

GONE WITH THE WIND

While we celebrate the advent of a new year, we know we have to say goodbye to some things. In fact there are many things that have become extinct over the past few decades. We associate these things with our childhood or growing years and they are assigned a special place in our hearts and memories. As we look forward to 2015, *the Star* takes a look back at the things that have become obsolete or failed to stand the test of time.

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Times they are a changin'. And how. Things that are indispensable one day are relegated to the dustbins of history the next. Make no mistake. Human beings are made to idolise the things that they've lost to time. We have the tendency to glorify and venerate the deceased, and so these obsolete or almost-there things will forever remain in our memory as idealised concepts. However, because of the demands of time and the ever-changing needs of society, we've had to or will soon have to bid goodbye to the once-in-fashion commodities that sadly are now archaic.



Niyamatkhana – 'The Meatsafe'

If you were an 80's or even an early 90's kid, you are sure to have seen a small steel or wooden chest that kept all kinds of special food items hoarded away for special occasions or favourites of the household. My

brother and I grew up abroad and whenever we visited our grandparents in Bangladesh, we would be delighted by this *nyamatkhana* that held the mouth watering delicacies for us. Over the next few visits, however, we learnt that with the demise of my grandmother, the *nyamatkhana* was also laid to rest. A sparkling new freezer took its place. Once a common sight in every household of Bangladesh, the 'meatsafe' has now become an extinct species.

Hurricane Lamps

Even around a decade ago, hurricane or kerosene lamps were the go-to device for most urban households in the country during blackouts. Thanks to more efficient generators, IPS systems and even battery charged lamps, this age-old method of lighting is in its death throes – at least in Dhaka city. Although villages where electric grids have not reached still use kerosene lamps, the advent of solar power has significantly reduced the need for these age-old contraptions.



Letters and other Snail Mail

Who writes letters anymore? And why would you? Thanks to smartphones and the internet, communication has become super easy and accessible. So much so that we can convey a message with the help of a few emojis. Letters and postcards, though, were so much more personal. As it always took a while to receive a letter, one could pour one's heart out and talk about every minute detail and the receiver would gulp down every word, reading and re-reading every line for any missed point. Only people who are romantic about a personal past write letters or send postcards now.

Fountain Pens

Remember dipping your first fountain pen in a pot filled with dark ink? Your shirt sleeves were bound to be stained with ink spots even as your mother yelled from the other room that she'd break your legs if she



found another stain on your white shirt. Fountain pens used to be the symbol of being a 'grown up'. It was something you were gifted on your 13th birthday, the coming-of-age year, by your grandparents or your parents and you would feel as if you could burst with pride. With writing by hand now almost reaching the state of being obsolete, it's little wonder that fountain pens have been relegated to a life of obscu