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# BUSINESS Silhouettes

THE FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL  
PLIGHT OF SMALL BUSINESSES P3  
SAILING ON ROUGH SEAS  
RELATIONSHIPS AND COVID-19 P4  
SECRETS OF THE SAUCE  
THE INTRICACIES OF BBQ P12

MODEL: AZRA MAHMOOD  
PHOTO EDITED BY ABU NASER



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**ECONOMIC TALKS**

**TAHIA KHALIL**  
Managing Director  
Connect Consulting Ltd



# The impact of COVID-19 on small businesses

## What would be your general suggestions/guidelines for creating a survival plan for a small business?

Bangladesh's GDP which was enjoying an exponential growth of 8.15 percent would be slowing down significantly due to the advent of COVID-19. According to the Economist Intelligence unit (EIU), the decline of GDP could lower down to 4 percent. The hardest hit would be the Small Business Sector. This sector contributes 20.25 percent in our GDP Growth and accounts for 35-40 percent of our employment. Hence, the Government and private sector has to take special steps for survival of small enterprises/businesses.

The continuation of the pandemic beyond 4 months will force a majority of the small businesses to close down. This sector employs over 50 million people.

World's Global Organizations have allocated US\$50 bn to fight COVID. At least 1.5bn could be procured for our country for small businesses.

In the post pandemic situation, the government has to formulate policies for revival of the small business enterprises. The stimulus injection, declared by the Prime Minister, is US \$2,36bn for small and medium enterprises has to be equitably distributed and ensure end use.

## What are some options of short-term sources of funds/loans for a small business?

A cash transfer programme at minimum wage rate through mobile transfer could help the sector. Focusing on obtaining the stimulus or Anudan declared by the government, which will be distributed by the banks, will fund their business. Making prudent use of it, like keeping low inventory of materials and keeping ready stock could minimise their cost and keep them afloat.



## Should I consider cutting employees' salaries? How do I deal with it, balancing my organisation's survival and fairness towards employees?

Employees of small business are meagrely paid. On top of that, cutting their salaries would push their survival. For the interim, salaries could be reduced to an extent where they could survive. This would have to be determined by businesses. Because the employees also need to understand survival of the business is imperative for them to survive. In the post pandemic situation, jobs will be even harder to find.

The small business owners need to especially look into how to minimise cost and make their staff more efficient. Multi-tasking needs to be made imperative for all employees. Resource allocation and ensuring utmost resource utilisation would be key to a successful revival and sustenance of their businesses.

## At the same time, how do we retain/boost employees' morale in this crisis?

Because of the instability of the nature of small businesses, employees will definitely have low morale in this crisis. Owners showing empathy towards their employees and counselling them could help. Small incentives in cash whenever the owners can afford could be given to the employees. This would make the employee feel taken care of and morale could be maintained. Where possible, remote working should be allowed, if not done previously.



## If I must have employees coming to office, how can I ensure the highest safety for them?

This could be done by spacing out the furniture, desk, tables and rotating the work schedule of the workers. The CDC and WHO have some guidelines regarding safety of staff which can

be followed and applied according to the business's space and number of employees.

## My business is simply not e-commerce/it heavily depends on offline activities. What should I do or how should I manage?

Employees, while attending office, should wear mask and gloves at all times. The restrooms should have ample hand washing materials, and spacing out of work areas are mandatory. Besides, if possible, employees can be given transportation to and from work to reduce the risk of exposure to the disease from public transport.

## If I am considering shutting down the business permanently, what factors should I keep in mind before arriving at this decision?

Permanently closing down business is a major step. It's predicted that 68 percent of small businesses will be closing down. Partial closing down would be a better option, and post-COVID, build it up again gradually.

In the end, sustaining small businesses will positively impact our economy and their closing down will send ripple effects to the wellbeing of the economy. Hence, all parties of the financial system should safeguard the existence and security of the small businesses.

## Acknowledgements

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Photo: LS Archive / Sazzad Ibne Sayed

us on /Sandalina

ঐতিহ্যের আর এক নাম আধুনিকতা  
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# অ্যান্ডালিনা

## সোপ






রূপচর্চায় আভিজাত্য...



**SPOTLIGHT**

# Hard Times for Nandan Children's Fashion

This week, Star Lifestyle had an extend talk with Tahia Khalil, our Financial Advisor who gave quite an insight for small businesses that are hard hit in this COVID-19 pandemic, along with a survival plan. To put reality into perspective, Star Lifestyle is presenting three diversified business cases that include Nandan Children's Fashion House – a small children's wear provider; HammerStrength Fitness Club – a gym that relies on constant physical presence of clients; and a compilation of kindergartens.

In 1996, Nandan Children's Fashion had set out to change the scene with readymade stylish children's wear that did not burn a hole in the wallet.

Let us wind the clock back, back to the late '90s. Dhaka at that time had very little to offer in terms of quality children's clothes. Everyday frocks and the likes were taken care of at home, the go-to tailors needed quite a bit of hints, designs and photos to make something that was a bit fancy. Other than Aarong, the available ready to wear children's clothes



in New Market were hardly what one could make do with.

At that time, specifically 1996, Nandan Children's Fashion had set out to change the scene with readymade stylish children's wear that did not burn a hole in the wallet. With options for various sizes and exclusive designs, the name Nandan has been essential for those looking for a

set of trendy children's clothes.

