The Walk for Life



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Walking has to be the most absorbing and invigorating experience in my opinion. One can go into a trance, explore the richness of the surrounding scène as well as be cautious of the various loopholes and manholes on the way. Well, many people (including the writer too) will have to admit that the Dhaka streets aren't exactly the best when it comes to walking. You go one way, someone walks right into you. Sometimes in busy malls, you wouldn't even need to walk because the crowd will carry you from one side to another. And of course, there is the alarming possibility of being hit over by a car every time you go out. Still, all this hustle and bustle is exactly what makes the streets of Dhaka so alive.

Just take a walk of say a few metres in any important road. What would you get? It's bound to be noisy. In fact it would be so noisy that if somehow there comes a silence on the road, the place would seem out of tune. If you try to catch something out of the crescendo, you will only be surprised. It may go something like, "Imported from India, Ma'am", next to "He didn't show up like he said he would". There may be at the back someone making a prospective business deal over the phone. Whereas beside you a laid-back teen in torn jeans and chains would go whistling to his friends remarking "Abar jigggs" or "Chorom". All these stimuli combine to surprise you at the sheer variety of life.

No matter how many walks I take, this splendour of emotions, the grandeur of colours always captivate me. There is always something to dig out from these scenes. The result of these ruminations may differ from person to person. Perhaps in the eyes of a learner, he might find the way trees move very educational. A senior citizen might look on and reminisce at how society has changed over time. But from whatever vantage point we look, one thing that would be common is to feel the unity and the singularity of life simultaneously just by pondering on. The fact that we are all a part of this mélange can only be noticed when we are a part of that crowd.

If you see it from the point of view of health, walking is unparalleled in its virtues. It is the best medicine that a doctor can recommend to any patient except one who is paralysed or cannot walk for some illness.

Medical benefits of walking include: it keeps one's weight in check, great news for the weight-watchers; it balances blood pressure; reduces the risk of stroke, heart attack etc. Besides reducing heath risks, walking also heals the mental ailments. It reduces stress and revitalises a person's mind helping the person think clearly, it improves sleep and calms a person down when, say, he is angry or when he is worried.

The last one is a must for me. I just have to walk when I think. It helps me decide, it helps me clear my mind. Of course in walking many people also have different habits, some people like the regular, confident stride whereas others don't mind doing the moonwalk even down the road! How a person walks is also a sign to decipher a person's mentality and disposition. For example if someone is scurrying up and down the room, you can guess that the person is stressed out and tense. If the person on the other hand is trotting down the lane towards you, you can tell she is downright happy.

Who says walking is a monotonous business? It is also an activity which amplifies a person's co-ordination. The