to be a happy hunting ground for Bangladesh. Bangladesh defeated Nepal, Brunei, Japan, Hong Kong and Fiji.

They qualified for the semi-finals, where they thrashed Papua New Guinea by 7 wickets. They took sweet revenge against this side who, outraged them in 1982 ICC meet. They defeated the Bengal tigers by 3 wickets.

Well now time has changed. Bangladesh has matured in cricket. Both the semi-finals and finals were played in the Kilat club ground at Kuala Lumpur.

On Sunday real test awaited Bangladesh. Around 7-30 thousands of Bangladeshis tuned in Bangladesh Betar, with all of their hearts throbbing. When the thriller started, UAE won the toss, and welcomed

Bangladesh to bat. Bangladeshes' two dazzling opener Shahriar Hossain and Liton gave Bangladesh a flying start. The first wicket added 66 runs before Liton departed. Then the falling of wickets started. Only Bulbul with a polished 46 saved the day. Akram Khan scored 1 run, and there was no one to pull the sail for Bangladesh. The last wicket partnership of Salahuddin and Saiful gave Bangladesh some respectability. The fall ends added 32 before Saiful was out. So Bangladesh was bundled out for 212 in 49.3 overs.

Resuming to bat the UAE started with some flashy shots. In the first over of Anisur Rahman, Salim Raja clubbed 11 runs. But Khaled Mahmud Sujon, struck back in the second over, by taking the dangerous wicket of Azhar Sayed. He also removed Salim Raja for 17. Well cricket is a game of uncertainty. The tide began to turn after first the two were out. Only Arshad Laiq was unbeaten on 31. Wickets falling quick successions, and the Arabian Lion was in great problem. Rafiq with his lovely off spin and Salahuddin with his quickies booked the UAE for 104 runs in 36.4 overs.

The UAE batsmen just couldn't do well in spin. When in Rafiqes ball Taquir gave an

easy catch to Bulbul at the slip, the grave was finally dug, and indeed it was deep. Our dogs did a marvellous job. Khaled Mahmud Sujon was adjudged the man of the match while Azhar Sayed got the man of the series award.

Bangladesh team has thrilled us with each of their run, bowling and fielding. But we can't stop. For the ray of hope which they planted in our heart, will grow into something big, and we expect more. Our cricketers have made us proud. Tears came into my eyes when Akram Khan lifted the ACC trophy. After 25 years of Independence, we had done something great. Something unique in its own way! Football, hockey and other games has given us nothing but cricket has enthralled us. We are proud of them.

With this win we can little forget about our horrifying past in the ICC. That was a catastrophe. I hope Bangladesh won't have to face it again. Our sports minister has promised to bring a foreign coach in no time, and he also pledged to build to a cricket stadium at Moghbazar. Now we have to canalize the talents of our cricketers.

The coming months are important for us, in March we are supposed to play the ICC. The boys should work hard to keep

up their reputation. The sports ministry should take effective steps to improve cricket from the grass level. Better facilities should be provided at the BKSP. The rising players should get a chance to show their talent. Sunil Gavaskar the one time master in cricket, predicted that Bangladesh would do better in the future, and the side has improved a great deal. He also mentioned that Akram Khan captained his team well.

Bangladesh won the ACC trophy without the service of four rational key players. They are Minahazul Abedin, Farooq Ahmed, Athar Ali and Enamul Haq. Some of the people are saying that Bangladesh cricket doesn't need them any more. They are wrong, and they have no idea about cricket.

It's very good that Bangladesh team won, it's a great pride to all of us. But we mustn't forget that experience counts in cricket, no matter how good you are.

Well alas Bangladesh cricket has entered the 'twilight zone'. It's not the time to look back, but it is the time for the Bengal tigers to look forward. The Royal Bengal Tigers are now hunting, and nothing can stop them, for the ray of hope which our warriors has given us would enlighten our soul and our course their soul.

## Do you suffer from TRISKAIDEKAPHOBIA?

(From 'The giant book of fantastic facts')

by Tazeen Helali

THE fear of number 13 is called TRISKAIDEKAPHOBIA. Go to any street in a French town and you won't find a house numbered 13, the Italians leave it out of all lotteries. All over Britain, superstitious people fail to turn up for work on the 13th of the month. A Scotsman had even spent every Friday the 13th in his bed and hadn't eaten anything in fear of food-poisoning and choking.

this superstition had caused and maybe still causes America \$100,000,000 a year. But Nick was not bothered about 13. He was the thirteenth of 13 children and has 13 letters in his name. He even organized an anti-superstition demonstration in Athens on February 13th with 13 girls who would smash mirrors and throw away horseshoes and rabbit feet. But alas, the demonstration was postponed, Mr Matsoukas died of a heart attack two days before the event was to take place. What would you call it — coincidence or superstition? Taken me to the brink of insanity.