Fast forward to 2020, with the store now one year away from celebrating 25 years, the COVID-19 pandemic has hit this small business with unprecedented shortcomings. When the stores, offices, schools and just about everything around the country were put into full shutdown in late March, 2020; it was roughly a bit more than two weeks away from Pahela Baishakh in April. And right around it was Eid-ul-Fitr, undoubtedly the biggest occasion for clothes shopping in the country. In fact, both these celebrations traditionally call for a good amount of focus on expenditure on new clothes, food, and all-around merriment.

However, as the countrywide shutdown edged past into the one-and-a-half month and carried well into the month of May, things were bleaker than ever for businesses all around. For Nandan Children's Fashion House, which is a moderate family initiative, this spelt unforeseen difficulties. Typically, small businesses like these reach their annual break-even with a respectable profit during the Baishakh/Ramadan season. But Nandan was left floundering to make ends meet.

Fixed costs like rent and employee salaries during the lockdown, with absolutely no sales, cut deeper into the rainy-day reserves and beyond. Nandan, which had a good footfall with three outlets in Dhaka, had to close down one store in Bailey Road, a place well known for its ever-bustling shops and stores. At this point, taking a loan or any other financial aid may seem lucrative at first, but paired with the already existing loans and liabilities, it only digs deeper into the financial burdens.

The owner and founder of Nandan, Irshad Ara, has not yet lost hope. Already, her Facebook page is highlighting the Eid-ul-Azha collection for the upcoming 1 August celebrations. However, her expectations are still to be tested against the reality of cost cutting of her buyers. On average, typical sales during the Eid-ul-Azha season is a bit less than half of the average sales during the preceding Eid-ul-Fitr. It is not just her ready-made clothes; her wholesale suppliers too have faced similar difficulties. Everyone is cutting down on costs and redirecting funds for the essentials only, and Irshad Ara is no exception. With a heavy heart, she has had to reduce her team of over 40 people without being able to pay them their dues.

Nandan is currently down to around 14/15 of the most indispensable members, who are being paid around half of their typical payment. If this situation persists any further, or worsens, Ara will have little to no incentive left to maintain her business.

Still, with renewed vigour, Ara has reopened her other two outlets with the recommended precautions, but in-store sales are yet to pick up. Her only sales so far have been via online, which too, have yet to see better days. As customer queries are trickling in, she hopes to pick up the pace even a little to keep her business afloat. Hope is after all, the thing Irshad Ara wants to bank on during the grim tones of this worldwide pandemic and its ripple effect on the economy.

**Special thanks to Irshad Ara, owner and founder of Nandan's Children Fashion**

# Trying times for Hammer Strength Fitness Club

The health and fitness scene in the country as a whole has seen a transformation throughout the last decade, and all for the better. But not all gyms and fitness centres are up to par with the needs and demands that vary from one gym goer to the next. At the same time, equipment usage and trainer capacities too have a high impact on the serious visitors. Also, the ambience and the crowd can make or break the deal for the establishment. Balancing all these with an aim to provide good visitor experience, Hammer Strength Fitness Club had opened its doors in April 2012.

For any thriving gym, the heart of the business lies in the visitors doing their best to achieve their health goals. But the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, with its propensity to spread at close contact, has put a hold to all sorts of gatherings, and gyms are no exception. Furthermore, with an imposed countrywide lockdown for a little over two months, the economic impact has been overwhelming.

Abul Fatah Saad, owner of Hammer Strength, however, is strongly optimistic. The club's social media page is a reflection of this, as it bears fact filled messages and encouraging quotes for the patrons. Following up on a client's fitness routine, both in and out of the gym is a typical day's work for a gym. However, just as work from home has translated into an at-home version for the



everyday white-collar office goers, the work of a gym trainer is not so linear. It may seem like a solution to have online one-on-one sessions with the trainers for suggestions. But trainers do not just talk to their respective charges, they need to physically be there to see what the person is doing.

From checking the correct posture and form during a planking exercise to keeping a careful eye on how a set of weight is being lifted, these are the things that cannot be checked through a webcam. Also, just about everyone is streamlining their expenses to

make the best use of available funds, and a gym membership has dropped to the bottom of the list for many. This, in turn, makes it impossible for trainers to hold their job.

Saad's gym in this context, is a shining exception. 90 percent of his staff are permanent, with a few recent hires. The club had paid up to 70 percent of their salary till the month of May, along with full Eid-ul-Fitr bonus. The difficulties are yet to be overcome as the gym is the main earning source for the trainers and such, and the possibility of a job cut also looms ominously. In this case as well,

the trainers and staff of Hammer Strength were assured none of them would lose their jobs, and they would be able to resume as things eased down. Saad believes that just as the trainers are an indispensable part of the establishment, it is his responsibility to look after them during these tough times.

Saad is now bidding his time to welcome the members back. After all, a gym is a social gathering place of sorts. To ensure visitor safety, precautions are being taken, with extra measures like limiting usage of equipment and cutting down of total days of operation, along with many other features for a fully safe gym experience. The gym's members have been constantly engaged through social media with workout video suggestions, online question answer sessions, and much more.

All that remains is to resume typical activities. Of course, things will definitely never be the same in every sense. The uncertainty still lingers as how long this pandemic situation will continue and what the after-effects would be. With all being said, Saad has chosen to focus on the present and make do with what he has at hand while giving importance to the most vital parts of his business — his trainers and his members.

