



LIFESTYLE

A visit to Gazipur is incomplete without a visit to Tok Noyon Bazaar, popularly known as Tok Bazaar of Kapasia upazilla. Though it's a very remote village of the upazilla, the place is popular for a restaurant called 'Tota Miah Niribili Hotel' (The owner of the cuisine is Tota Miah). The hotel provides you a large range of Bengali cuisine that has a total of 100 traditional food items, prepared on a regular basis -- including 70 items of traditional *Bhorts* (all types of dry fish, meat, and vegetables) 30 items of curries, 'Mashkolaier Daal', an item that is exclusive to this restaurant and some pickles, made by the 50-year-old Tota Miah himself.

Tota Miah had a passion for cooking and started his journey with Niribili Hotel around ten years ago. From his childhood, Tota Miah served as a cook in different tourist areas of the country, for example, Sylhet, Chittagong, Cox's Bazaar which helped him to explore more. Tota Miah always dreamt of having a restaurant in an area, free from all the chaos of city life -- and that's why his restaurant is called 'Niribili' (solitary).

Tota Miah began with 30 items of traditional *Bharts* and curries that he used sell to local customers in a small, rented place. His business expanded when people from the nearby districts -- Gazipur, Mymensingh and Kishoreganj began to crowd his little shop and demand for more.



"Vehicle drivers coming from different areas of the country would promote my hotel to the people living in remote districts," says Tota Miah. "I feel good when people send my *Bhorts* to their beloveds living outside Bangladesh."

Upon entering, you would see Tota Miah's physically challenged son Rajib

welcoming all and shouting with glee -- "Bhorta, Bhorta, Bhorta!" and help people to get tables.

Currently, Tota Miah's Niribili has a seating capacity for 60-70, where 90 percent of them come from Dhaka.

"When my relatives mentioned 70 items of *Bhorts*, I thought to myself how can it be possible? But today when I saw the menu, I found this to be something beyond my imagination!" exclaims 35-year-old Sultana Shamima, a government employee. "The mashed Taaki, pigeon and hilsha are just mouth-watering!"

Because of the excellent quality of food, Niribili hotel has always served a place for family get-togethers and also a meeting place for local influential people.

"As it is close to my constituency and I use this route regularly, I love to have my lunch here every now and then," says Advocate Md Suhrab Uddin, a Member of Bangladesh Parliament of 163 Kishoreganj-2. "The food and service Tota Miah serves within a very reasonable price is nothing short of commendable."

But do you know the secret of Tota Miah's special dishes? Tota Miah has a 10-member-team of village women, trained and maintained by Tota Miah himself, along with his wife Saleha Begum. Besides, all the items are cooked on earthen stoves, while the 'Bata Masala' increases the taste to a great extent.

Plan a weekend with family and friends for 2017! Don't miss the unique *Bhorts*! ■

TONA MIAH'S 'NIRIBILI'

