



TIME OUT

WINTER DELICACY AT TSC!

NILIMA JAHAN

PHOTO: KAZI TAHSIN AGAZ APURBO

The moment you hear the term 'Sheeter Pitha' (winter cakes), a perpetual village image might pop up in your mind. Sitting beside the earthen stoves with your mother, keeping a hawk's eye on the preparation and finally eating the piping hot *Bhapa Pitha* (steamed rice cake) with *Khejur Cuur* (date palm jaggery) will surely make your mouth water!

However, over the years, the scenario has immensely changed. Even in this busy city, some places for public gatherings have also become vibrant spots for having *pithas*!

Let's take the example of TSC (Teacher-Student Centre, University of Dhaka). As it is regarded a very popular place for the youth for day-to-day *addafying*, at this time of the year, the numerous makeshift shops of *pithas* have added a new dimension to the area. Besides, as *bhapa pitha* is very easy to prepare compared to the other items and the cost of making is also little, the venture brings smiles on the faces of the sellers, giving an opportunity to earn some extra money.

"I have been doing this temporary business here for over the last seven years," says 26-year-old Kona Akter, a very popular Pitha seller at the TSC area. "Every evening, especially on holidays, I along with my four staff members



don't get any time to talk!" Kona is also a student, pursuing her graduation from the department of Marketing at the Begum Badrunnesa Govt. Women College.

One would be astonished seeing their skills and speed of making *bhapa pithas*. The sellers hurriedly take pounded rice mix in a tiny platter, mix coconut shavings, and finally put stuffed date molasses on the surface of the mixture. After steaming the entire mixture for a minute or two, they provide the customers the delicious bites of hot and fluffy *bhapa pithas*.

The price of this delicacy is also very reasonable, in most cases ranges between five to ten takas, depending on the size. *Pitha* sellers of TSC usually collect the ingredients from the old part of town earn between 700 to 800 takas daily.

"Since winter has set in, I cannot think of a single evening without the *Bhapa Pithas*," says 23-year-old Fariana Leena, a student from University of Dhaka. "As my exams are ongoing, and I cannot manage any time to go home this winter, I find it really enjoyable tasting the winter delights with friends."

Along with the students and youths, people of all walks of life flock together to have *pithas* at the TSC. "As soon as my office hour ends, I regularly come to have winter *pithas* with my colleagues," says 36-year-old Shamim Al Mamun, who works at a nearby consultancy firm.

In this busy city, joyfully eating the piping hot winter *pithas* with your dearest one at the TSC or bringing some winter delights for your beloved family members can be one of the best memories this winter.

So, if you have not visited yet but intend to, make sure to drop by TSC and feel the ultimate taste of winter! ■

HERITAGE

In 1835 the General Committee of Public Interaction submitted a proposal to Lord William Bentinck, asking to establish an institution which would teach English literature and science in major cities such as Dhaka, Patna, Chittagong and many more. After the proposal, a lot of work was put into the planning. Intellectuals of that time held several meetings with the committee; to see if a government funded school could be possible under the British Raj. In the middle of that year, the government passed a proposal which led to the establishment of the Dhaka Collegiate School on July 15 in Bengal, as the first government school. This project became very popular among the cream of the then British Raj and the authorities wanted to take this project outside of Dhaka. After one year, they reached the port city of Chittagong. In 1936, with the same goal of teaching science and humanities, the Chittagong Collegiate School was established. After all these years, the school remains the same, being the oldest school of Chittagong. In December 2016, the school completed 180 years.

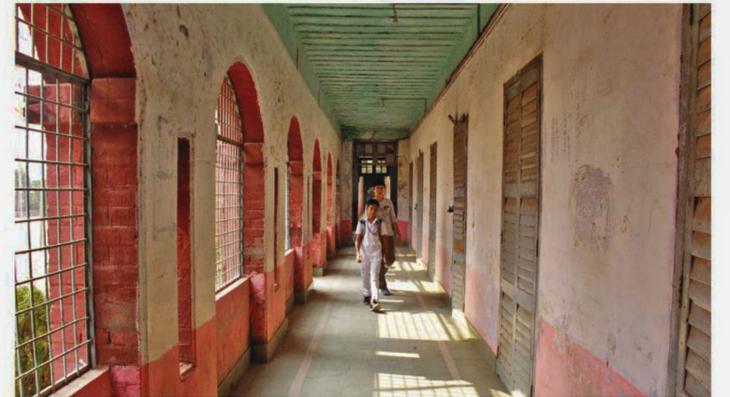
Chittagong Collegiate School and College was first established as Chittagong Government School and was also the first English medium school in the city. Back then, classes were held at a government brick building constructed during the early years of the British period. Though there are no official records on how many students were in the first batch, it is said that the school started its first year with around a hundred students. Most of the students from the first batch were sons of Zamindars and Portuguese Christians. After fifty years, the school was relocated to its current location at Ice Factory Road, North Nalapara, near the Chittagong Railway Station. Eventually, the school was renamed to Chittagong Collegiate