**Special thanks to Abul Fatah Saad, owner of Hammer Strength Fitness Club**

# Marital life during pandemic

On a countless number of couples worldwide, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought on unprecedented marital challenges. China, where the outbreak first occurred, experienced a spike in divorce after the country began to lift the lockdown. Having said that, there are also couples for whom the lockdown has opened new opportunities to bond like never before. No matter what, this pandemic surely has pushed us into a situation we did not foresee. When two people live under one roof and see each other 24/7 month after month with no end in sight, conflicts are inevitable.

"We are living in a highly anxiety-provoking environment," said Nusrat Siraj, a licensed mental health counsellor (LMHC) of Bangladeshi origin, who practices in New York City. "Social isolation, financial stress, loss of loved ones, and health concerns have all led to an increased marital conflict globally. The good news is that the challenges of a pandemic do not necessarily have to harm marriages," she said. "If they invest time and energy, couples can emerge stronger in these extremely challenging times."

Every day, we are adjusting and re-adjusting to the 'new normal'. Every sphere of our lives seems to be sustaining damage of some sort as a result of the pandemic, including our romantic relationships. However, some good things are coming out of this mess, too.

"In the early days of the pandemic, we used to fight a lot and fight over even the littlest things," said Kazi Tahmina, a senior lecturer at a private university in Dhaka.

"The stress level was insurmountable. With two small children around, working from home itself was and continues to be, a major challenge," she said. "But our marital relationship took an about-turn when both

of us contracted the coronavirus back to back."

Falling ill with COVID-19 changed perspectives of Kazi Tahmina and Md Palash Sharker, a sub-editor at a Bengali national daily, on their marriage and family. Being diagnosed with COVID-19 was unsettling enough. What added to this couple's anxiety was the fear of losing each other to this deadly virus. The illness and the fear brought them closer together, helped them re-establish the connection that was lost somewhere in translation.

"We fight a lot less now," said Tahmina. "We now try to understand and listen, like really listen to each other."

"Being down with COVID-19 helped me realise who my real friends and well-wishers are," said Sharker. "Now I can proudly say that my wife ranks #1 on that list. She looked after me throughout my illness."

"It took both of us to fall ill to realise how much we love one another," Tahmina added.

Marriages are about spoken and unspoken expectations. We expect our partners to understand and love us, and we expect them to share financial, childcare, elderly care, and household responsibilities. But sometimes, the idyllic first months of a marriage quickly disintegrate and make way for quarrels and disagreements as or if our expectations increase dramatically.

"High expectations kill the fun in a marriage, I think. With the passage of time and births of children, we also cannot afford the energy to make the other person our centre of attention anymore," said Vidita Gazi, a communications specialist at a development agency. "Priorities like school fees, bills, and children's happiness come in the way."

In this time of pandemic, it is perhaps important that we do not make unreasonable expectations from our

partners. We are all fighting our own battles! For Gazi, the lockdown has brought her and her husband closer to one another. Although it was chaotic in the early days of the lockdown, they are now bonding like never before.

"When he complains, I manage, when I complain, he manages. I guess this house arrest brought us closer. We learnt to develop this coping strategy for managing our stress through discussions over afternoon tea one day," she said.

Like many urban families with two working parents, Gazi's family is grateful to their helping hands at home, who made this 'new normal' more bearable for them. "But I don't know how we will manage or if this conjugal harmony will last when these girls take their annual leave at the end of this year, because it looks like this virus is not going anywhere anytime soon," she said.

The struggles or achievements for newlyweds in this pandemic, however, are different from those who are married with children. Samira Rahman, a Bangladeshi American, is one of the several millions in the U.S. who are looking for a job right now. Samira got married last November and moved to a new state with her husband. She was adjusting to a very new and very important phase of her life when this pandemic struck hard.

"It was overwhelming!" Rahman said. "In the beginning, we even used to argue over things like how the kitchen should be managed, or how much of the everyday life details should be shared with our respective families."

But at the onset of the pandemic, things quickly changed for this newlywed couple. "I think it has kind of put our relationship through a crash course of understanding,"



she said. "I see more consideration

and empathy in both of us now, something that probably would have taken longer to achieve as newlyweds, if the pandemic did not hit us all."

According to Nusrat Siraj, LMHC, marital conflict is not a sign of an unhealthy marriage as conflicts in a marriage are simply unavoidable. "In this pandemic, individuals can engage in the following behaviours to nurture healthy relationships: maintaining self-care, work schedule and routine; communicating with partners with an open mind; spending time in nature; working on fun projects with kids; or planning something exciting like virtual dinner with friends and extended families."

Couples all over the world are adapting to the 'new normal'. With financial uncertainty, fear of unemployment, and limited job prospects looming large on the horizon, staying married during a pandemic is an arduous task. However, our investment of time and energy in our marriages during these struggling times can warrant harmony and happiness for ourselves and our children when good days return.

**By Wara Karim**

**Photo:LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed**  
Names of some of the interviewees have been changed to protect their identity.

