

Dinu's family~ A typical Bangladeshi family in the middle of Munich

Dinu's family

When Dinu moved to Germany in 1990, he came alone without friends or family. He wanted to be successful and earn a living first. He made a plan that he would earn enough money until 2003, so that he could afford to get married. He talked to his father and told him to keep an eye out for a suitable bride in Bangladesh. Only three days before the actual wedding day Dinu first got to meet his future wife. She came with him to Munich and they have three little children now. At home Dinu's family speaks Bengali, one of the three national languages in Bangladesh. The other official languages in Bangladesh are English and Urdu. In school in Bangladesh the children also learn Hindi. Dinu's daughter speaks five different languages at the age of 8: Bengali, Hindi, which are spoken in her family, and English, German and French, which she learns at school.



The wedding ceremony

Dinu's wedding followed the typical Bangladeshi traditions. It was an arranged marriage. This means that the parents look for a suitable partner for their children and make that decision for

them. People in Bangladesh and India believe that marriage is a very serious and important decision that is best made by an experienced adult. Because of that widespread conviction, most marriages are arranged. Sometimes bride and groom only get to know each other shortly before the wedding.

The wedding ceremony lasted for four days and was celebrated both at the house of the groom and the house of the bride. Dinu's



An Indian bride is being carried to her wedding.

father paid for the whole wedding, including giving his son's bride one kilogram of pure gold. A lot of families have to go into debt when their children marry because they cannot afford the impressive celebration. There were 1500 people present at the wedding to celebrate and dance together. Everybody was dressed in the traditional clothes and golden ornaments and the traditional dancing music was played. Dinu says: "I will only get married once in my life, so it must be done properly!"

Task:

Work on the following questions. Choose between the answers. Only one answer is correct.

1. Why did Dinu only meet his wife three days before the wedding?
 - a) It was love at first sight and they instantly knew that they wanted to marry.
 - b) It is common for people from Bangladesh to have arranged marriages and often they don't get to know their partner first.
 - c) He was not interested in meeting his future wife.

2. Why does Dinu's daughter speak so many different languages?
 - a) She has lived in all those countries.
 - b) It is important for Bangladeshi girls to speak many languages.
 - c) The family speaks Bengali, Hindi and English at home and she learns French and German in school.

3. Why are there so many arranged marriages in Bangladesh?
 - a) It is a very important decision to marry somebody and the parents want to help their children with that decision.
 - b) It is less complicated.
 - c) All marriages are arranged.