TEENS and TWENTIES

Indian OR Sylheti

by Towheed Feroze From London

IF one is bored with London, he is bored with life. Cause London has everything that life has to offer said one famous novelist (I can't remember the name but what can you expect, so many blondes have captivated my heart in such a manner that sometimes I tend to forget my own name) however needless to say that London stands out for everything that is grand, nerve crackling and exquisite.

Here life never ceases to stop for even a single moment . "London" is phenomenal and only one of its kind. It offers everything that your heart may crave for. (UMM... at this moment my heart is craving for ... sorry guys can't elaborate if my girlfriend in Dhaka finds out I am dead meat).

Life here is multifaceted. There are millions of redeeming aspects of this cosmopolitant hub and I would like to let you guys back in Dhaka get an idea about each and every one of them. Today I shall focus my article one the Indian restaurants of London.

London is infested with bistros, restaurants both posh and ordinary. A person with an adventurous palate can indulge in exquisite dishes from Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia etc (restaurants here are an integral part of London night life) I know guys the mention of night life is getting you licking your lips but as the French say "Fait patience," I will definitely write a saucy, spicy article on London night life in the next issue).

The restaurants are doing brisk business and the "full" sign on weekends account for the Londoner's taste for foreign food. But, like in politics one chain of restaurants enjoy a monopoly of customers over the others. And presto these are the Indian restaurants selling for claiming to sell authentic Indian cuisine. The English lately have developed a taste.

For hot, spicy Indian dishes (not to mention hot and curvaceous Indian Girls ...Indian actresses are absolute hit). So, to cater the developing taste bud of the English, Indian restaurants have sprung up like mushrooms. Eating Indian food is the fashion now. But wait till you hear the true identity of all these Indian restaurants ..... as a matter of fact apart from a few most of these (with deceiving names like Balti Villa, Bombay palace, The Delhi Brasserie, Maharani, star of Bombay) belong to the Sylhetis I.E the Bangladeshis. The restaurant business is predominantly run by the Sylheti people. I had a rare opportunity to go to one of these places and believe me I was flabbergasted by the scene hundreds of Europeans stuffing polao and korma like gluttons.

This sight was enough to get my stomach rolling and, I ordered some for myself . Well, what can I say (even our bua could cook better polao and korma). Bengalees would never even tolerate such substandard food. But amazing the English were eating it with great relish. They seemed to be quite content with what they were eating. Here let me clear one thing " I am not denouncing the Sylheti restaurants, what I am trying to establish is that if they served biriyani to the standard of that in Dhaka then the English possibly would discard their own menu and definitely the English restaurants would go bankrupt. I wonder what would the English say after having a plate of haji"s biriyani of old Dhaka. But there are a few great chefs here who cook Indian food near to perfection . One of them is Tony Mian .. (Yet another Bangladeshi). Here if you want to sell any food just label it "Indian" and it will sell like hell.

In the eating business the Sylhetis have already left an indelible mark. With their restaurants and food the Sylhetis have given a positive image of Bangladesh (a rare thing won't you say). These restaurants have established the culinary supremacy of the sub continent. In this modern age when we are so far behind in many aspects it gives one a sort of pride and pleasure when he sees Europeans hunger for polao, korma, chicken do-piaza. At least we can complete with them in one respect.

Richard the Lion heart
has had enough chicken and tart,
he wants something hot
that would make him spring from his cot
so, he goes to East End
to Tony Miah's den
Polao and korma that's what I want
and that's what I chant.

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Considering Inconsideration

by Adnan R Amin

Situation-1

YOU are studying fervently for the test tomorrow and perhaps your mother is saying her prayers in a quiet, peaceful manner. Suddenly — a terrible noise and hullabaloos breaks the serenity of your house, and as you fall tumbling from the chair in an vain attempt to jump up, you notice your mom (who has evidently forgotten all her suras momentarily) staring at you vacantly — apparently dumbfounded. Meanwhile the noise, which it turns out, came from a "lottery-ticket-vending-van", still chants, "Matro chollish lokhho taka, jodi laiga jai, chharben apni Dhaka — shondeho ki tai?" (???).....