School. Interestingly enough, even after the name change, the school was popularly known as the Entrance School until the first decade of the twentieth century. From the very beginning, the school established a very good reputation and was known for its excellence providing secondary education.

Undoubtedly, Chittagong Collegiate School played a big role in modernising Chittagong. The school's permanent campus offered all kinds of facilities to the students which were unimaginable in Chittagong back then. The school not only established a dormitory for the students but also had a separate residential area for the teachers. Its campus is one of the biggest school campus in the country, consisting of a playground, swimming pool and even a mosque. The school also boasted some of the best teachers for generations. Ohidul Karim, one of the most distinguished literary persons of Chittagong was a teacher at the school. His grasp on Chittagong literary scene is still missed by his former students.

Many iconic figures studied in this very school including Noble Peace Laureate Dr Muhammad Yunus, prominent scientist Professor Jamal Nazrul Islam, poet Nabinchandra Sen, renowned actor Abul Hayat, famous writers Humayun Ahmed and Zafar Iqbal, Professor Muhammad Ibrahim, media analyst Muhammad Jahangir and many more. It is quite rare to see a large number of iconic individuals belonging to the same school.

The most interesting aspect of this coincidence is the stories that surround them and the school. Both Dr Yunus and Dr Ibrahim were scout members of this school and represented Chittagong Collegiate School in the World Scout Jamboree in Canada and Philippines. "When I think of Collegiate School I remember the old days as a scout member. The after-school scout work surrounded most of my childhood and



also made me what I am today," says Muhammad Jahangir. Another interesting aspect of Collegiate School was the Junior Cadet Core (JCC) training. "In class nine and ten everybody had to participate in the JCC. It was kind of a pre military training and our commander was an Urdu speaking man named Ostad Jashim." Students had to dress in full khaki military uniforms and were also given fake rifles to march in the then Nawaz Stadium. "This drill actually helped me learn a lot things such as how to stand at ease, how to march and even how to present arms. Even if today somebody gives me a rifle, the first thing I will do is demonstrate how to present arm," says Jahangir.

In 2016, Chittagong Collegiate School celebrated its 180-year anniversary. People from all over the country and abroad participated in this grand occasion. Dr Muhammad Yunus in his speech said that without this school he would not be what he is today. It's a wonder as to how much of an influence a school can have on its students. We hope that Chittagong Collegiate School will continue to build brilliant minds for as long as possible. ■

180 YEARS OF CHITTAGONG COLLEGIATE SCHOOL

APURBA JAHANGIR

PHOTOS: PRABIR DAS



PEARLS OF WISDOM

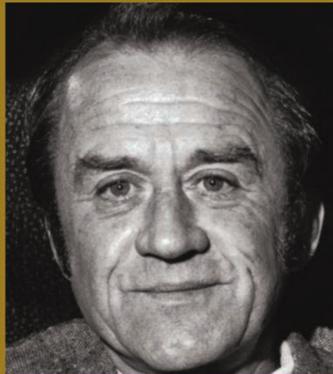
"CHEERS TO A NEW YEAR AND ANOTHER CHANCE FOR US TO GET IT RIGHT."

OPRAH WINFREY
Media proprietor, talk show host, actress, producer, and philanthropist



"IF YOU ASKED ME FOR MY NEW YEAR RESOLUTION, IT WOULD BE TO FIND OUT WHO I AM."

CYRIL CUSACK
Irish actor



"THE NEW YEAR STANDS BEFORE US, LIKE A CHAPTER IN A BOOK WAITING TO BE WRITTEN. WE CAN HELP WRITE THAT STORY BY SETTING GOALS."

MELODY BEATTIE
American author