## HOROSCOPE



**ARIES**  
(MAR. 21-APR. 20)

Colleagues can come through for you. Try to keep to yourself. Major opportunities are apparent. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



**TAURUS**  
(APR. 21-MAY 21)

Ease disappointments by making amends. Unpleasant changes at home are evident. Don't be too harsh with your partner. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



**GEMINI**  
(MAY 22-JUN. 21)

Financial issues can add to your depression. Make the tough decisions. Don't entertain pushy individuals. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



**CANCER**  
(JUN. 22-JUL. 22)

Avoid going out. Children may not be honest with you. Check on your investments. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



**LEO**  
(JUL. 23-AUG. 22)

Direct your energy into physical exertion. Residential moves will be favourable. Don't be rash. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



**VIRGO**  
(AUG. 23-SEP. 23)

Don't live for others. Build up your savings. Stubbornness can lead to estrangements. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



**LIBRA**  
(SEP. 24-OCT. 23)

Take on creative projects this week. Problems with your partner is likely. Find ways to enjoy yourself. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



**SCORPIO**  
(OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Social outings will do you good. Don't allow anyone to cause friction with your partner. Expect opposition at work. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



**SAGITTARIUS**  
(NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Your lover will be annoyed. Find yourself a challenge this week. Unexpected bills may set you back. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



**CAPRICORN**  
(DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

Projects may not be fruitful. Take care of pending legal matters. Don't mix business with pleasure. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



**AQUARIUS**  
(JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

Sign up for fitness programs. Find time to travel. Don't lose your temper at work. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



**PISCES**  
(FEB. 20-MAR. 20)

Secret affairs are evident. Act fast on any opportunities. Children may cause limitations. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.

**KUNDALINI RISING**

BY SHAZIA OMAR

Writer, activist and yogini  
www.shaziaomar.com



# Healthy Digestion through Yoga: Nauli Kriya

Nau means boat (like nauka) and Li means cling, so in nauli kriya, the abdominal muscles cling to the abdominal wall while moving like a boat on the rolling waves of the ocean. It allows you to massage the organs in your abdominal region through the circular movement of the abdominal muscles.

Nauli is a purification technique used in yoga. To perform nauli, stand with your feet hip width apart, take a big breath in, then fold forward and release the breath. With lungs empty, next, suction in the stomach, (inward and upward, through udiyana banda, a technique used to lift the pelvic floor). Next, release the soft part of the belly in the centre. Then, contract the left and right abdominal muscles in turns, causing a wave-like, churning motion.

You can watch this video for a demo. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lv8KJ6SJzZ8>

The vacuum created pulls blood from the abdominal cavity into the chest and heart and improves circulation to the abdominal muscles, tissues and organs. The pressure in the capillaries and veins in the abdomen decreases, facilitating blood flow and fluid exchange.

Nauli has many benefits. It stimulates and cleanses your digestive and elimination systems — the intestines, stomach, pancreas, liver, spleen, bladder, colon and the reproductive organs. This alleviates constipation and ensures smooth bowel movements. It tones the abdominal muscles (especially the rectus abdominus, which, for women after pregnancy, may become very weak) and the pelvic floor (which helps support a healthy spine and prevent back aches.) It reduces excess fat on



the abdomen and internal abdominal organs. It strengthens the muscles that control the flow of urine. It stirs up the lymphatic fluids in the abdominal area and increases your immunity. It increases metabolism and internal energy, giving vitality.

Healthy bowel movement means daily elimination of waste. If you are not able to go at least once a day, you may try nauli kriya, and also, adjust your diet. It is important to eat sufficient fibre and green vegetables (cabbage, spinach,

etc). Guava, papaya and watermelon (with the seeds) can also help.

Nauli should be practiced when the stomach is completely empty. A beginner may start with three rounds in each direction (ten rotations). After two weeks of practice, one can build up to ten rounds within a week. One can slowly build up to 25 rotations per round, for ten rounds. If pregnant or menstruating, nauli kriya should be avoided.

Nauli stimulates the third chakra, the

Manipura, located at the navel. Manipura is the storehouse of vital energy (prana) and so, activating this chakra helps boost one's ability to exert one's will, take responsibility and get things done. It also activates the second chakra, the Svadisthana, which helps us accept reality and move with the cosmic flow.

**Photo Courtesy: Shazia Omar**  
*Shazia Omar is a yogini, activist and writer. Her yoga classes are available for free on her channel: YouTube.com/ShazzyOmar*

FROM PAGE 3

## The final countdown for schools as COVID-19 rages on

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect every sphere of life, the education system too is under sever burdens. While online learning sessions and other digital methods are being used to take classes, there remains the issue of the actual schools themselves. In a report from The Daily Star on 21 July, 2020, an estimate was given that around 100 schools around the capital would be sold off.

The report included the real situation of several schools.

Over the last four months, Ideal Public School in the capital's Matikata area, saw its earnings plummet as most of the guardians were unable to pay tuition and other fees amid the coronavirus pandemic. The founder and head teacher of the kindergarten, Nargis Akter, had no other choice but to put her school up for sale. The amount of outstanding house rent, unpaid salaries

for teachers and staff just kept mounting and ended in this harsh end. Every month, Nargis has to pay Tk 50,000 as house rent and Tk 70,000 in salaries of teachers and staffers. Till June, the dues stood at about Tk 5 lakh. Furthermore, if she fails to find a buyer, the school has to close its doors to 300 students and 25 teachers and staffers after 15 years of operation.

This picture is the same for many schools in and around the capital as they found themselves in a tight corner amid the pandemic. The majority of the teachers at these schools have returned to their village homes and are in financial hardship.