Situation-2

You start out early in the morning. Your first class is Maths. The subject is tough and the teacher obnoxious. (Most maths teachers turn out to be like that — somehow!) You are almost there .... almost .. "Kintu na" — "holo na" — because in front of you the road is blocked by a pandel (got the spelling right?) in which a public meeting will be held. This causes an incredible contraflow in the street and a bolt from the blue right on your head.

"Inconsiderate"! look up the word in a dictionary and you'll find a picture of a Bangladeshi or Bangalee just beside it. It would be though, unfair to keep the compliment straddled within our country or nation. But as the article is being placed in the very context, I have no other choice but continue in this very fashion.

Today — somehow I feel, people have started losing all their compassion and empathy for others and have begun to do only what's best for themselves — regardless however, of how it effects other people. And *that* is basically what inconsiderateness is all about.

Where does it start and where does it stop? The answer is it starts everywhere and ends no where. Think about how people trash the whole city. Nobody bothers to use trash cans or dustbins to dump their garbage — instead they dump it anywhere and everywhere. And strangest of all, always a trash from a house with a dustbin nearby lands *"outside"* the enclosed area! This — cannot be explained by me and could pose a serious threat to Mr Sigmund Freud had he tried to explain the Bangalee mentality with his theories!

Another disgusting subject — which I hate to write about — is excreting publicly. How many times I have wanted to kick these people right into the drain. And worst of all, it's so damn embarrassing when your travel companion(s) is a female!

Let me go back to my initial subject: miking. It is another problem which has apparently reached its peak. Lottery-ticket-vending-vans have only accentuated and intensified our age-old predicament of cinema-advertising vans. These vans play really horrible Bangla-cinema songs by even worse tape-recorders. The end result is disastrous. This is virtually energy release through sheer mental torture. And to make things works the noisy elements invariably come along at really impossible times — in the morning, or during your treasured siesta or else during "Azan"s or praying times.

As the matter of sound pollution has come up, I would like to conveniently mention another matter. It concerns car stereos. Initially people played stereos, because they themselves wanted to listen to music. But recently, some (especially the younger generation) people have become so "considerate and kind" that they play the music so loud that every person within the 20-km range can hear it! It is compulsory to listen even if you don't want to.

Honking or blowing your horns is another detestable practice. The purpose of horn was presumably not to be blowed everytime there was a traffic jam or each time the driver gets mad at a rickshaw-puller. But today — people honk for no reason at all. Perhaps to let everybody know a car is coming, so be careful — your life's at risk. Nobody bothers to cool down even in front of hospitals or clinics. One cannot just help wondering where, the civic-sense, the infinitesimal amount of consideration that used to exist amongst us, has vanished!

In various cases of merely trivial matters, people have been seemingly adamant to prove their lack of caring, and their indifference. Have you ever seen youths gathering in New Market and sitting idly on the face of a sign which says "Do not sit here".....? These people sit in the middle of the road and keep looking around for elements which could substantially whet their appetite for eve-teasing! Have you ever seen people park their vehicles so carelessly and haphazardly that it causes, contraflow, jam — absolute havoc in the streets and you to want to commit suicide? The truth is, that these people do not — by any means care about other's inconveniences! In one particular case, I remember, our car was stuck for an hour as another carelessly parked vehicle obstructed it!

I daresay, our tenant, who has rented the first floor of our house, parks four cars inside the boundary of our house. Most of the people who come to visit us, have to park their cars outside!

