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LIFE

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Graceful and lit

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MEHJABEEN MUTAFIZ SIMILY

GROCERIES, ESSENTIALS AND EVEN TECH
FIND EVERYTHING ONLINE **C**
LIGHT ON THE TUMMY, NOT TASTE
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ঘরে থাকুন
মিরাপদে থাকুন

চিরচেনা রঙিন পৃথিবীটা আজ অনেকটা ধূসর।
জীবন হয়ত খমকে আছে চার দেয়ালের ঘরে।
তবু প্রিয়জনদের ঘিরে দৃঢ় বন্ধনে থাকার, নিজে সুস্থ
থেকে অন্যকে সুস্থ রাখার প্রচেষ্টা থেমে নেই।
পরিবর্তিত নিয়মে জীবন চলছে, চলবেই।
ঘরে থেকে ভালো থাকুন, সবাইকে ভালো রাখুন।

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WISDOMTOOTH

BY SANIA AIMAN
Sub-Editor, Lifestyle
The Daily Star



Looking for the silver lining

The effects of any crisis are manifold, and we will all have to face together the collective trauma that Covid-19 has inflicted. But from within the effects of these troubling times, we look for silver linings — the unexpected positive effects. And while I write this from a blessed spot of privilege and security, my intent is in no way to ignore or deny the very real struggles faced by a vast section of the world.

The truth is the impact of any crisis varies vastly in its individualised and class-based effect between the haves and the have-nots. So, while sitting in contemplation, often doubting if I am doing enough and more often concluding that I am not, I count the things that bring my nihilism-leaning heart some hope.

One of the most beautiful outcomes of the struggle, pardon my choice of words if it feels tone deaf at this point, is perhaps the outpouring of civic unity, kindness and selflessness that a section of the society has demonstrated. While there is no denying the rot and inadequacy of the governance, or the corrupt sections that will steal even the grain designated for relief. Yet, hope lives, and its light shines brighter every day, in the work of the silent but consistent and selfless service of the volunteers that are providing rations and food to thousands of people every single day.

In a middle-income country wrought with income inequalities and deeply vulnerable livelihoods, it is simply heart-warming to see the strength of the giving hands. I see these efforts as the truest manifestation of 'for the people and by the people,' as the common man's efforts and funds are made stronger in their impact by the participation of law enforcers and civil servants working to the best of their abilities.

As a cat parent, what is even more beautiful to me is that just as people are taking care of people, a lot of gentle souls



are taking care of the street animals, feeding them, treating them, and protecting them. This is a struggle even in normal times, but these kind and brave people persevere then, and now.

For the rest of us staying at home, blessed to have our loved ones around, life has given us a sudden pause. Most of us nowadays are usually always in a rush, running behind things that need to be done, lists that need to be checked off. Be it the grind of education mills, churning out scholars of rote learning being readied for a rat race, or it is corporate soldiers, fighting for profits to line the pockets of their masters. There is a constant push to do more, be more, have more and take more.

Except for a pause. Very few can claim today to enjoying the simple pleasure of just being. The unexpected pause provided by the enforced quarantines, after the demands of "work from home" are met, have given us all a very rare opportunity to just be.

I noticed friends hanging out online for hours, and heard real free laughter after a long time this past weekend. Rekindling passions for music, painting, crafts, writing, cooking et all can be easily observed on all the social media groups too.

I can guarantee that my mum likes having

all of us around this much. The cats don't seem to mind too much either, mostly. This forced pause has given many, and I can vouch for myself, the time to just be and breathe, introspect and contemplate once more.

In many households, it has created time for strengthening of family bonds as people find ways to weather the crisis together. In one particular instance, one of my friends with two toddler sons made a comment that stuck with me. Rather than thinking of this time as a loss of school time, what if the children staying at home for extended periods, along with the parents also forced to stay at home even if working, actually turn out the better for it?

What if this time forges stronger familial bonds and instils values that are otherwise so difficult to imbue? What if these become the fondest memories of their childhood; the time when mum and dad were both home all day, for so many days!

Lessons without constant assessments, reduced peer pressure and physical strain of long commutes, and more play time. What is there to not like? Even vacations are not like this, as we adults usually still have work. Is it ideal in the long term? Mostly not, but it is not yet a critical concern.

For a certain number of individuals, this has been an eye-opening experience in many ways. Of course, being taken out of their daily-life bubbles was not a source of joy, and there is a lot of anxiety about what the future will bring, and the real impact of FOMO, but there has been essential learning of empathy. A public exclamation from a 24-year old about "house work being really difficult" followed by an impassioned plea to their peers to help out more at home tipped me off to this one. It's sad that it took them so long to realise this, but it is great that they did and hopefully the lesson will stay.

Wait, there is more! I have also seen growing empathy for homemakers, our mothers who have lived an entire life with the house at its nexus. I like the newfound comprehension for this gargantuan effort that is often taken for granted. I like how many organisations are (hopefully) realising that working from home is a real and effective option, and haranguing employees to clock in and clock out at the office is not a necessary condition for efficiency.

I like how some elephants were released back in the wild, free from carrying tourists. I love the beaches full of turtle eggs, and baby elephants frolicking in the waves. I love how nature is getting a long-due rest, as the enforced lockdowns prove that they are in fact doable, to combat global warming and pollution.

There is no denying that we are going through a grave crisis, with a terrible, terrible toll on the lives of mostly good people. But this, like others, too shall pass. And hopefully, we shall emerge as a better world, with many ideas, ideals, and solutions from the lessons learned during this forced pause, to cure the world of its ills little by little.

By Sania Aiman

Photo: LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed

us on /Sandalina

ঐতিহ্যের আর এক নাম আধুনিকতা
ঠিক যেমন ঋপচর্য আভিজাত্য মানেই

স্যান্ডালিনা
সোপ

ঋপচর্য আভিজাত্য...