Srijan Central School and College in Savar's Bypile area is one such institution. It has about 150 students and 15 teachers. Chairman Shamim Iqbal, the school's Chairman mentioned that the school needs about Tk 1 lakh a month to run, and

he is not getting any tuition fees.

Another school, Rajdhani Ideal High School in Basila area, was put on sale by its director Faruk Hossain Ripon. Founded in 2015, the school has 170 students and 15 teachers. The school has about TK 3.5 lakh due in house rent and salaries of teachers and staff.

With 250 students and 12 teachers, Phoolkuri Kindergarten and High School in the capital's Mohammadpur has also been put up for sale. Established in 2003, its monthly expenditure is about Tk 1 lakh. In April, school director Takbir Ahmed gave advertisement for selling it.

As the owners move to sell their schools in the middle of the academic year, the students of class V and VIII of these institutions may find themselves in a difficult situation. They are expected to take public exams in November this year.

Iqbal Bahar Chowdhury, chairman of

Bangladesh Kindergarten School and College Oikya Parishad, said almost every day, they get news that schools have been put up for sale. So far, the number is around 100. They estimate that around 60,000 kindergartens across the country will share a similar fate.

The financial repercussions are not the only things to consider here. Manzoor Ahmed, professor emeritus of BRAC University, commented that 100 percent enrolment of students at the primary level will be at risk as a consequence of permanent closure and sale of kindergartens. The number of dropouts too are bound to increase.

With the situation being as is, schools closing down will have negative socio-economic impact in the long run, with little to no option for recovery.

**By Iris Farina**



# RAIN or SHINE, jackets and coats are FINE

Given the hot and humid summer, it is no doubt difficult to even think of jackets. At least first thought wise, but a little bit of exploration can actually direct us towards a fresh perspective, a more inclusive one. Think about the times when you had to put on air conditioning to the maximum in an indoor location.

## COVER STORY

What if you were only wearing a sleeveless tee and a knee length skirt? It is bound to get chilly in a bit. This is exactly where summer coats and jackets come in handy. A trendy cover-up over the seasonal regulars, ensuring that you enjoy the best of the weather — round the clock!

## STYLES TO CONSIDER

**DENIMS:** A timeless, denim jacket that your mother wore in her younger days. A piece of clothing that's your favourite and also one which you expect your daughter to wear, someday. Simply said, it's a classic and a must-have in everyone's wardrobe!

**FAUX LEATHER:** You have watched your favourite TV heroes and heroines don it. And you have always wanted to sport it in a similar fashion. Let us reassure that you have always been right to consider it a 'fashion necessity' for that cool wardrobe of yours.



**WHITE TRUCKERS:** Bored of the normal and the drab regulars? You need not be while discussing coats and jackets. White trucker jackets come to the rescue whenever you feel a bit weary of the blue jeans and the grey-coats. Pair a set of cool shades — maybe a cat's eye to look extra special in blazing whites.

**FLIGHT JACKETS:** Are you in a hurry to climb up the social ladder, and be recognised amongst your friends as the cool and the trendy one? Put on a flight jacket over your minis, floral dresses or even worn out jeans and t-shirt. Hope you enjoy all that attention!

**TRENDY WINDBREAKERS:** You think summer is all about being hot and humid? Sadly, in this tropical region it's also about rain and dirt. So, a stylish windbreaker helps to protect you from the sudden gush of rainfall and the chills that you might be getting from the wind. The motto for a fashionista would be "rain or shine, be trendy, hip and fine."

**OVERSIZED BELTED JACKETS:** You can wear these with almost anything. Feeling like not dressing up at all? Just put on a belted jacket over your PJs and then board a plane! A hat, traditional or quirky, looks ultra-cool with these fashionable outfits.

**BALLOON SLEEVES:** Ever heard of the balloon sleeves? They are tricky variants of the traditional denim jackets and look super hip and modern when paired with white pants or formals.

**DOUBLE BREASTED:** Finally, top of the line exquisiteness. If you have daylong business meeting in your office boardroom with a central cooling system, then this is your best bet to look stylish and yet comfortable, amidst the extra chilly environment. This is a top of the line fashion statement. A must-have for all professionals!

By Fashion Police  
Model: Azra Mahmood  
Photo edited by Abu Naser

# Le Smoking Tuxedo

**IMAGES THROUGH A THEODOLITE**

**MANNAN MASHHUR ZARIF**

Senior Subeditor, The Daily Star



Parisian fashion of the 1960s was witness to winds of change. And the world followed suit.

The riff of women's styling was slowly playing a varied tune, one that saw a flow of inspiration drawn from men's fashion of the time and that of the yesteryears.

Of all things borrowed from the gentlemen, the white shirt stood out and has remained a fashion staple even for women. While some have let their imagination run wild in creating myriad tops and blouses from this indispensable basic, others have kept matters simpler without much change. Yet, androgynous fashion has more to thank to boy's fashion, and 'le smoking tuxedo' is just one of them — the timeless creation of Yves Saint Laurent (YSL).

Perhaps, the most suave and sensuous of his creations, Le Smoking debuted in the Autumn-Winter Collection of 1966, and has, over the decades, inspired designers

to create and re-create their own versions of the feminine jacket. If you, as a woman, love to put on a suit, just know that it all goes back to the mid-sixties, when YSL was exploring uncharted territories. He was already established in the Parisian fashion circle, and as former head of design at Dior, no stranger to international fame.