And — before I forget, let me tell you about the very incident that induced me the idea of an article like this. One day my brother and I were trying in vain to obtain a rickshaw in Siddheswari. It was pretty late at night, (it was nowhere near Ramna Thana for that matter — mind you — just in case you're wondering...) After what seemed like eons, a solitary figure emerged and we almost flew up to the chap who was paddling away idly. We stated our destination and were about to fix the fare when this really fat, black slob came running out of nowhere, jumped onts "our" rickshaw and shrieked "chalao". We were more hurt (?) than astounded at this fiendish act. Hah! talk about civic sense!

In another similar case, the same two characters, again my brother and I were out shopping in Aarong, for Eid. After much grumbling-mumbling and fuss, I finally found this "pretty cool" kurta/punjabi. I was going to try it on or something — I don't remember, but I put it on the rotating — thing for a moment — unaware of the would-be-perpetrator just behind me. This fiendish slob just grabbed "my" kurta and ran like hell! What can I say? I was mortified, and quite trying to find another kurta in protest (?!!)

Let us now turn politics and marvel at the lack of civic-sense and consideration in politics! Think about processions and how they block the road while passing. All the cars, buses-trucks have to crawl behind it. Wherever I see such processions, I just can't help wondering why they don't let at least *one* row go; that would help a lot. Public meetings do this too which I mentioned earlier. I have been trapped in Kakrail on many occasions while going to college due to political meetings or the constructions for it.

Another matter is that, the road is often closed when the prime minister is to pass. This started, to the best of my knowledge, from the regime of Ershad. This inconsiderate practice renders literally hundreds of vehicles tangled in an intricate web of traffic jam. This has gotta stop! Or else the alternatives are (a) Make new roads for VVIP's (b) Buy the PM a private helicopter (c) Arrange underground tube-systems (d) Make everyone else call on the PM or whoever, who attempts to block the roads.

In this article, I have tried to express my moderate views, in which I feel, the whole country, the whole nation is lacking in civic sense. Some people hold radical opinions too, in this regard. I have a friend who feels, people should not wear, too bright or fluorescent colored attires. Just the other day, he pointed out a young man wearing a horrible yellow T-shirt and maroon cord trousers and said, "that's what I call lack of consideration!" (I had earlier unfortunately asked him to find incidents and examples for my write-up), I tried to explain that the clothes did not cause him any inconvenience. He thought for a little while, covered his eyes and said, "Yes it does. It blinds your eyes while driving!??"

Hunt for HUCKLEBERRY

by Shahbaz Khan

A second and the principal source of the whole planet's energy sources is situated near the eastern peninsula of Phoes, a nation which has the highest population in this planet and is one of the more powerful ones among the five powers of this world. Scientists have long tried to use the internal power of the planet's own movement along the planetary orbit.

For nearly four hundred years, scientists had embarked on conducting research to finding a cheapest way of supplying the much needed energy for the whole planet. About 90 years ago, a joint commission of scientific analysis and probing into the Dentexian core by two small nations in the south-eastern part of the planet revealed an astounding find. This find shed the single most important light on how technology could be used to generate electricity for the planet without resorting to expensive power plants and inter-continental electric grid.

The scientist involved told the Dentexian that the core of the planet is hot enough and moving fast enough to generate electricity which can be connected to the already established inter-continental grid. The commission revealed that the best site for deep core probing to extract unlimited energy sources from within the core was the Himani province of the Majestic Phoes. But the Kingdom rejected the use of its land as the supply source of energy for the rest of the planet and resented the find as being a tacit attempt by the less prominent nations to question the powerful — the majestic forebears of the Phoes who for long centuries have dominated the planet in culture, politics, development and technology. The people of Phoes rarely identify themselves with the rest of the planet which they consider inferior to them. The four other powerful nations have had the same attitude towards the rest of the planet's inhabitants.