Week 3

The last ten days

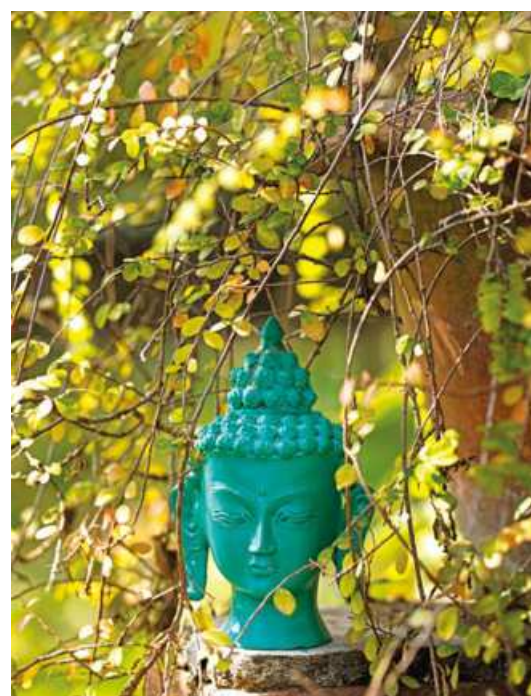
Most of us are roughly taking every day as it comes in these trying times. A disrupted daily routine, coupled with being cooped up with little to no leisurely activities, the burnout has probably hit many. With the looming possibility of a rather restricted Eid-ul-Fitr ahead, this week's checklist focuses on some practical things around the house.

PRODUCTIVITY

Closet Cleanout

Think of it as a delayed spring cleaning for your clothes. We all have things in our wardrobes that do not fit, or the colour is worn out, or we simply do not like it anymore. Having these pieces linger in our closets simply take up space create clutter.

Now that we finally have some time on our hands, it is time to sort it all out. Bring out all your clothes and make different piles. There should be a keep, discard, donate, and DIY sorting arrangement. Clothes you love and will wear again go to the keep pile of course. Ones beyond repair, worn out colour or torn should be thrown out. Channel your inner Marie Kondo if you have to. Think for yourself; did you really enjoy wearing that certain dress or is it just something there because you paid a bit too much for it?



Squeaky Clean Gadgets

While cleaning the home, a lot of us miss out on one category — the electronics. Everything is getting quite a bit of clean-up these days. But just cleaning the dust off the surfaces of televisions and speakers is never enough. Most of us are quite guilty of binging a show in front of the computer monitor and dropping crumbs and whatnot on the keyboards. Tablets and phones, the tools of the trade for work and study get oily spots within hours of usage. Take some time to clean all your devices using the correct methods — from your laptop and desktop, to your TV, refrigerator, microwave oven, don't overlook anything. It is only when you clean these that you realise how dirty they can get.

THOUGHTFULNESS

While we are praising essential workers like doctors and policemen, certain groups often get overlooked. These are the people serving us day and night and keeping us safe. We are talking about our guards, apartment caretakers, and night guards working in the neighbourhoods during this pandemic.

You can arrange iftar for these people. While physically gathering and sharing is not the safest option now, you can arrange for individual boxes for each person and hand them out.

REST AND RELAXATION

Recharge

As the third week of Ramadan rolls by, exhaustion is bound to creep up with all the cleaning and home organising. And with Eid approaching, you know there is more to come. Take some time off, relax and rewind. Read a book or watch something. If you cannot let your body relax, your productivity will plummet. So, recharge yourself before heading back to work, even if it is at home.

Change

A Different Eid

The essence of Eid lies in celebrating with your friends and family, indulging in good food and getting dressed up. But somewhere along the line, the true essence got lost underneath a heap of shopping.

As we prepare to celebrate a different Eid this year, we should also take notice of how we are enjoying this time surrounded by the people we love, and how buying new clothes or accessories rarely play a part in the joy of Eid.

At these times, Ramadan is a solace as it reinforces ideals like patience, self-restraint, empathy and generosity. These are valuable lessons that can teach us how to adapt to these uncertain times as well as for future difficulties, should they arise.

By Anisha Hassan and Iris Farina

Photo: LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed

The 'don'ts' of shopping during the pandemic

As the coronavirus crisis intensifies with each passing day, daily errands have become intimidating. Grocery shopping now requires more thought and planning than ever before, not just to protect ourselves, but also as social responsibility, to lower exposure of the essential workers at the stores, who leave the safety of their homes everyday so that we can keep our homes running. To make their lives, and ours easier, here are some ways to not go grocery shopping.

Do not come unprepared

To get things done more efficiently, having a well-thought-out list of supplies to last at least a week saves a lot of time. Wear a mask and gloves, and carry disinfectant wipes or sanitisers to wipe down any cans, the trolley handle or other exposed surfaces before contact so as to ensure the buyer's safety.

Stores provide disinfectants to their customers before entering. If needed, politely ask for a little extra to give the trolley handle a wipe.

Do not bring the entire family

Keeping social distancing rules in mind and to limit exposure, it is best to go grocery shopping alone. Having grandparents or children around to help shop puts them at unnecessary risk. This is not a family activity!

Do not ignore markers on the floor

Some stores have designated markers on the floor to encourage social distancing. These markers tell the customer where to stand while maintaining a safe distance between the customers during checkout. Be attentive of the signs!

Do not get in the worker's personal space

Even though the aisles of the grocery store do not make social distancing easy, it is of vital importance that we still try our best. While interacting with an employee, do not forget that this is another human being who is just at risk as anyone else. Their safety is also a concern, as without them, the shops would close down.

