

# MY WAY OR THE HIGHWAY

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PHOTO: KAZI TAHSIN AGAZ APURBO

*"Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life"*  
- Unknown.

The above quote has two problems. First, it is often misattributed to Confucius. Second, most of us never pay heed to it anyway!

This is a month when it seems necessary to rub the dust off this quotation. Last month when people got their HSC and A Level results. Now that the joy (and the omnipresent V-sign by those who have earned GPA 5!) or the melancholy have subsided, it is time to make a big decision.

What would you like to do with your life? What would you want to be? Most students 'instinctively' decide on studying medicine, engineering, BBA and a few other common subjects, - often forced by parents, friends and society. But that's clearly not the way you should make such a decision.

## Find Out What You Love Doing

Steve Jobs once said, "If today were the last day of my life, would I want to do what I'm about to do today." Study a subject you are passionate about. If you haven't discovered it yet, search for subjects online and see if any of them clicks. Courses as varied as zoology to journalism to aviation (remember that childhood dream of becoming a pilot?) to archaeology are offered at institutions in our country.

And for the moment, put the financial aspect aside. It's better to be in a job that you love that pays fine than be in a miserable job that pays a lot. If you love the field you are in, success is bound to follow.

## Don't Be Afraid to Go Against the Flow

While pursuing to become a doctor, lawyer or engineer may provide a sense of security - as they are deemed as 'safe' and 'respectable' careers - you will not be able to excel if your heart calls out for, say, fine arts. The future might seem very vague now, and your parents might not want you to take that 'unstable' road. Convince them (more importantly, convince yourself) and take that leap of faith.



## Question Everything, Even the Idea of Going Against the Flow

Writing or painting is not for everyone, though. Just like the fact that some jobs are seen as desirable by society, there are jobs reputed as 'cool' or 'artistic'. Many people from such backgrounds look down upon 'mainstream' students and

professionals. "Oh! You are a banker. You have no life." Or, "So you want to study BBA? That's the most common thing ever." This too, is an incorrect way of looking at things: going against the flow is not your goal; studying and being in a job that you love, is. If studying BBA or being a banker is actually something you think you will enjoy, go ahead with it.

## Make an Informed Decision

Keep in mind that you have to study the subject you choose for at least 4 years, and, that period is sometimes followed by a life-long career in that field. If you do not like your course and later your job, it is a trap that might last a lifetime. So choose wisely. ■

CAREER

HERITAGE



What do you reckon is the most common element featured on the book covers of publications about Old Dhaka? Of course, many things have been portrayed. But one article that keeps recurring is the horse carriage - our beloved 'ghora gari'.

The hackney carriage, therefore, may be argued to be a symbol of the heritage of Dhaka. Such is the influence of this vehicle. And why would it not exert this influence, given that it was one of the most popular modes of commute?

Before 1840 horse carriages were rare. There was at least one in 1823: Bishop Heber, an English clergyman, had come across it. It was the carriage

of Nayeb Nazim Shamsuddaula, imported from Kolkata.

The affluent and influential Armenians eventually brought horse carriages into vogue in our city. The Armenians of Dhaka, who were merchants and zamindars, had left behind a rich heritage. A couple of weeks ago, we talked about the glory of Armenians, by citing the example of Pogose School, the first private school in Dhaka established in 1848 by JGN Pogose.

But one write-up doesn't suffice to the contribution of Armenians in our city and to our culture. The business of horse carriages was pioneered by an Armenian organisation, GM Shircore & Sons. "Shircore thus pioneered a

# SHIRCORE & SONS

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PHOTOS: PRABIR DAS

transport revolution," wrote Dr. Sharif uddin Ahmed in his book Dhaka- A Study in Urban History and Development: 1840-1921, "and his 'horse carriage' business became such a great success that his example was soon followed by other Armenian and local businessmen: the ticca garries rapidly became the chief form of public transport..."

In 1867, there were 60 horse-drawn carriages for hire. That number became 300 in 1874. By the year 1889, the figure soared to become almost double.

Advertisements were printed to lure customers. According to the 20 December, 1856 issue of Dacca News, a specific buggy could be hired for a month at a price of Tk35.

There were different kinds of horse carriages in Dhaka, from buggy to britzka to 'tanga', varying in design, number of passengers it could carry and the number of horses required to pull it.

Advertisement was not the only thing newspapers printed about the horse carriage. Dhaka Prakash published an article on 4 July, 1897 about a strike called by the coachmen, due to the injustices done to them by the police demanding bribes.