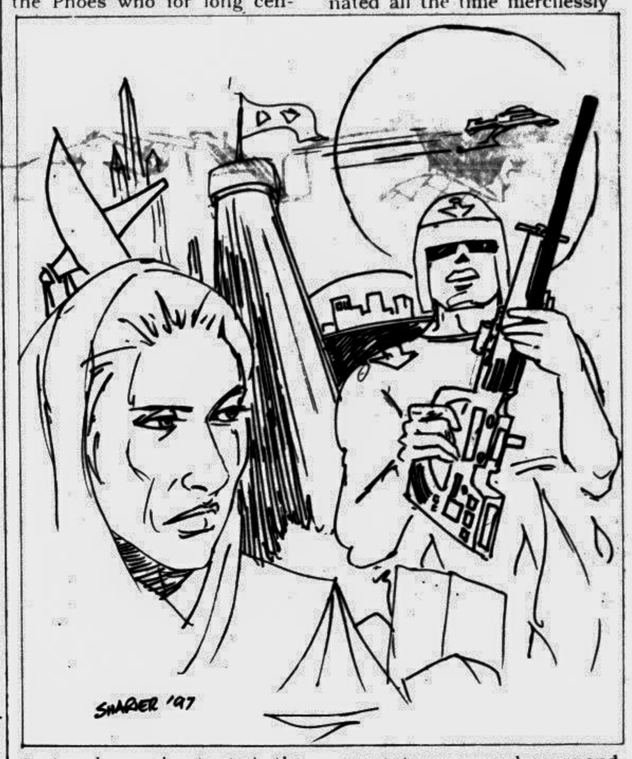
About three years after the commission's find, the government of the five powerful nations gathered secretly together in a remote island near the north pole of the planet where temperature rarely goes up — 100 degree Fahrenheit to discuss what they want to do about the prospect of unlimited energy. It was agreed among them that since they were the undisputed leaders of Dentex and are expected to retain that position for a long time to come, it would be dishonorable for any one of them to relinquish their domineering power to some lesser nations who were beneath them in all areas of development. In other words, the five most powerful nations even repudiated the find of the scientists from two of the poor nations as an act of dissent and challenge to their authority. Hence, repugnant to even consider. But since unlimited energy was a major concern for them and their people, they took it upon themselves to capture those scientists and put them to death claiming that they were infidels and terrorists bent on destroying the planet with some secret weapon. Before the scientists were killed by a so-called terrorists court in the Republic of Tamarun — the third most powerful among the five, the secret military establishment was able to unearth from them how to generate unlimited energy.

Within a decade or so, the five most powerful began to implement a gigantic project of covering their nations with unlimited and cheap energy while the majority of the nations suffered heavily due to the fact most of the inter-continental power grid as well as protective outputs that were built along the billions of miles of electric line uprooted their home, their environment and their nationhood. Although electricity was also provided to the vast majority of the poor nations, the use was deliberately restricted or tempered with so that they would always be dependent on the five most powerful ones. Wealth was transferred unfettered to the five most powerful because they have the ownership to the inter-continental power grid, though the vast majority of the planetary grid passed through their lands.

But this was not the only acrimonious item that created a generation of distrust among nations. Centuries of social, political and cultural dominance by the five powerful along with unnecessary military showing, even for the silliest purposes left the majority of the planet's population wonder whether or not they were even considered some life form having some fundamental rights or dignity and free choice of their own. Trade laws, continental migration law and a vast repertoire of restrictive and protective laws made it almost impossible for the vast majority of the Dentex's hapless nations to rise above their position from the lowest edge of economic and social prosperity. Massive unemployment, poverty, disillusionment about the future, and a persistent feeling of lack of justice prevailed in the psychic of the people in those countries. While their superior brethren from the five most powerful treating them like some bugs to be exterminated all the time mercilessly engage in perverse pleasure and to the moral destitution of even the most saint show contempt at them at every turn.