In short, give them the space you would expect other people to give you.

Do not go to the store to stretch your legs

Cabin fever is real and going grocery shopping sounds like a dream come true nowadays. However, that does not mean one should go to the store to get some fresh air or exercise and crowd the place. Best to leave grocery store trips for necessities rather than recreation.

Do not touch things you do not intend to buy

We all love fresh produce. But now is not the time to be touching fruits and vegetables to get a feel of the freshness and inspecting it for imperfections. Unless one intends to buy something, best not to touch it for the sake of their own safety and everyone else's.

Avoid paying with cash

If possible, using a credit card or debit card, as it is safer than a hands-on transaction. Some stores take payment through Bkash as well. If an alternative is available, use it!

Keep in mind that lashing out at the workers for not having something in stock will do anyone any good. These workers are working in highly stressful environments, putting themselves and their families at risk. A simple 'please' or 'thank you' goes a long way to making these trying times easier.

Lastly, do not forget that we are all in this together!

By Puja Sarkar

Photo: LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed



Half-hearted lockdown diaries



OF JILAPIWALLAS AND JILAPIWALLIS

The story of the humble jilapi starts with the Turkic invaders, even before the Mughals took over the subcontinent. A flour based twirled dessert, the jilapi is dunked in sugary syrup and devoured by the tens, and is the most sought-after sweets during iftar.

It always remained a difficult dessert to make however, and almost every one of us left it to the professionals, until recently, with Ramadan amidst this lockdown and social distancing, the iftar or iftar hopping and shopping as we knew it, has taken a massive hit and with it, changed our habit of standing in lines for jilapis and halims.

Thus, making jilapis at home is the new 'hashtag trending thing.' Thanks to YouTube cooking channels and recipe sites, making jilapi nowadays is almost like making *piyajju* — the quintessential iftar lentil croquets.

If you are on any social media platform 10 minutes prior to iftar time, you would see thousands of types of jilapi taking centre stage; some look like chicken innards,

some like a flattened bird's nest, while some are close to the real deal.

Everyone is posting their awesome jilapi pictures with great satisfaction; irrelevant of its shape or taste. We humans are an extremely spirited and adaptable race. Therefore, be it the jilapi (crunchy or soggy) or this half-hearted lockdown, we will win them all.

THE MOST MISSED ONES ARE THE BARBERS



Almost a month and a half without a grooming trip to the salon or beauty parlours have taken a toll on all of us. Slowly but steadily, we are starting to resemble our Neanderthal cousins — bushy eyebrows, thick moustaches, and an odd beard or two sticking out from under the chin, hair growing over the ears in unmanageable messes, when even the 'messy look' looks sorry.

Nails are growing out like eagle claws and sun patches are covering up the once perfectly polish face, grey hair is ruling the once shiny auburn locks. Men and women have never looked this bad in recent years. Well me, I have been calling my salon almost every week, if by any chance they are open and doing titbits of home grooming, but my husband's state is grave with his unruly mane, sticking up like they got a jolt of static electric shock.

He has been running after me to trim his hair with kitchen scissors due to the lack of a proper grooming one. Thus, when he saw our driver sporting a new haircut from the random roadside barber, he grabbed a bottle of disinfectant and ran to him for a trim and now, he is happily convinced that a Tk 30 cut is as good as his specialised barber.

DESHI FRUITS FOR IMMUNITY

Java apple, or as the good old Bengal calls it, *jamrul*, is one of my May favourites. Crunchy, watery, slightly sweet *jamruls* are the green jades of the fruit world and are in stiff competition with another Baishakh delight, the green mango.

Unripe mangoes, which are in season for a longer period of time are tangy, sour and sweet, and can be made into a drink, a chutney, or stirred in mustard for achaars; while *jamrul*, in season for two to

three weeks, is almost bland in comparison. Yet, the cool, insipid juicy fruit has a subtle sweetness to it that cannot be denied. Thus, *jamruls*, never a hot favourite *deshi* fruit among the masses, always had a special second preference stand after green mango for me.

Wood apple, guava, water melon — all of which are harvested between late April till mid-May and then in June, the king of all *deshi* fruits, ripe sweet mangoes, are reigning alongside blackberries, another short-lived fruit of Bengal.

I love the gooseberries, the Bengal currants or *koromcha*, the pale yellow *orhor* — all of which are in season from early to mid-Bengal summer. The *deshi* fruit platter



is so varied and packed in vitamins and antioxidants that they are nature's way of telling us to try these immune boosters. So, skip the one apple a day and try our *deshi* seasonal bounties.

Don't forget to read our listicle of online shopping in this week's Star Life-style. Remember, buy *deshi* this Eid, and support our local designers.

—RBR

Photo: LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed

◆ HOROSCOPE ◆



ARIES (MAR. 21-APR. 20)

Your life could be in upheaval. Help co-workers with difficult projects. Hard work and dedication will pay off. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



TAURUS (APR. 21-MAY 21)

Stress can lead to other problems. Don't let anyone pressure you. Opportunities for travel are evident. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



GEMINI (MAY 22-JUN. 21)

Spend time with loved ones. Make time for yourself. Stick to basics. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



CANCER (JUN. 22-JUL. 22)

Beware of misunderstandings. Don't make hasty decisions. Creative hobbies will be good outlets. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



LEO (JUL. 23-AUG. 22)

Children can cause problems. Friends will have your back. Deceit is evident. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEP. 23)

Things can change at any moment. Stay on top of things. Your partner may not be trustworthy. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



LIBRA (SEP. 24-OCT. 23)

Rely on your partner. Avoid making changes at home. Offer suggestions for fundraising events. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



SCORPIO (OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Don't let emotions cloud your objectives. Be clear with loved ones. Start saving for a rainy day. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Make time for family. Promote your own interests. Real estate investments will pay off. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

Someone may betray you. Don't divulge secrets. Anger may cause you grief. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



AQUARIUS (JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

Act on accurate information. Reach out to loved ones. Try not to stress out too much. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



PISCES (FEB. 20-MAR. 20)

Learning new things will be most stimulating. Don't gamble unnecessarily. Get to the bottom of things this week. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.