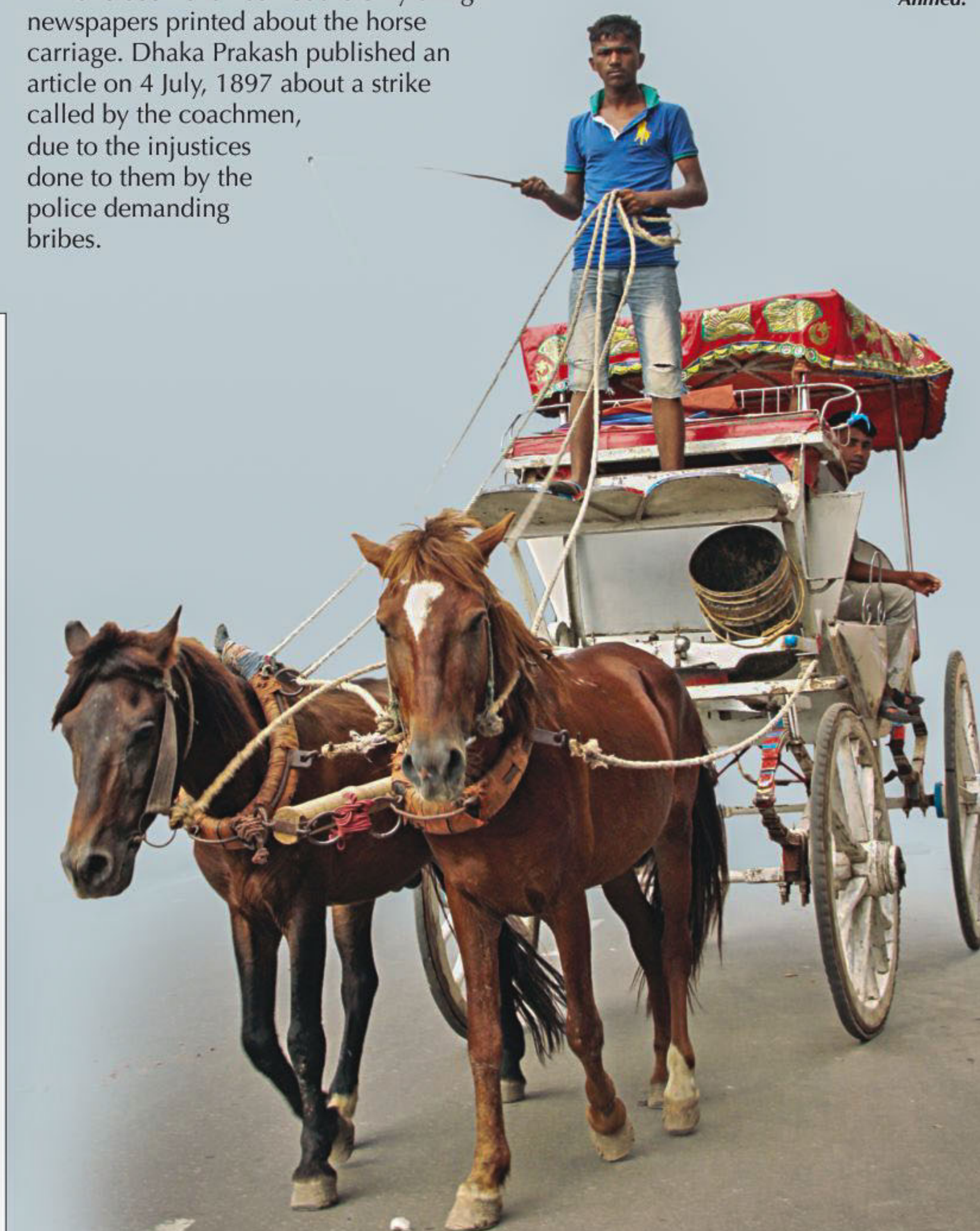
If you were a coachman during those times and were really good at your job, you could even get hired by the Nawabs. Those coachmen had an uniform and a special 'pagri' and they were respected in their community.

GM Shircore & Sons of course had other ventures. For example, their shop was one of the first retail outlets in Dhaka to sell European goods, from cigars to honey soaps to fancy note papers.

But perhaps their biggest contribution was the horse carriage. Today, hackney carriage is a mode of transportation often called upon for a recreational ride. Sometimes, the bridegroom arrives at his wedding riding on it.

More so, it is the reflection of how one company contributed to the progress of Dhaka.

Source: 'Dhakar Coachoanra Kothay' by Ridwan Akram 'Dhaka- A Study in Urban History and Development: 1840-1921' by Dr. Sharif uddin Ahmed.



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