The decade of the '60s saw YSL create master designs that empowered women through fashion. For the artist, this was the turning point, as it was for women's fashion, and for the first time, unisex styling was set to gain widespread acceptance. Women could wear a tux; be feminine with an air of masculinity. For the first time in fashion history, they could carry a suit to dinner, cocktails and the boardroom, which they were frequenting than ever before — and no one screamed faux pas.

Yves Saint Laurent has been known to say, "For a woman, the tuxedo is an indispensable garment in which she will

always feel in style, for it is a stylish garment and not a fashionable garment. Fashions fade, style is eternal." This was an audacious stance for a new design, even though inspired from the tux — a well established men's staple.

The tuxedo had a strange introduction and use in fashion. Men's fashion. This particular garment was originally worn in smoking rooms to protect one's clothing from the smell of tobacco! Needless to say, this is also how the famed Le Smoking Tuxedo got its name. What a giant leap it had been from its humble beginning to blatant glamour.

YSL's tuxedo was not an exact replica of the men's version. In his creative sagacity, he used the same fashion codes, deciphered for the feminine body. To begin with, the collar had a subtler curve and shape; the waistline became narrowed to accentuate the body shape; the pants adjusted to give the legs a 'longer' look. The

fabric of choice was wool and velvet. The colour of the garment — black!

The initial response for Le Smoking was little short of disappointing, and as far as fashion legends go, only one piece was sold in the season!

By the seventies and the mid-eighties, women's tuxedo became mainstream. Every suit that women now sport, be it the casual blazer, or a formal suit, has Le Smoking as its root, and perhaps that is the reason why it has remained a staple. Le Smoking has been out of fashion for a while now and predestined never to have a comeback, as it never really fades in influence. As far as Le Smoking goes, the appeal is real and everlasting, destined to repeat itself on the ramps and in our lives over and over again.

**By Mannan Mashhur Zarif**  
**Model: Azra Mahmood**  
**Photo edited by Abu Naser**

**THE FEARLESS OLIVE**  
BY REEMA ISLAM



# Post-Eid table spread



Eid maybe over, but the mood for festivities certainly isn't. And what better way to celebrate that festivity than with recipes ranging from the bustling streets of Fez in Morocco to my maternal grandmother's kitchen and a Turkish friend's midnight endeavours on the island of Crete! As we struggle to keep our sanity intact amidst the craziness that the coronavirus has brought with it, I sincerely wish you all a pleasant holiday and may your sacrifices go a long way. Eid Mubarak!

## STUFFED KOROLA KEEMA

*My maternal grandmother in Lahore always loved feeding us with this famous rendition of korola or bitter gourds, and although I don't remember her flavours, my mum has valiantly tried to emulate her mother through this dish. I hope it adds a diversity to your Eid table this year.*

### Ingredients

4 large bitter gourds or korola  
1 kg mince beef  
Pinch of turmeric powder, coriander powder, cumin powder, cardamoms and clove powder  
6-7 tomatoes, skinned and chopped  
1 cup tomato purée (otherwise you can blend fresh, skinned tomatoes or use half cup if using canned purée)  
3-4 large onions, diced  
3-4 cloves chopped garlic  
Oil for frying the bitter gourds and for cooking the meat

### Method

Scrape or lightly peel the top parts of the gourds and make a side slit (they need to look like little bags so cut them lengthwise). Shell out the seeds and insides. Keep the insides on one side but discard seeds. Wash them and mix with the salt and leave aside

for about 15-20 minutes. Wash off the salt thoroughly; then pat dry and fry lightly for about 3-4 minutes until slightly browned.

Keep aside and prepare the meat.

Sauté the onions until translucent, then add garlic and ginger. Cook for 2 minutes, add the turmeric powder; cook for up to 2 more minutes before adding the meat and continue to heat until it has browned.

Add cardamoms, coriander and cumin powder and the shelled-out insides of the gourd halfway before the meat is browned. After this, you may add a bit of sugar and sprinkle of clove powder and cool the meat a bit.

Take a needle and thread it, then fill in the fried bitter gourds with the keema. Fill them up enough so you can close them and sew the openings, taking care that the meat is not spilling out. Make sure you have enough meat left in the pot for a gravy. Add tomato purée to the rest of the meat and gently place the filled gourds inside and cover it. Let it simmer on a low heat for about 15-20 minutes so the gourd absorbs the flavours.

**Serving:** Serve with a generous helping of chopped herbs and preferably a few hours after it has cooked as the gourd absorbs the flavours of the curry the longer it stays immersed.

## MOROCCAN STUFFED SPLEEN TIHANE

*Moroccans, like the rest of the Arab speaking belt or North Africans, love their offals and especially, stuffed ones. I once shared a family favourite Osban, stuffed cow intestines from Libya but today I attempt to bring you something from Morocco, where the city of Marrakesh, is the only city inscribed in the UNESCO list of Intangible Cultural Heritage, simply for its food.*

### Ingredients

1 veal or beef spleen, trimmed of fat  
500g ground beef or lamb (or a mix of the two)  
1 cup half-cooked white rice  
½ cup chopped pitted olives  
2 medium onion, diced  
2 tbsp chopped garlic  
1½ cups fresh herbs like mint or coriander etc.  
2 tbsp tomato paste  
2 tbsp red chilli paste  
2 capsicums, chopped  
¼ cup lemon juice  
1 heaped tablespoon ground cumin and paprika, or cayenne

### Method

Mix all the ingredients together — rice, beef, spices, tomato paste, lemon juice etc. Take the whole spleen and trim away the fat and from the front end, make a straight horizontal cut so it has only one rounded edge on the opposite side. The other side is now straight so you can dig in with a small knife and slowly inch your way in, making space. The inside of the spleen is incredibly spacious so fear not and charge ahead!

