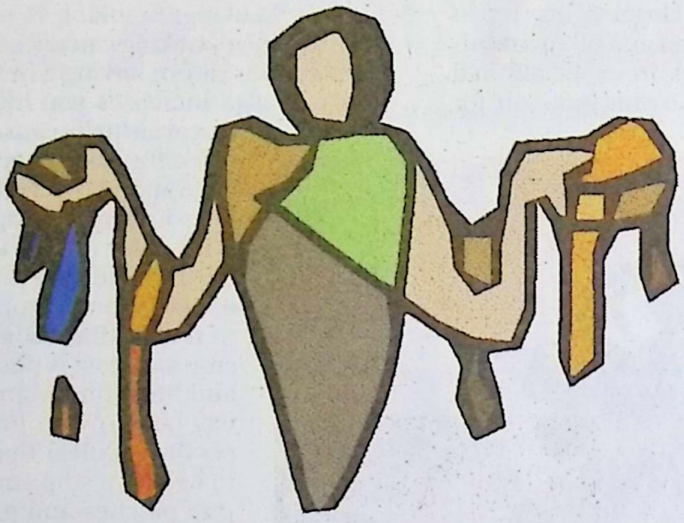


An Unusual Trip Home

Last week, I was returning home from my coaching centre in a CNG-run autorickshaw. In the course of the journey, the vehicle slowed down in front of a signal. As I was looking around, a man dressed in dirty rags came towards me and put his hand forward. To my utter shock I realised that his hand was not empty! It was filled with murky slime, probably from a nearby drain. And the next thing he said to me was 'ma teka de, naile moila pheikka marmu' (give me money or else I will throw the dirt on you). I was more than terrified and jumped to the other corner of the auto-rickshaw and hastily pulled out a Tk 100 note from my bag. As I was about to handover the money the signal turned green and the driver drove all the way away from the man. I could finally breathe properly. But the sad part was, I was stuck in the same signal once again! People might find this incident to be funny but let us seriously ask ourselves, where is our country heading to, that people are getting so desperate for survival?

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Begging with the Family

A few days ago, I went in Panthopath to attend a class. Prior to leaving class, after it was done, I was talking to one of my friends by the roadside. Suddenly, a man and a woman along with a minor child came to us asking for some money. The couple told us that they lived in Comilla and had come to Dhaka. On their way, the money was snatched away from them and due to this reason they could not go back home. My friend gave them a Tk 10 note. They left after a while. After a while, I saw the same kind of begging in another part of the city. The new couple with the child were trying to lure the passers by and was accepting the money that was being given to them by the sympathisers. I do not understand, now who to believe on the streets and who not to believe.

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A Menace on the Road

The other day as I was heading towards my university, I was rushing to the bus stop and did not notice a group of hermaphrodites coming towards me. They looked a little different from typical hermaphrodites, as they appeared to be female rather than male. They were wearing saris, holding wooden boxes in their hand. No less than four of them surrounded me, demanding for money, creating a very embarrassing scene. As I was in a hurry, I didn't have enough time to bargain with them. I did not have any change in my wallet. They looked at my wallet and noticed a Tk 100 note they and told me that they would give back 90 takas if I gave them the note. Like a fool I gave them the money, expecting them to give me back the change, which they refused to do! I kept pleading with them to give me the change. I showed them my wallet and told them that I did not have anything at all. Finally they gave me 20 takas. Finding no other way I began to walk very fast away from all of them. The government ought to address the issue and make some provisions for them so that they do not have to go around snatching people's money. Otherwise, the general people will fall victim to these groups all the time.

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