

can enjoy form and hue only. It is for the botanist alone to apprehend the intricacies of the juicy content and discover the law of evolution and it is for the artist and the architect

garden

to copy the designs created by nature. Botanical growth and

animal anatomy is the prototype for the artist. A garden is a harmonious blending of art and nature.

This is the only garden in Lahore where entry is free. People enter to stroll and inhale the light, fragrant morning breeze full of oxygen. The green belt is stretched to the point where the slope of hillock joins it. The hillock slopes are covered with green bushes and creepers, and weather-beaten boulders. There is a forest of mountainous trees (pinus roxiburgi) on the slopes. Plates indicating the botanical and vernacular names of the trees and shrubs are nailed on tree trunks. One has to wait for the spring season to enjoy the full bloom of the shrubs.

I feel it a privilege to have access to this garden and feel indebted to labour put in by the gardeners. The garden premises comprise some of the prestigious buildings including the Montgomery

# A man ma

Hall housing the Quaid-e-Azam Public Library. Its facade is supported on massive Greek columns reminiscent of the Raj days. Another souvenir of the British days is the Gymkhana Cricket Club built of purple slate stone. An ex-premier appropriated this club.

The central boulevard passes through the middle and divides the garden from north to south. From the southern gate an enchanting view of the boulevard culminating at the elegant Montgomery Hall is the favourite scene of the filmmakers. There is a zigzag of link roads. Tall and shady trees cover the entire campus. It is a panorama of natural beauty studded with architecture of both imperial days and Muslim era.

One could see grown in the flower beds a variety of flowers. To the flower-lover, flower plants with tender stalks bear-

ing globular, bulbous, almond-shaped, peacock feather-shaped and indented petals is feast to the eye. Tree freaks are also to be found. There is a huge fibus species tree with octopus-like knotty roots spread all over the earth. Palm trees wrapped in smooth bark that seem to be finless fish with bulging out bellies are the perennial sentinel.

There suddenly erupts rhythmic beat of the *dhole* (drum) and the crowd gathers at the saint's grave, where the *dervish* whirls in ecstasy. In fact the dominating feeling in the entire garden is that of tranquility as sought by the *dervish*. In Jinnah Garden is preserved the air of Lahore of yore. Affluent middle class crowd takes strides in the morning walk session mixed up with Punjabi style vivacity and rowdyism. The anglicised old gentleman dressed in the immaculate style of Jinnah has



vanished.

The upper middle class girls clad in western dress are to be seen. As the bearded man holding a rosary walks past them he casts a crooked glance in that direction he mutters a recitation to ward off the Satan. But ironically the Satan is not to be warded off. The satan 'is present there in the shape of trees under the nomenclature of 'satan'. The satan trees with thick foliage are the ideal enclaves of Hafize-Shiraz's cherished dream. The circular lawn is rendezvous for the lover and the intellectual alike.



Centuries old trees adorn the garden. Photos: Rahat Dar

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# man made forest

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During morning hours you will find the parking enclave of Bagh-e-Jinnah packed with dazzling luxury cars. There is hardly a space left for motor-bikes or bicycles or even for more cars. The luxury cars are a symbol of oppression in Pakistani society, a majority of which is illiterate, poorly-dressed, under-fed and deprived of potable water. However, the mixed crowd of joggers comprising haves and the have-nots moves on without ill feeling, reposing faith in destiny.

The demon of commercialism and commercialisation is

pounding its ominous feet at the doors of every public sector project in Pakistan. Bagh-e-Jinnah is no exception. By extending the simile, the entire Pakistan is Bagh-e-Jinnah. We are already observing the beauty of the garden being ravaged as a result of food-melas and Jashne Baharan. The boorish, philistine, nouveau riche class that has emerged in Pakistan may dislike Bagh-e-Jinnah in its present state. The rush of this class has already transformed Lahore into an ugly city. Lahore is no more Lahore. The city has been totally pol-

luted with poisonous smoke. The serious-minded, scholarly and the sensitive visit Bagh-e-Jinnah to inhale fresh air but they find there readymade pollution as a result of commercial stalls. To facilitate the commerce going on at Shahrah-e-Tijarat and Lawrence Road the area of the garden was reduced in the past forcing the nightingale to migrate to other meadows. Hafiz-e-Shiraz aptly exclaimed many centuries ago: (We are Nightingale taciturn in the season of the Rose. Hafiz: to whom should we communicate this strange state of mind?)



adorn the garden. Photos: Rahat Dar