You can easily make a nice hollow to stuff your rice-meat mix into it. Once properly stuffed, sew the ends and you may pat it into a round shape or leave it flat. Oil a deep baking dish and in a pre-heated oven (at 180°C), place the spleen and bake for about 1 hour. Lower the heat to (120° C) after 20 minutes and when you insert a fork, it should easily go inside.

**Serving:** Serve this on a bed of chopped herbs and salad and slice the spleen like a meatloaf.

## TURKISH LIVER DISH

*While researching food heritage in Crete, my*

*archaeologist friend from Turkey and I had to prepare a meal from our countries, so my humble chicken curry joined her liver dish. This rustic dish was not just simple, but it also reminded me of home.*

### Ingredients

250g liver  
2-3 large eggplants, roasted, peeled, and seeded  
Flour for coating  
Olive oil for frying  
Olive oil for mixing with the purée but you can use 2 tbsp mustard oil too  
1 tbsp roasted sesame and coriander seeds  
½ cup pomegranate seeds  
½ cup coriander and mint leaves, chopped  
Salt and pepper, to taste  
Pinch of za'atar or you can use oregano powder; pinch paprika  
½ tsp garlic paste  
2 tbs lemon juice

### Method

Add a pinch of salt to the flour and coat the washed liver, which has been chopped into bite sized pieces, then fry it lightly for about 4-5 minutes until it has browned. Mash the eggplant pulp and add olive oil and lemon juice or mustard oil. Mix it with garlic paste, herbs, salt and pepper.

**Serving:** Serve the eggplant mash in an oblong deep dish and sprinkle a few drops of olive oil on top of it, then some za'atar/oregano powder, paprika, the herbs and the pomegranate seeds. Make a deep well in the middle and place the liver there. The idea is to eat it while dipping it into the eggplant mixture.

**Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed**  
**Food and Styling: RBR**



BTW

# The revolutionary history of the Swivel Chair

Be it in office boardrooms, workplaces or even our own bedrooms with our gadgets and computers/laptops, there is one common denominator we are bound to find in all three — the swivel chair, more commonly known as the revolving chair.

With a single central leg with round wheels at its base, the chair allows easy hand rotation of 360 degrees to the left and right, helping to recline in the direction of our pleasure. Our modern-day sensibilities also allow for the options of raising or lowering the seat. The swivel chair affirms a sense of comfort when in use, as it is functional, and brings a sense of aesthetic design as its shapes and designs evolve over time.

The swivel chair is conspicuous in almost every major work setting whether it is at home or offices, in a private or public, making it a delightful seat, allowing easy movement by the wheels and the freedom to turn in any direction, synchronising work or any leisurely action.

Behind the comfort and warmth of what seems to always create a degree of buoyancy when working, has a deep-seated taint of revolutionary history attached to it.

The creator of the swivel chair is the great American revolutionary statesman and legislator, Thomas Jefferson, who played an important role in creating the United States of America as we know



it. When not busting his brainboxes in creating the nation-state with all its numerous flaws as we see and know today, Jefferson was also a skilled and innovative inventor with an acumen for design.

In a great state of political upheaval and euphoria, Thomas Jefferson, in 1775, had shifted to Philadelphia after becoming a member of the Continental Congress, the convention of delegates who were tasked with creating and planning the structuring of the legal and political framework of the United States of America.

Knowing that he had a lot of paperwork that had to be made in a burst of concentration and energetic impulse, he went for furniture shopping. He needed a suitable writing desk and a perfect fit



of a chair to ensure he was comfortable in drafting important documents and could engage in important decision-making, heralding him as one of the most whimsically inventive and articulate political leaders of all time.

Having to do research all by himself with everything scattered here and there, Jefferson wanted to bring a degree of order to his study and therefore his mind, which made its imprint on the quill formulating his ideas on the paper in its final stage.

Wanting to create a mobile chair, the esteemed polymath bought a stationary wooden model of a Windsor chair whose legs he removed alongside the separation of the seat from the back. He then re-joined them with an iron spindle and in getting

the chair to spin, he employed the use of casters, designed mainly for use in window sash pulleys. In trying to make the chair more office friendly and mobile, he had changed a rigid English chair with a solid wooden seat pushed into drilled holes into something uniquely American that would be synonymous with the type of nation he was creating.

The chair is deeply intertwined with American history, especially with the writing and documentation of the Declaration of Independence, another of his vaulted achievements. Impressed by its use, he had taken it to his plantation in Monticello in Virginia in 1776. Here, the chair went through another set of modifications as its original legs were replaced with bamboos and a writing surface attached to one of its sides. Rare for its highly remarkable revolving mechanism, the chair has been embedded into modern day corporate life as well as in the rooms of higher echelons of power.

A true Renaissance man, Jefferson had a curiosity and penchant for improving things as often as he saw them. The world can admire him not only as a great statesman, but also an inventor with an unquenching thirst for design and improvement.