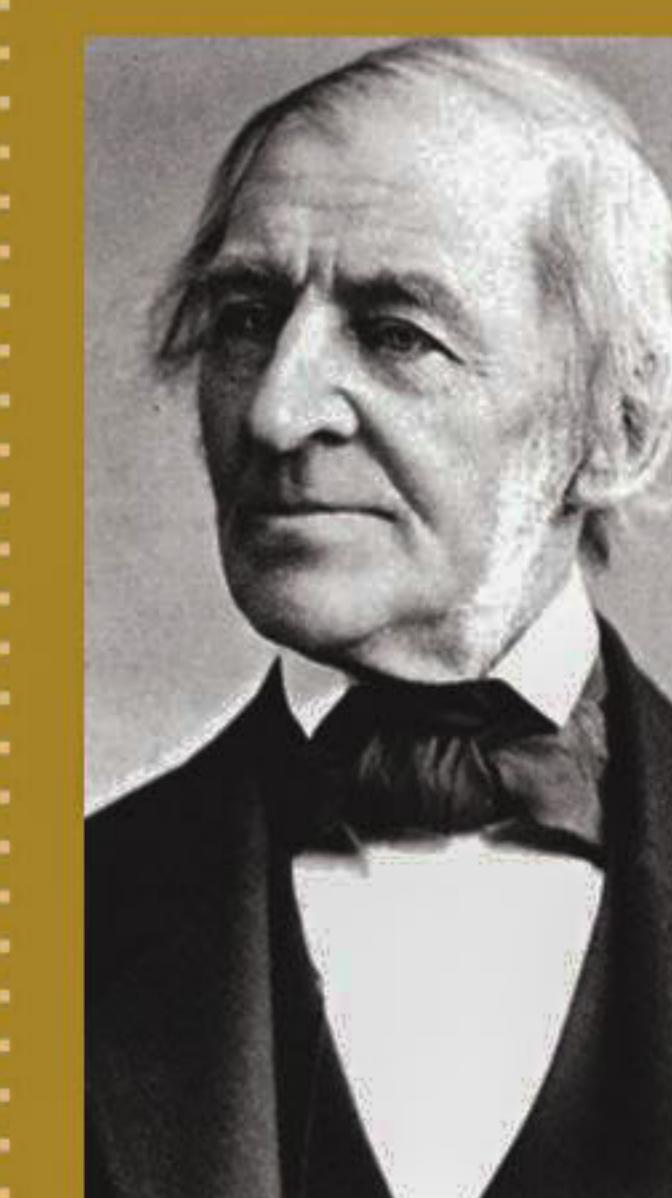
NILIMA JAHAN

PHOTOS: ASHIK RIAJ ANEY

PEARLS OF WISDOM

"YOUR SUCCESS AND HAPPINESS LIES IN YOU. RESOLVE TO KEEP HAPPY, AND YOUR JOY AND YOU SHALL FORM AN INVINCIBLE HOST AGAINST DIFFICULTIES."

HELEN KELLER
American author, political activist, and lecturer



"WRITE IT ON YOUR HEART THAT EVERY DAY IS THE BEST DAY IN THE YEAR."

RALPH WALDO EMERSON
American essayist, lecturer, and poet

"YEAR'S END IS NEITHER AN END NOR A BEGINNING BUT A GOING ON, WITH ALL THE WISDOM THAT EXPERIENCE CAN INSTIL IN US."

HAL BORLAND
American author, journalist and naturalist

HERITAGE



DHAKA'S PANDORA'S BOX

APURBA JAHANGIR

PHOTOS: KAZI TAHSIN AGAZ APURBO

The definition of a market is an area or an arena in which commercial dealings are conducted. Now one can say that there's nothing remotely poetic about browsing through a market's shops -- but what if a market gives the essence of the culture, the people and to some extent, the city as a whole? For more than 60 years, New Market has catered to people of all class and age. From being a book lover's paradise, a child's toy heaven to the prime stop for weddings, New Market is the heart and soul of the Dhakaites. Standing right beside Dhaka University, New Market also observed many revolutions which seized the city. The market itself has an interesting story.

Year 1952. East Pakistan was going through one of its periodical bouts of violence and instability. After the central government of Pakistan declared Urdu to be the national language in 1948, a number of protests took place in the city, finally leading to February 21, 1952, where a huge number of demonstrators were killed by the police. While the year experienced the struggle for independence, this was also the time

when the city was being more modernised. Under the supervision of Nurul Amin, then chief minister of East Pakistan, New Market's first bricks were laid. Completed in 1954, New Market was originally intended to cater to the needs of the elite population of Dhaka, especially for the people living in Dhamondi and Azimpur. Before New Market, Old Dhaka was considered the shoppers' hub of Dhaka, but due to its narrow lanes, intolerable noise and crowd, shopping was not a happy experience for the families going there. The emergence of a cleaner, more spacious market proved to be a pleasant change for the people of the city.

New Market is built on 35 acres of land with a space for 440 shops. However, only 25-30 shops were launched during the initial years of the complex, leaving enough space for people to browse and shop in peace. The design is triangular in shape with high arched entry gates on its three sides. During the 1980s, three more New Market blocks were constructed on the north under Dhaka City Corporation. The New Super Market was made for crockeries, Bonolata for kitchen market, Chandrima and Gausia market for varieties of fashion items and D block for groceries. Each was made with the



capacity of holding over a thousand shops.

Though many shops have come and disappeared with time, stores like Zean Book Store, Modern Art House, Bashiruddin Tailors, are still there, standing in the corners of the market happily serving their customers. Interestingly enough, if you look around, you can find stores that have items like cassettes and old records. The market houses interesting looking homeopathy chambers in the alleyways of the

