

The famous cream roll of Olympia Bakery.



The alternative medicine pharmacy New Life has a nostalgic feel to it.

The store used to sell even LPs during its initial years but a lack of demand forced them to stop supplying these old music records. However, music enthusiasts of an older generation still visit the store for music cassettes that they won't find anywhere else.

Despite a loyal customer base, sales are down, says Burman.

"Most music albums can be downloaded online and so, people don't feel the need to buy movies or albums from stores anymore," he adds sadly.

Freedom Fighters of New Market

ABM Shamsuddin and Golam Kabir were students during the Liberation War movement. Their love for the country and the desire to see it free from the clutches of the oppressive Pakistani regime encouraged the two of them to join the war. However, they weren't allowed to do so as they were too young; both were only in middle school when the war broke out.

This didn't stop the youngsters to do whatever they could to help propel the movement and support freedom fighters in the field in every way they could.

"Freedom fighters would hide in our houses to escape arrest. They would stay for a couple of days in our house without fearing detection and then be on their way. We often would hide arms and ammunition in our house to protect our brothers in the war field," says Shamsuddin.

When his uncle left to join the war, Kabir too left with him, not knowing what the outcome of his decision would result in.

"Nowadays we hear people claiming that they fought for their country and demanding recognition. I fought for my country too but I've never craved publicity for that. When you want monetary benefits in return for your contributions in the war, you are basically selling your patriotism, your sense of righteousness," says Kabir.

They both now run the Dhaka Book Syndicate that was launched in New Market in 1958 by Shamsuddin's father and Kabir's father-in-law Mohammad Azizul Hakim. The shop is the go-to place for medical and public service books. The young rebels who fought for an independent nation are now elderly gentlemen, content with their lot in life, satisfied that they are able to carry forward the dream of a man they both loved and respected.

History in Its Heart

Even though the very structure of New Market has changed over time, the place still evokes images of an era many of us are unaware of. The market has been able to keep intact pieces of individual and national history. And that's the reason why we consider New Market to be such an important part of our national heritage; there is something truly special about a place that can captivate our memories and take us back to a history that is familiar but lost in the depths of time.