## A Waste Of Soul

: Anti-Rodent Anarchist Fooling Around Thoughtfully

I was talking to a friend of mine over the telephone. A fellow poet and fellow inmate. While we were pretending to sneeze in Verse I started describing a very describable girl I know and we wasted more than an hour discussing my latest head-over-heels skipping rope all the physical quantities. That make you forget the Psychological qualities. After I hung up I realized that I'd spent Tk 2, 200 entire paisas and the time I could have spent improving my mind (which does have room for improvement). On an absolutely phone call to an absolutely worthless degenerate. What I didn't realize was that I'd also wasted money and time, a lot more than an hour on Tk 2 in this case. On the girl I mentioned. With even fewer benefits.

## Operation Roach

: Someone the Great

ADRENALIN Warming rushing through my veins Seeping out my pores Action Hyperaction See the Enemy fly into Home Territory Hear the buzz of his wings Telling a story more ominous Than the sirens clanking in your head Patriotism, awaken and barbarism Raise the forces the armed arm forces and leg forces Slam the Slipper The enemy's dead Crushed With no-one to weep, to mourn over his martyrdom against Mortein Finally My room's been rid of the irritating rebel That was interrupting my strivations towards nirvana Though the cockroach wasn't that lucky.

## BIRDS

by Asif Rahman

The birds do sing, While comes the spring, And fly the birds, From tree to tree, And also over the sea. Colourful birds, wonderful birds, And the wings as flat as cards, Some birds red, And some birds blue, And some have a furry, green head.

# The Great Dinosaur Egg Hunt

GIANT halo of eggs astonished scientists with its size after a Chinese farmer found it on a hillside.

Believed to be the largest nest yet found, the matrix is studded with 26 exposed eggs; more may be locked inside.

Another trove contains eggs of a therizinosaur (below), which lived in the Cretaceous period, between 110 million and 65 million years ago. More than ten feet in length, these long-clawed plant-eaters were related to meat-eaters like Tyrannosaurus rex.

Because the tops of eggs usually broke off during hatching, fossil clutches are normally excavated from below. Unscrupulous diggers have been known to glue pieces together and sell them as whole eggs. For scientists, breakage is a boon — embryos were preserved only when the eggs were cracked before the yolks and whites decomposed.

The study of embryos could reveal more about the link between the dinosaurs and their descendants, the birds. It could determine whether some dinosaurs were warm-blooded and how carefully they pro-

ected and nurtured their eggs and young. The most intriguing idea — cloning a dinosaur from DNA, a scenario featured in the book and movie Jurassic Park — is also the most outlandish.

Small eggs often produced gargantuan adults — and at impressive growth rates.

Can DNA be extracted from dinosaur eggs? Success was reported by a team led by molecular biologist Chen Zhangliang at the College of Life Sciences at Peking University, where he works with paleontologist Zhang Yun. But some scientists remain skeptical. While DNA may well have been isolated, they say, it has not been proved it was from a dinosaur.

Meanwhile, eggs are being studied by an interdisciplinary team of scientists at North Carolina State University at Raleigh. They report that analysis of bone phosphates re-

vealed a sampling of atmospheric oxygen from the time the eggs were laid some 75 million years ago. Further studies could reveal more about the animals' reproduction, diet, and whether some were warm-blooded.

Courtesy — National Geographic



## A Tribute to Raihan Sir

: Someone the Great

O Great laughing one Your classes were fun And yet did we learn But now-where do we turn? O Great laughing one With the gotten Ray-Ban Minty 'Spou' dost thou chew Until they stick like glue Or Which are shared with us by you Or Which tends to adhere to shoes O great laughing one A tradition has begun (Just what, we don't know But it rhymed — and now we go) P.S — Mr Someone the Great has kindly consented to write this sonnet for the dudes and dudette of class IX Sunnydale (especially Imtiaz, Imran, Suzana, Daniel, Shambil and Arafat) who are heartbroken because Raihan Sir has left their crummy school.