

collecting thoughts of seasons invariably takes us on a journey down memory lane. The nostalgia of the sound of raindrops on our tin roofs; the cacophony of a Poush Mela; offerings at the altar on the last day of Poush —each individual responding to their own set of emotions, which they can fondly carry no matter where they are.

In the modern context, this is truer for the first generation of city dwellers. Need we remind, that too is far back in our collective memory? We are now perhaps third, or even fourth generation of Dhaka dwellers, and with time, the memories of a pastoral ancestry are disappearing fast!

It is more due to Bengal's innate romanticism than meteorological reality that it has six seasons. True, evident in common vernacular for eons has been that each season comprises two months, in reality they simply roll into another.

Grishsho —Summer— seems predictable, more about passion and the zest for life. Everything old and dull is put away so that life is embraced with renewed, reinvigorated spirits.

The colours of Baishakh are reminiscent of its indomitable nature. Red, a hue so redolent with life force and energy, is symbolic of the Baishakhi spirit in every possible way. A beacon of positivity for the coming year and a glimmer of prosperity as radiant as the dazzling sun. And white — for everything pure in life and the world around us.

As far as change of the seasons is concerned, we are quick to predict cruel summers, drenching monsoons, and the bone-chilling torment that the bite of winter always is. Yet, the entire seasons of Sharat and Hemanta go quietly, often unnoticed.

Most of us are oblivious to the mystical emotion of being touched by clouds manoeuvring on the clear sky like white cotton candy, or derive the pleasure from the purity of the 'kaash phul' on stretched arable lands. From the distance, the kans grass seems like a stretch of white carpet. The dense aggregate of the long stem, topped with a snowy blossom.

And while we romance on an expanding field of kans grass and the emotions it evokes in us, facts remain that "kaash" is a weed, only fodder for cattle.

Undoubtedly, Spring still heralds a change of time that punctuates between the harshness of the Bengal winter —the chilly Poush and the severe Magh— and the cruelty of the unforgiving summer —Baishakh and Chaitra— with a bout of comfort soaked in infinite beauty.

Spring is still a season of change. It is a season of colours; the blooms in an array of fiery shades proclaiming the coming of a new hour.

And it is a season of love: when the cuckoo still call for their mates in the wilderness, and from pockets of manmade green spaces.

We are as smitten by the splendours of Spring as we were decades ago; overwhelmed by the flamboyant rejuvenation of nature; the metamorphosis of a desolate Winter into anticipated warm days gushing forth in small packages of a short-run period.



Clouds like cotton-candy

Sharat is shy. Meek amidst all seasons, and passes — often unnoticed. After a spell of monsoon, the grey clouds are now replaced with cotton-candy whites that float about the sky in marvel. Down on earth, fragrant flowers blossom — shiuli, bakul, mallika, kamini... madhabi. The flowers of kaash, as white and pure as the clouds up in the heavens. And the charm is in the weather too, uncharacteristically gentle in its heat, humidity and rainfall.

Glee and gratitude

Perhaps no other season represents the transitory nature of life than Hemanta, late-autumn as we know it. The two months — Kartik and Agrohayan, are neatly placed between the splendours of autumnal celebration of the divine, to the earthly rejoice of harvesting the boon of the fields. Filled with glee and gratitude for the kindness of the season, the womenfolk of the household lend in a helpful hand, husking rice in a 'dheki.' Nobanno is here, with a promised bounty of crops, and the delicious desserts to be anticipated for the winter ahead.