SPOTLIGHT

A different Eid

Eid is in fact a celebration of spiritual significance, and the buying of new things for all members of the family is but an expression for the celebration. There is a certain joy in going to the market right before the festival, and browse through the thousands of creations that businesses whip up specifically for this occasion. The chaotic roads, the malls full of exuberant people, families, couples, and friends hanging out. All of this only adds to the wonderful ambience, which is uncommon to the rest of the year. Thus, even in times as troublesome as now, while the Covid-19 pandemic remains unchecked in Bangladesh, we can still try to cherish and celebrate the spirit of Eid. Festivities do not only mean roaming through the streets, donning an exclusive piece and meeting up with friends at the latest hot spot in town. That perhaps was never the essence of the festival in the first place.

Prepare a decent meal, share whatever is in your stores. And if you feel like, don a piece that is special, if not new. Dress up in the morning, and get set to enjoy the company of loved ones virtually, thanks to technology which has made these tough times of isolation that much easier. Yet, it is also a time of sharing our fortunes, and one of the steps is to remember preferring everything local while making purchases. The pandemic has crippled local industries, and it is up to us, who have the ability, to inject some much-needed vigour into the economy, and the fashion industry is a part of that.

Remember, here, the industry is not only made up of the glitzy and opulent outlets, it also includes the hundreds of artisans and the entire supply chain that the industry sustains. It makes it imperative to recognise that now is the time to support all that is *deshi*, and hold true to our oft repeated maxim, *be deshii, buy deshii*. Eid was never about extravagance, but of a shared community feeling, embracing our family and everyone around us. And maybe that is why this can still be a great Eid.

The clamouring shop assistants, some cheerful some grumpy and some utterly exhausted, the running to and from the tailoring shops, last minute shoe shopping, picking up a bunch of hairbands and clips from the roadside stalls, a new strainer or cushion covers, new pots for the beloved plants etc. are all part of the essential *deshii* Eid experience.



Most offices pay bonuses, and families try to get the best of everything that they can. However, the Covid-19 pandemic seems set to rob of us of that joy, not to even mention the repercussions of the very real health crisis, sickness, and fatalities.

The entire atmosphere of joy and festivity that permeates our surroundings every other year may not be available to us this year, yet, this might still become the Eid we remember most.

By truly focusing on what is most important, the true essence of celebration is to have loved ones with us, and be healthy, and enjoy these blessings we have been bestowed with, this could in fact, become one of our fondest Eid to look back on.

— LS Desk
Photo courtesy: Chondon



Eid 2020

COVER STORY

Interviewed by Mehrin Mubdi Chowdhury

Photo Courtesy: Sara Karim, Warah, Chondon, Bata, Anjans, Le Reve

Local fashion moves online: DAWN OF A NEW ERA

Eid is truly a time of social mingling. A big part of that, is dressing to impress! For those of you who truly miss splurging on that exquisite sari or suit, looking for the perfect “wow” outfit is actually still very much possible.

Just think about all the renowned local fashion stores, and you are likely to find them taking their businesses online. Believe it or not, your next great purchase is just a smart device and internet connection away! Best of all, splurging on local products can be guilt free. Some of your favourite fashion outlets have spoken of their experience with online shopping, and how it has added to their sustainability.



SARAH KARIM COUTURE

“It’s definitely time to rethink our business structure! I have been meaning to work on the website for quite some time now, especially for our international clients, but somehow, the project was stalled. Today, the pandemic has made it imperative to make online shopping an essential part of the shopping experience.

Even though most clients still prefer a ‘one-on-one’ experience with our dresses, as do I, the online sales support will also be there as an additional benefit. I know that many clients would also prefer the latter, especially as a precautionary measure to the pandemic.

Sarah Karim Couture’s Eid collection is now available online — on our social media pages, Facebook and Instagram. Our dresses are customisable; trials can be done at home and our support staff will provide alterations where necessary.

And in case of ‘drop-ins’ at the store, clients are most welcome. All precautionary steps will be taken to ensure a safe and healthy environment at the store.”

Sarah Karim — Owner and Designer at Sarah Karim Couture

Essentials:

Sarah Karim Couture: <https://www.facebook.com/Sarah.Karim.Couture/>
<https://www.instagram.com/sarahkarim/?hl=en>

AARONG

“Aarong has been active online for the last two years. With an interactive website, including chat bots and dedicated apps, Aarong has made shopping very convenient for its clientele.

Aarong plans to stay open after the temporary ban on ‘retail outlet’ shopping is lifted, but it reassures of strict precautionary protocols.

According to plans, people would be discouraged to enter in groups, with children and without masks.

Aarong’s top management encourages its clientele to make purchases online and easily procure anything from household decoration items to nakshi kantha or jewellery.”

Aarong Management

Essentials:

Aarong: <https://www.aarong.com/>
<https://www.facebook.com/BRAC.AARONG/>
<https://www.instagram.com/brac.aarong/?hl=en>

BATA SHOE COMPANY BANGLADESH

“BATA has always stressed on online shopping. It was closed for a few days during the lockdown, that too because delivery services were not available. However, we have resumed our duties, with lots of perks for our clientele.

We are providing flat minimum discounts of 15 percent on every online purchase, and some items are on up to 70 percent off!