The Shadheen region's Tamar family has been one of the longest surviving dissenting force trying to unite many poor and powerless nations to stand up against what they called unjust and supremacist domination by the five most powerful nations. The family's survival for centuries was attributed more to its pragmatic approach to solve the problem of domination than by sheer luck. Attempts to terminate many rising and established leaders from the Tamar family were legendary source of inspiration for many other rebel groups around the planet. The family has a vast network of members spread around different countries, in business, in the practice of law, military, police and of course politics. The family was successful in using a variety of legal mechanism that most of the five powerful nations follow to its advantage, and made it difficult for the authority of those nations to directly attack them without facing legal problems in their own public opinion. One of the members of the Tamar family Kesir Memtexan married the daughter of a prominent military official of Federated Union of Auruns while he was doing his higher education in one of the province of Auruns. The prominent military leader of Auruns was less eager to carry out a century old practice of his nation to entrap his new in law. Besides, that would severely hurt his daughter's as well as other family members' feeling. Powerful as he was, other high officials and even the highest level of ruling class began to overlook this in an attempt not to antagonize the powerful military leader who has quite a network and loyal support among the two million man military.

To be continued



dHoOm DhAraKka at IBA

By Staff Correspondent

If you thought that *Dhoom Dharakka* was over by 20th March..... well, you are absolutely wrong, man! On last friday (March 28) the IBAites organized the Freshers' Reception for BBA 5th and MBA 31st Batch. Of course they did not have Sheraton's Winter Garden as their venue, but then in the IBA auditorium the spirit of the freshers and the existing IBAites was so high, and the music was just too cool that the reception was , no doubt, the fourth *Dhoom Dharakka* of Dhaka. And thanks to Babu (MBA 29th batch), Mahin (MBA 30th Batch) and Shuchi (BBA 1st Batch) for ingeniously supervising the whole program, making it a great success.

The program started with the usual function etiquette - *the speeches of the sages.* However on that very occasion, Dr. Abdur Rab, the Director of IBA, Dr. Nurur Rahman, the Chairman of BBA program, and Dr. Anwar Hussain, the founder member of the BBA program, all said their wise words this time rather with a tinge of humour, making the audience burst into laughter time to time. And then there was a bit of cultural show : recitations, dance, folk-songs and what not! But the real thing was yet to come..... Once the sages had left the auditorium and band songs started to rock the floor, the euphoria-struck IBAites made the use of every skratch of space available between the podium and the gallery to *dance and shake* with the rythm. One after one smashing songs continued. And the vocalist of the last band , Ehsan (29th batch), stretched the show till 11:30 p.m., when the function finally ended, much to the dismay of the audience. They wanted more!

Known for its notoriously rigorous curriculum, IBA, the country's leading Business school, has many distinctive qualities. One such is: It is a place where, no wonder, education and fun go together.

No doubt, the Freshers look fresh with enthusiasm!

There they are.... dazzling Mehnaz and Matin.

A Train not on Time

HAVE you ever met a dethroned lover? Not the type we come across these days, but the true ones. And by the way, those who don't believe there's still a thing called "love" in this mighty era of money, please stop reading at this very sentence. Well, since its not a classless society in every yardstick like money, age, religion, style, looks etc., I know quite a few hearts crippled by denials in many different ways — cheating, *noing*, reasoning, explaining with great affection and the like.

Please don't try to reason with matters of heart, as my Laksmi does, for she is very punctual about it. Sometimes her readiness amazes me : whom she refuses, she treats still with so much sweet behaviour that her refusal, through her skill, looks almost like a favour.

I'm telling you all this because Laksmi is not now here to care. Hypocrisy, right? Stay put. I'll tell you a little about human's inhumane hypocrisy.

A surge of feeling leaves me to be angry over one of my friends, a she, because quite some time ago, she let the society rule herself rejecting him (also my friend) with fairy condolence. He was hurt. Deeply, like experiencing death.

Well as the 'elders' say, "time" and "experience" are the only ways people grow up. Accordingly, they both did — one with a naked hatred for the same society which is giving her a terrible miscarriage of justice; and the other with a naive commitment to the society — precisely the one that gave him a scorching burn.

