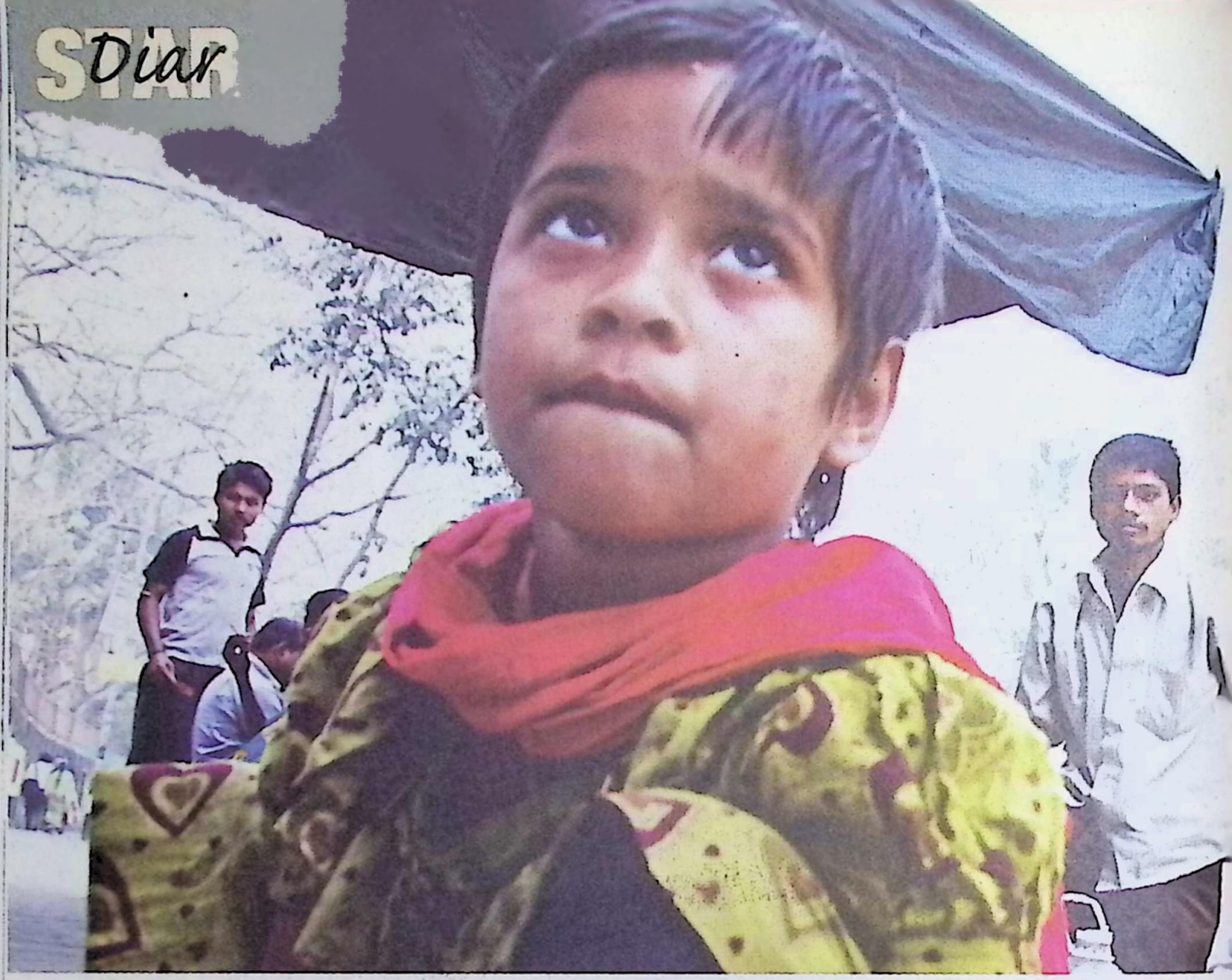


PHOTO: ZAHEDUL I KHAN

Bully Be as Bully Does

As I was walking down the road in a posh vicinity of Dhaka, I saw a little child watching with awe at something displayed at a shop window. The look on the child's face was one of total curiosity, as he stared longingly at the chocolates and other goodies displayed at the window. The boy wore tattered clothes, and seemed to be from the streets, which is probably why the shop guard didn't think twice before rapping him hard on his head. I was as shocked as the child at this brutal attitude. I am usually a non-confrontational person, but this action forced me to confront the man and ask him why he would hit such a small child without any reason. The man gruffly replied that he was in the way of pedestrians and shoppers. When I retorted that he wouldn't dare to raise his hand if this was a child of well-off parents, the man raised his voice to say something but seeing the crowd get bigger, he kept his mouth shut. Such bullies, who pick on children half their size, ought to be shamed in public and taught a lesson they'd never forget.

Ali Zakaria
Dhaka

The Colonial Hangover

I don't understand people's obsession with fair skin. The other day my mother's friend came over to our house and on seeing me she said, "Oh, your daughter is dark but she's sweet-looking." I didn't really understand what she meant by this statement. Was it supposed to be a compliment? Why should my complexion be the definition of my overall look? This colonial mindset has been passed on over generations, and there's a dire need to change the way we perceive beauty. We love labels and don't hesitate using them on people, calling them too fat, too thin, too dark or too short. But this just shows our narrow and shallow mindset.

Farhana Alam Sinthia
Elephant Road, Dhaka