While Bata will remain open after the government lifts the ban on shopping malls on 10

May, it still encourages people to stay at home, maintain social distancing and shop from the safety of their residence. And hence, all the perks on the website, like free delivery! This year, for Eid, Bata stresses on ‘comfort shoes,’ along with 400 other exclusive designs that are also available.”

Razib Jahan Ferdous — E Commerce Manager at BATA Bangladesh

Essentials:
BATA: www.batabd.com
www.instagram.com/batabangladesh

ROSE BY NIZHU

“Covid-19 is a worry for the next two years! I don’t see an end very soon to the pandemic. Our business will be hampered and that’s common sense.

I have been meaning to work on the website for a long time. I began the process with an online social media page that I personally managed. But somehow, my clients never responded well online, preferring to come to the store.

Covid-19 has certainly changed regular business patterns. After the pandemic hit, my online sales have increased ten folds.

This is certainly the dawn of a new era, and I hope to make the best of it. Currently, I am working on the website, and very soon, our customers will be able to get services from the site. Meanwhile, we are active on our social media page. Come check us out!”

Rojina Akter Khanam — Proprietor of Rose by Nizhu

Essentials:

Rose by Nizhu: <https://www.facebook.com/rosebynizhu/>
<https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/rosebynizhu/top/?hl=en>



CHONDON

“I have always wanted a website for Chondon, but never got the time to actually see it through. This pandemic has given me ‘enough time’ to work it out, allowing Chondon to go live with the website any day now, before Eid.

This will definitely be an additional benefit for international as well as local clients.

I was able to finish the Eid collection just before the pandemic hit, and thus, clients

can enjoy it in its entirety on our Facebook and Instagram handle.

Hopefully, we will be able to get over the menace together, with each other’s support.”

Chondona Dewan — Owner and Designer at Chondon’s

Essentials:

Chondon: <https://www.facebook.com/chondondhaka/>
<https://www.instagram.com/chondondhaka/>



ANJANS

“The pandemic has prevented us from doing business during the most crucial times of the year, and this has severely affected the entire industry, including the supply chain, the designers, the artisan community, clients — everyone!

As a precautionary measure, we did shut down everything, both online and outlet sales, for more than a month.

We have just re-opened with online services, and introduced our latest Eid

collection. We added-in the extra perk of zero delivery charge with every purchase.

Things have begun to pick up, especially since the 10th of Ramadan. The promising few days of regular sales have boosted our morale. We only hope things will get better from here onwards.”

Shaheen Ahmmed – Owner and CEO at Anjan’s

Essentials:

Anjan’s: <http://www.anjans.com/>
<https://www.facebook.com/anjans.bd/>



LE REVE

“We have prioritised e-commerce for almost a decade now. In a fast-paced world, an online sales outlet is very necessary to stay sustainable.

We have been selling at a steady pace through our website, over the years, alongside our physical outlet. But the pandemic put a halt, even to that, since delivery options were limited for a certain period of time, during the lockdown.

Then it took some time for the online business to pick up again. We were wary at the beginning that people might not want to purchase our products at all.

But to our surprise, they broke the norm and are actually buying in hoards, and organic sales have sky rocketed. We are thankful to our clients for trusting us and staying by our side through the pandemic.

Our entire Eid collection is available online, and open for all who are wary of visiting physical stores because of the pandemic.”

Afrina Habib Munmun — Senior Manager (Marketing) at LE REVE

Essentials:

LE REVE: <https://www.lerevecraze.com/>



WARAH

“The month-long lockdown has caused businesses to come to a halt, but there’s no stopping the expenses. The rent has been piling up, the wages need to be paid, and so much more. An online business initiative can only ease the grip.

To make any business sustainable, I personally believe that online sales are necessary. Warah’s physical store will only open when things are back on track and we have completely bid adieu to the pandemic. Meanwhile, Warah will be available on Facebook, and we will be taking orders on our official social media page.”

Rumana Chowdhury — CEO and Designer at Warah

Essentials:

Warah: <https://www.facebook.com/Warah2008/>



Let's *imagine*

If you are to think of a typical Eid this year, how would it be? What would be the trends? Let's do some recollection from where we left off before the whole Corona crisis. Ruffles, bishop sleeves, jacket blouses, and belts on saris were trendy right at the beginning of 2020. And now you know, if we are to begin, we should start right there.

This Eid, let things go back to the old flow, and that is with a splurge on peach and pastels. For the evening homely events, we can always opt for the darker shades like brown, navy blue, black, olive green, and greys.

Eid mornings always demand that we wear something extremely comfortable, like linen kurtis, pure cotton saris with block prints, perhaps with light embroidery. Hair tied in a tight bun, a tiny black teep peeking in between the eyebrows and a nude shade on the lips is all that is required to look glam.

The afternoons demand a little more; kameez and panjabi in shades of beautiful pastels. Pink is a personal favourite and somehow, it looks extra special on the gentlemen as well. There is a reason why they say real men wear pink! Maybe a little embroidery in the borders with definite contemporary cuts that scream style, hip and trendy, all at once.

Then comes the evening — a time to



relax and enjoy good meals with loved ones, a time to catch up on good old times and some good music. Does it mean you wear your usual drab clothes and do all that? No...of course not!

Put on that black sari you were meaning to, that gorgeous brown panjabi, or even the navy blue Jamdani. Whatever the choice of colour, it must always be a sari for the ladies and panjabi for men. Simply because it's Eid. The ladies must let their hair down. And the blouse...oh yes! The blouse must be mind-blowing, a cut out of the ordinary.

You promised yourself no Instagram this Eid, no bragging, no showing off. But there's no stopping you in permanently etching the style, the special moment in your memories. Look at the bright side. Those beautiful days may just be back again where we dress up, and be happy for our own selves. Not for others.