Now, they are seemingly two helpless (I may always be wrong) people wondering what they should do with their lives, because the "love" is still there — stronger than in the past. They meet, hug and console each other, but don't *want* to relay their passion "in public", possibly in their attempts to gain control; more so, to show allegiance to the necessity-driven "society". Sheer hypocrisy... Now, correct me if I am wrong, isn't this a falsified necessity which betrays their hearts? Well, Laksmi would have said "sometimes, people don't want to hear the truth; they would rather live with illusion". Like always, my Nymph comes up with a ready reason.

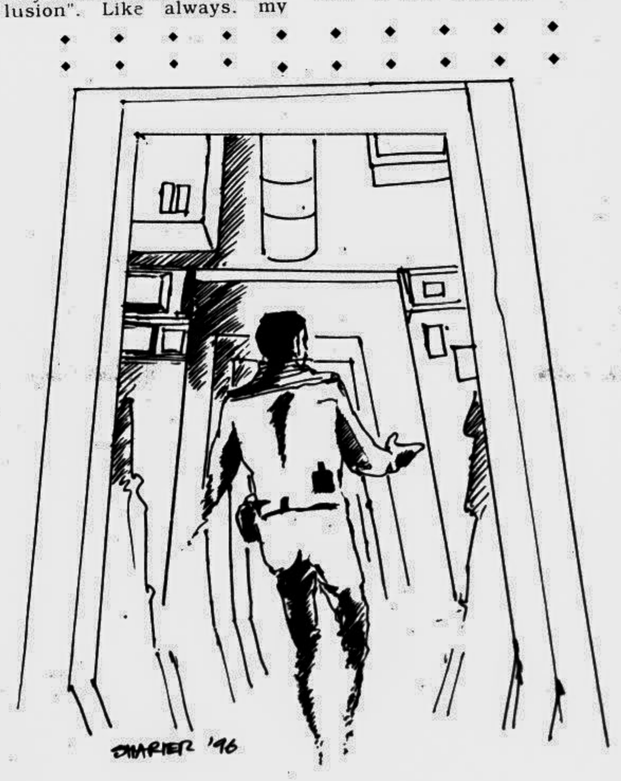
While the way-of-the-world became my friends' glittering bride and groom and airy hopes their children, I kept committing the oldest sin (or is it?) in the newest kind of way — I loved. But as soon as I realised that "a little sincerity was a dangerous thing and a great deal of its was absolutely fatal", I did try to convince myself saying: "I had an affair with someone, capable of injuring by beauty, in which there was neither sin nor shame." It didn't work, I kept running into mental feuds. But Laksmi found shame in it, for I butt into her good "times" when she was with people of *substance* around her.

She said ; "Go home, its late, and I'm busy." I felt like the account-keeper who misses the office-bus everyday.

I lay in bed that night thinking about her, and I had to laugh at myself. She really was bewitching, and I, a chimeric figment. She and I are two of a kind — neither of us would ever settle down. The life we lead is "socially" too exciting and stimulating and rewarding. Like my friends, we also don't know what to do with our lives. Well, those who are only interested to know how they should live instead of taking life as it comes are automatically "hypocrites".

Ney, she can't be so, for she is the one who always tells me: "Live, live all you can; it's a miserable mistake not to." But it was too late; I wouldn't have lived the life she was pampering me even if I could. My wheel of life was by then well set around her pristine crudeness.

This reminds me of a song I found interesting to a certain extent (you may not like it). The theme is : if you love many at a time, then keep saying that "I love you"; but if there's only *one* you are immersed in, say the opposite. Knowing that my dewy-eyed Laksmi will come back to me when the charade is over, I told her: "Cruel, you!", which she was not. She took it literally and got against-ridden with pale cherubic smile.

By the time I reached her with a pool of *apologia*, there was only spectre which can only be concealed in the tormented carve of my heart.

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