



MUSINGS

# The peculiar case of nicknames

"Ei je bhai, Jharu Miah, eidike ektu ashen toh?"

Do these words sound familiar? Maybe not, if you are a millennial, but Gen X can surely recollect the expression, as words spoken by people in the peripheries of Bangladesh.

Let's shift our attention slightly... everyone calls her 'Moynar Ma,' all because her first born was named as such.

Moynar Ma has a tragic tale to tell. According to her narrative; she has mothered eleven children altogether, and only five survived to see the light of day. She swears that it was only because some village fakir requested her to give inane nicknames to the offspring and miracle worked its wonders, 'bod nazar' or evil eye, had been almost instantaneously removed and four of her sons after Moyna survived to be called Jharu, Muchi, Balu, and Belcha for the rest of their lives!

You still think these are words of fiction, concocted as entertainment material for

enthusiastic readers? If yes, please do not hesitate visiting the remote villages of our beloved motherland, inquiring into the history of pre-generation nicknames and your disbelief would soon evaporate into thin air.

But that was the queer case of the bygone days, it is no longer applicable to this generation as most people overlook superstitions and have given serious thought to family planning. So, an average, 'ideal' nuclear family will have one son and a daughter and of course they cannot have such derogatory nicknames for their treasured progeny!

Due to westernization...Oops! Globalization...we have surely resorted to names that have no link to our heritage.

Shawon Muhaimin, a student of class IX at an English medium school, is popularly known as Jay-Z after the famous rapper. Little does he know that Jay-Z was an old soul himself, nicknamed Jazzy by his friends for his mature character; later he

transformed the name to Jay-Z to sound uber cool to his rap fans.

Similarly, there are so many with super-trendy short names invented and spread mostly by themselves — a typical Akram turnsto Akry, and Tazrian to Tazzy! But that's a different story altogether.

Parents on the other hand love to second name, a.k.a. nickname their children based on their unfulfilled life purposes; a fan of Maradona would simply love to call his son that, fans of the music world find it irresistible to call their children Sargam, Bina, Tanpura and henceforth. Unfulfilled desires are usually met by these animated and perky names.

But, all this is the case for the subcontinent, what about the world far and wide? Well... in such circumstances, if you know someone's nickname, you probably know half of their life story.

It is said that in the era of the Vikings, famous Norse words were kept as nicknames by a favourite relative through

celebratory arrangements, depicting the strong bond between the name provider and the name receiver.

The English are slightly different, as they have always been, desiring to remain grammatically correct in every circumstance. Their style of nomenclature is not entirely imaginary or spontaneous! Someone with the title Miller is nicknamed Dusty, alluding to the flour dust of a miller at work.

Don't believe this? Please Google!

At the end it can be said that whatever the name maybe, nicknames provide us with a certain bit of familiarity, a space for comfort. So, while you guys keep on pondering about the background story to the nickname of your best friend. I shall keep myself busy looking for witty names for my potential brood.

Good luck hunting!

By Perplexed Chowdhury

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