Here's wishing you all a wonderful Ramadan and a magnificent Eid to look forward to.

By Fashion Police
Photo courtesy: Summer Collection 2020
Z&Z by Mehjabeen Mutafiz Simily



DESHI MIX
BY SALINA PARVIN



Comfort food during Ramadan: Stew and Others

The holy month of Ramadan brings with it a fresh wave of festive cheer. It is a time of self-reflection, to focus on the soul rather than the body and an opportunity to reconnect with our faith.

Sehri is the pre-dawn meal eaten before the Fajr prayer and is taken as a blessing. The pre-dawn meal, or sehri is the most important meal during Ramadan, as that is what one's body thrives on all day.

It is imperative that we keep ourselves hydrated, consume a well-balanced diet and make the right choice of food and drinks throughout the month for a healthier mind and body.

Different families follow different customs, but a lot has changed over the years. Here is a handy guide on what you should include in your meal that will keep you fuelled until dusk.

High-carb foods like rice, bread and potatoes have complex carbohydrates and



Hydrating foods and drinks are a must. Avoid having too many cups of tea or coffee as the caffeine leads to loss of water. More so, sugary foods or drink get digested very quickly and could leave you feeling hungry sooner than you would expect. Having said that, drinking too much water is also not advisable. It will dilute the stomach acids and lead to bloating and indigestion. Sip water gradually, at regular intervals.

Headaches can be a sign of dehydration. Fresh fruits, juices, and vegetables with high water content will keep you hydrated. Coconut water is a great source of electrolytes with simple sugar and minerals that replenish water loss. Add cool foods like cucumbers, pineapple, tomatoes, oranges, melons and onions, which help in reducing body heat. Keep away from salty foods as they increase fluid loss in your body. Most importantly, keep hydrated and chew on a date or two at sehri to keep your energy levels up throughout your fast.

MOROCCAN BEEF STEW

Ingredients

- ½ kg beef tenderloin, cut into 1-inch cube
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 large carrot, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 2 cups beef broth
- ½ cup golden raisins
- ¼ cup halved pitted olives



- 1 cup chickpeas
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro
- 1 tsp lemon peel
- 3 tbsp olive oil, divided
- Salt to taste

Method

Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a large heavy saucepan over medium-high heat. Sprinkle beef with salt and pepper. Fry until brown on all sides. Transfer to plate. Add remaining 1 tablespoon oil, onion, carrots, and garlic to pan. Cook until vegetables are soft, stirring frequently, about 2 minutes. Add spices and stir. Add broth, olives, raisins, chickpeas, and cilantro. Bring to boil,

simmer until juices thicken. Add beef and lemon peel to pan. Stir and cook for 5-6 minutes. Remove from heat and serve.

SPICY FISH STEW

Ingredients

- 250g fish fillet, white
- 250g shrimp
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 tsp chilli powder



- 3 cups fish broth
- 1 tsp green chilli peppers, chopped
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- 1 cup peeled and diced tomatoes
- 8-10 basil leaves
- 1 tbsp oil
- Salt to taste

Method

Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and garlic sauté for few minutes. Add chilli powder and mix well. Then add the fish broth, green chilli peppers and cumin, stirring well. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to low, cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Next, add the tomatoes, shrimp, and fish. Return to a boil, then reduce heat to low, cover and simmer for 5 minutes. Add salt if needed. Add basil leaves and remove from heat. Serve hot.

SWEET CORN STEW

Ingredients

- 2 cans sweet corn
- ½ cup boiled chickpeas
- ½ cup capsicum, cut into small cubes
- 4 cups chicken stock
- 1 onion, minced
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 cup cooking cream
- 2 green chillies, sliced
- 2 tbsp butter
- ½ tsp black pepper powder
- Salt to taste

Method

Heat butter in a pan on low heat. Add the chopped onions and stir until it turns golden. Add the garlic and chicken stock while stirring, with a sprinkle of salt and pepper. Now it's time to add the sweet corn (make sure to drain the can first) leave it to boil. Simmer for 10 minutes. Add capsicum and chickpeas to the pan. Add the cream and mix well properly. Cook for 2 minutes. Garnish with the green chilli slices and serve warm.

WHITE BEAN STEW

Ingredients

- 250g white bean, soaked and drained
- 250g boneless, skinless chicken thigh, trimmed and cut into chunks
- 2 onion, finely chopped

- 2 clove garlic, chopped
- 1 tsp black pepper powder
- 1 carrot, finely chopped
- 1 lemongrass stick, finely chopped
- 1 bay leaf

- 3 cups vegetable stock
- Chopped basil, to serve
- 2 tbsp oil

Method

Heat oil in a large pan, add chicken and fry until lightly brown. Add the vegetable and beans, fry for a minute more. Stir in the stock and herbs. Bring to a boil. Stir well and reduce the heat. Cover and cook for 30 minutes on low heat. Stir in the basil leaves and serve.

CHICKEN STEW

Ingredients

- 500g chicken, cut into 1½ inch cubes
- 3 cups chicken stock
- 6-8 garlic cloves
- 2 medium potatoes
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 5-6 French beans, cut into small pieces
- 2 medium carrots
- 1 medium onion
- ½ tsp black pepper powder
- 2 tbsp whole wheat flour
- ½ cup milk
- Salt to taste

Method

Slice onion and garlic. Cube the potatoes. Heat oil in a pan, add onion and garlic and sauté for a couple of minutes. Meanwhile cut the carrots into cubes. Add potatoes and carrots to the pan and sauté for 2-3 minutes. Add chicken and continue to stir.

Add whole wheat flour to the chicken and mix well. Fry for 1 minute. Add chicken stock, salt, pepper and mix well. Cover and cook until the chicken is almost done. Add French beans and milk and cook for 5-7 minutes. Serve hot with garlic bread.

