Job opportunities

CHINTITO

It can happen to you. But, after today, never be startled, because you have read about it in this column.

There is this "goo bahini" guys plastered in shit and any of their number can confront you while you are having a stroll on the pavement, presumably for fresh air. The gentleman...

And, why not? If we can address any gathering with "Ladies and Gentleman" when many of them are known debauched individuals loan defaulters, killers and traitors, why should we leave out a guy who is carrying some human excrement in public?

As I was saying, the gentleman will threaten you with a bear hug if you do not pay him some money. Most people do pay up, anything that comes out first, because even a hundred Taka note is cheaper than the possible laundry bill. You can gain more psychologically, if you usually throw away your clothes after such an embrace. So pay up! It's cheaper.

This is just one of the many ways some *bekaar juboks* have developed to earn a living in the capital in a country where there is very limited source of earning elsewhere. For, had he tried the same trick in an upazilla town or some forgotten village, the man and his ware would have perished together; that too, if he could dress up appropriately for his act. Also, the victim would be unable to pay. Statisticians are convinced that there is simply not enough food to go around in some places to create that amount of shit. Only in the capital there is no shortage.

Does that mean we have nothing to do against such nuisances? Of course, you have dear. You could dress up in a head to toe raincoat the next time you take a walk on the street.

Be careful the next time you take a rickshaw ride. The workers in this business usually strike near your point of embarkation. Fifty to hundred yards up your journey, the rickshaw will go past very close to pedestrian. The rickshaw-puller will make sure of that because he is one of them. Immediately the man on the street will start shouting at the puller and show his torn trousers, split from waist to foot, and demand compensation from him. Now you were on the rickshaw. You know that the rickshaw had nothing to do with the guy's torn trousers. The rickshaw did not touch him. The righteousness within you bubbles up and you start telling off the guy on the street. Don't! Some guys from out of nowhere will surround you and engage you in an argument that you cannot win. You may end up paying anything from one hundred to five hundred Taka, or cheaper, you could be beaten up.

Does that mean we have nothing to do against such nuisances? Of course, you have dear. As soon as the drama started you could immediately give the rickshaw-puller five Taka, jump off the rickshaw, cross the street and walk as fast as you can in the opposite direction. Don't lament you were not warned.

Say, you are walking on the pavement and there is no goo-guy around; perhaps because there is not enough food in the capital. But the innovative nuisance that can haunt your every movement is lurking close by. This employment of deception is restricted to men only. As a guy brushes past you, the upper part of your attire may be soiled by some mud, grease or whatever. He becomes overtly apologetic and offers you help in cleaning the shirt or punjabee. You are touched, literally so. You hand over your clothing for cleaning and it is cleaned, inside out. As you don it and head for your destination, you realise you have been cleaned, you feel lighter. In fact, only those who are light of the head can fall for this one.

Does that mean we have nothing to do against such nuisances? Of course, you have dear. Of course, you have. Don't wear anything on top. Or to be more respectable, wear two. You could open one and walk off with the other. That will fool the guys.

Then there is the snake charmer. He will thrust a snake at you as you are walking on the street. He will threaten you that the snake will be asked to bite if you don't hit for your pocket. By chance if your pocket is empty or you do not understand snake-talk, the snakebite is inevitable. My experience is such city reptiles are made non-poisonous, but don't take my word for it.

Does that mean we have nothing to do against such nuisances? Of course, you have dear.

You could ask him to enrol you in his school of snake speech or you could carry a been. Word of advice: learn to play the been before your next walk.

The primary reason for the increase in such swindling tactics to earn a living is that punitive measures have totally stopped. Unless there is appropriate punishment for such crime, the ideas of the doers shall become more creative.

But then these are the needy people of the society. Most of them do it for their survival. There are many well-to-do amidst us, who needlessly indulge in fraudulent practice. There are bigger s____s and snakes in the capital and all around the country. We need to clean them first. The jobless will than have their opportunities, dignified opportunities. ■