MIXED VEGETABLE STEW

Ingredients

- 2 medium carrots, into 1-inch cubes
- 1 medium green papaya, into 1-inch cubes
- 2 medium potatoes, into 1-inch cubes
- ¼ cauliflower, small
- ½ cup green peas
- 8-10 spinach leaves, chopped
- 1 onion, sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 tbsp refined flour
- 2 cups vegetable stock
- 7-9 black pepper corn
- Salt to taste
- 2 tbsp oil
- ½ cup milk

Method

Heat oil in a deep pan. Add onions and garlic and sauté till translucent. Add potatoes, carrots, papaya, cauliflower and stir. Add refined flour and stir. Add vegetable stock and salt. Cook for 8-10 minutes or until the vegetables are done. Add crushed black pepper and milk. Let the mixture come to boil. Cook for 2-3 minutes. Remove from heat and serve.

take longer to digest. They help in keeping your energy levels up. Avoid too much spice as it may lead to heartburn and indigestion.

Fibre from fruits and whole grains should top your sehri menu. Fruits like apple, banana, and apricot are high in fibre and so are chickpeas, oats and wheat. Fibre installs a feeling of fullness and helps prevent constipation.

Protein from dairy products and lean meat is essential. Sneak protein in your diet in the form of milk, egg, chicken, yoghurt, and lentils. This will help strengthen your immunity.

Food with high satiety value and low glycaemic index should be given priority. Such foods keep you full for longer and act as crave busters. They release energy over a period of time and will help prevent fatigue and lethargy.

Eat nuts and seeds, foods packed with fibre, or have broth-based stew or soups. In many homes, whole wheat chapatis is savoured with some vegetables and fruits. It's makes for a complete meal which is digested slowly and keeps you satisfied.

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed
Food and Styling: RBR

KUNDALINI RISING

BY SHAZIA OMAR
Writer, activist and yogini
www.shaziaomar.com



Balancing your energy

Chakra cleansing for good health

The body is more than the sum of its parts. It is physical and energetic. Various parts of our body generate various frequencies and the body and its organs have their own energy frequencies which are continually changing. When balanced, we experience healthy functioning of our mind and body. When imbalanced, conditions of disease arise rooted in this energy system. If our “life force” is low or blocked, or excessive, we experience ill health. We have an astral plane made up of energy discs that vibrate.

These energy centres are called chakras. They govern our physical and psychological body. Each chakra has its own mantra sound (vibrational frequency) and postures as well as foods which nourish it. The repetition of suitable affirmations can also help set intentions to break old patterns and create new ones. Understanding this system can help us look after our health and well-being. The chakras align with our endocrine system: Muladhara — adrenal gland; Svadhisthana — reproductive organs (ovaries and testes); Manipura — pancreas; Anahata — thymus; Vishudha — thyroid; Ajna — pituitary; and Sahasra — pineal.



Muladhara — I am
Element: Earth

The root chakra is made up of the tailbone, the legs, and the feet. It governs our feeling of survival, safety, security, and grounding. It has to do with one's sense of identity, family, home, and being.

When this chakra is balanced, we experience a feeling of belonging and stability. We feel secure in our family and finances. To balance this chakra, we can eat red food such as pomegranate, grapes, and tomatoes. We can also practice grounding asanas such as squats, lunges, warriors and hip opening poses such as pigeon and frog. The mantra for this chakra is VAM.



Svadhithana — I feel
Element: Water

The sacral chakra is made up of our reproductive region, our hips, and our pelvis. It governs our sensuality, sexuality and creativity. It has to do with our feelings and emotions. When this chakra is balanced, we experience the ability to go with the flow and we can enjoy pleasure. To balance this chakra, eat foods that are orange in colour and practice asanas

that activate the pelvis, sacral area, lower abdomen, and hips. The mantra is VAM.



Manipuri — I do

The solar plexus chakra is made up of our stomach and solar plexus area. It governs our digestive system and our self-confidence. It has to do with action and our ability to get things done. When this chakra is balanced, we have a healthy will power and sense of responsibility. To keep this chakra active, we should eat yellow food such as bananas and lemon. For asanas, we can do poses that activate the abdomens like boat pose and twists. The mantra for this chakra is RAM.



Anahata — I love

Element: Air
The heart chakra is made up of our lungs and heart, arms and hands. This chakra governs over our respiratory and circulatory systems as well as our ability to give and

receive love. It also governs our ability to heal.

When balanced, our heart beats to the rhythm of joy. To keep this chakra healthy, we need to eat green food like spinach and guava. We can also do heart opening asanas such as cobra, wheel, and camel pose. Or pranayama, the exercise of breath. The mantra is YAM.



Vishudha — I speak

Element: Ether
The throat chakra governs our thyroid gland and neck and shoulders. To balance this chakra, eat foods that are turquoise or blue in colour and do asanas such as fish pose, lord of the fishes, and shoulder stand. Humming (brohmori mudra) and Brahma Mudra are also good for the throat. The mantra for this chakra is HUM.



Ajna — I see
Element: Light

The third eye chakra governs our intuition, awareness, and insight. This chakra also rules over psychic abilities such as clairvoyance, telepathy, dreams, imagination, and visualisation.

When imbalanced, we may suffer from headaches and migraines, as well as an inability to see the big picture. To exercise this chakra, we can practice Kapal Bathi pranayama and asanas such as eagle pose, dolphin pose, and child's pose. The mantra sound is Om.



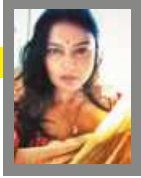
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Element: Thought
The crown chakra governs our spiritual connection to God-universe-higher self... It also governs mental health. To exercise this chakra, eat foods that are violet in colour. Asanas for this chakra include rabbit pose and head stand. Meditation is especially useful for exercising this chakra.

The mantra is Om.
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Photo courtesy: Shazia Omar

UNDER A DIFFERENT SKY
BY IFFAT NAWAZ



Mazin

**"Ekhon ami
Megh nei ar, shobai ekhon
Brishti bole daake amay"**

— Joy Goswami

In the Kingdom of Rain, in the land of breeze, life moved in the rhythm of liquid glass. There, the glass was always full, and the sky never fooled one about the forecast. The stability of such ways brought people no dismays.

The Kingdom of Rain knew how to wipe tears fast if sadness ever came, despite the rain, they knew how to stay dry and even if they got wet, their smiles would never fade. They were happy and they loved and worshipped their King.

The King of Rain was suffering from a long ailment. He did not have many years to live. His only daughter, Princess Mazin, was the sole heir. She had been trained to be the perfect queen for the people of rain and rainclouds. Her name meant just that in Arabic, a cloud that carries rain, a Mazin.

Unbeknownst to all, Princess Mazin had a fall into the deep darkness of her being. And instead of preparing to take over the throne, she half-wished light to wipe her clean. It was a serious condition; her heart was always heavy and to hide this, she picked up a few conniving habits.

She mastered a plastered smile and the people of rain would look at her in awe, they marvelled at her beautiful clothes and face and the way she spoke and saw. They would say "Oh our Princess Mazin is such a delight, she is so gifted and her footsteps are peacock's flights!"

When Mazin came away from the people's stares, she would drop into her bed and wondered what was there? To life? If she herself could not feel the delight that people saw; what point was there to be a queen of the kingdom of Rain when she did not know how to let inner clouds thaw?

Mazin felt addicted to the affirmations of others, the ones who found her beautiful and clever, and happy and fit, she would turn to listen to their songs of wit, ballads that made her feel better for a minute or two; she needed such things, or she felt frozen, cold, blue.

The ill King saw on his daughter's face the story of a trapped storm holding unerring unrest. He knew he did not have enough time in hand, and the solution to the problem needed to be grand. So, the wise King called Mazin into his room, and



told her she had to leave the Kingdom or there would be doom.

"Mazin, I order you to go to the land of Sand, there is an ocean there and the sun stays near, you must go there and live for a year. And do not return if you cannot rid yourself of your secret heavy tear," he said.

Mazin felt anger, yet gratitude at her Father's orders. A part of her wanted to run to the land of sun and sand, the other wanted to cling to her comforts of the land of rain, with its people showering her with compliments even though they never really saw her true face. Still, Mazin did not think that putting on a false face was a crime.

But her Father insisted, "Look Mazin, you cannot sit on the throne with falsehood in



your heart, if you are to be a true queen you must find first your true self. Now go to the land of Sand and do not come back until you are free from your inner discords."

And so, Mazin left for the land of Sand, she crossed the land of Ice and Dust and reached the place at last. Everything felt unfamiliar there, the sky was too blue, no rain clouds roamed, the sun rose pink and red and set in orange, in-between the sunlight was golden — always.

It never rained. The sand was dry and warm, and when Mazin would bury her feet in them, she felt her inner storm's calm. But she did not like that feeling. It was too quiet, too still and too illumined. She felt the stillness would cause the mazin she carried inside to burst and pour and flood her earth, and then she would not be a Mazin at all, a shame to her name. Whoever had heard of a light Mazin? All rainclouds were heavy and so was she, her right since birth. She tried her best to keep herself intact.

But the land of Sand had a way of getting into everything; that was the nature of sand. Once Mazin stepped into it, it never left her. She always found sand, potent with their dry-heat, light and sea-scented, tucked between her toes, or at the ends of her dress, or in her hair, under her nails, on


the pages of her books, in the drop of her mid-chest, that spot where people point to when someone asks, "Can you point to yourself?" And in answer, their index finger goes to that mid-point in the chest and they say, "Here I am."

And like that, without knowing when, sand became part of Mazin's life, and she stopped fearing the potency of their tiny heated selves, their texture that became one with her skin and travelled to her inner chambers, drawing water from a dark cloud she carried in her mid-heart. The cloud which did not know how to pour, and like an outdated identity, unwelcomingly awkward, sulky and insecure, it cried without tears.

Then one morning, Mazin woke up and saw rainclouds had gathered in the land of Sand. She had forgotten all about rain and its sound. She hurried outside to get a good glimpse as the sand whirled and danced sublime and sheer. Mazin too joined the dance and as very few people lived in this land, no one stopped to watch. Mazin twirled and sang, tears of joy swam out of her and she felt her heart's happy twang.

"I am so happy!" Mazin exclaimed, and no one was there to tell her how light she looked and how feathery she felt. Mazin did not need such affirmations anymore. Her raincloud had melted, the constant working sands had pierced through it in the depths of nights and without any great cloudbursts or pain, Mazin had become rain. She poured and poured her ecstatic drops, and the wind carried her back home — with no memory of ever being a Mazin at all, she was now a stream, of light and bliss, ever-flowing in and out of truth's desires. And they called her Rain — the evoker of transcendent emotions, the cleanser of fears, pouring blessedly wiping all tears.


Photo courtesy: Iffat Nawaz




করোনা ভাইরাস-এ


আতঙ্কিত না হয়ে প্রতিরোধ গড়ে তুলি!

প্রতিবার সাবান অথবা হ্যান্ড ওয়াশ
দিয়ে অন্তত ২০ সেকেন্ড* হাত ধুয়ে নেই





* Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC)



REAL FAMILY HEALTH PROTECTOR

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BY SHAZIA OMAR
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Photo courtesy: Shazia Omar