**By Israr Hasan**  
**Photo: Collected**

LISTICLE

# Tricks to teach your dog

The saying that dogs are man's best friend has been proven over and over again by our canine companions. They elevate depression, and lighten up our moods when we were down. What they feel for us is something so pure, we often cannot even fathom it. They embody loyalty, love, and most importantly, possess an innate ability to feel our sadness. Dogs can feel our emotions, and truth be told; they are happiest seeing us when we get home after a day's work.

In recognition of our furry friends, here are a few tricks you can teach them. This is especially a good time to try these out, as most of us have this unprecedented opportunity to spend longer time at home with our furry friends.

It is also a great time to show some love and bond with them before we go back to our busy schedules. Basically, two items will be necessary for you to start on these, a clicker to train them to audio, and treats to reward them!

## Shake-hands

It is one of the easiest tricks you can teach your dog, as dogs naturally paw at you whenever they want something. So, when you present them a fistful of treats, they will be inclined to respond. Once they do, just simply shake hands. Repeat a few times and after some conditioning,



voila! You have a friend to shake hands with.

## Sit

Making your dog sit is perhaps another one of those easier tricks you can, upon command, have your dog do. They see everything as a game, they will initially



get confused and wonder what they can do to get the treat. Do not give them a treat until they figure out how to sit. After the first successful attempt, repeat the command and the treat. They will then start registering what you want them to do the next time you say 'sit.'

## Roll-over

Just like sit, this trick is extremely simple. Repeat the same steps as for 'sit,' but instead, say 'roll.' It will take finesse and patience to get it right, but it is absolutely adorable when they are able to pull it off, and you would not be able to help but 'aww' when they do, and rightfully give them the treat that they deserve for mastering the art of utter cuteness.

## Fetch

Fetch comes pretty easy to most dogs, however, some breeds need more training than others. Take your clicker and throw an object at a certain distance, record this behaviour until your dog masters the idea of fetching said item and bringing it back to you. Once they do, give them treats and repeat. Do not forget to say 'fetch' when doing it. They will respond more quickly once you start giving them treats.

One important thing to remember, please be patient with your dogs as you are teaching them these tricks which are fun to do. Use the time to spend it with them, nurture them, love them, and bond with them.

**By Ahmed A Raeeda**  
**Photo: LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed**

# 100 days of solitude

I used to love being alone, to be away from people. But without knowing the unknown and discovering strangers, life can never be fulfilled. "100 days" sounds quite romantic, mathematical and rational. Indeed, it was. It was a marathon 100 days of overlooking the next few more hundreds knocking at the door. I never wanted to be a confirmed bachelor, at least in a literal sense. But the newly adapted 'quarantine' situation is not poetic, but rather pathetic. I have tried every moment to colour it with my wild imagination. I had my silent lover, who was a Superman, a Spiderman and at times, prince charming who would rescue me somehow someday.

Alas! It would never happen like before, and yet, it seems so real to be with him. He is my imaginative companion, who has no desire to be the last romantic of the century. Yet, I paid the biggest toll of my life by juxtaposing him with my locked down love.

I am locked down; I am still under the surveillance of the unknown territory. Love interests me more than leadership. Before, I had it all — art, literature, music, science, technology, innovation, brands, travel, books, ethnic vintage jewellery, everything! In fact, I own a couple of luxurious boxes of Winsor & Newton oil and watercolour too. I never counted glitter brushes which melted with glorious ultramarine.

Like the shirt he was wearing when I first met him. Everything seemed so unreal, yet very true. I did my 58th Venice Biennale art project, with an idea of visibility paradox. I thank God for each deep breath that HE allows me to take, and thank HIM for the unconditional mercy HE shows us. At times I screamed, not in fear but in grief and anger, because what have I done wrong or why the hell the dolphins have to die!

100 days taught me to fear living a secret life. I wanted to live as much as I could. Simplicity was a virtue, and I was simple enough to shrink like a dwarf. I was not Snow White, I was one of those seven dwarfs, cooking, cleaning, doing household chores. Yet, I tried to thrive through my colour palette and spatula that now know the colour of my blood, salty, and sultry.

In hundred days, hundred thousand shades were produced by the artist who can never feel the freedom again. I used to love my house, my atelier, after every trip I returned to my atelier which feels like heaven. Craving silence was an integral desire which turns into a chaotic nightmare. Dogs barking nearby, the whistle of the train not even melancholic, people are

seldom free without masking the soul. My days were different, uncertainty always being the core of our existence, but to feel it so close is a new dimension.

I like questioning myself. Questions arise when I am open. One cannot escape being playful, being psychic of being judged for her/his own action. I am playful in my isolation. Dangerous but devoted like a servant to her master in an ancient story. Curious to know, ready to be alone or be daring enough to be in charge. We are like mocking birds.

How do you see yourself when you are sure of who you are? Skills can be improvised but devotion is static, like the sun. Use of colour as deep and specific, a labyrinth of abstraction on the surface. Looking at the visual interpretation of addictive repetitive black creates an endless recantation.

Are they relatively related? You know as soon as we both look at each other, the artist and the creator. It is a way to uphold its essence of the beauty of weaving myths thread by thread. Complexity is not in its natural pattern, but cohesive independence is the artist's naïve ability of strong expression, which is bohemian and neo-deconstruction.

An artwork can never be new, an artwork can never be old. Hence, I knew not where it began but have no clue where it will end. No matter how an artist intends to feel while looking at it, each time the colour changes and gives rise to a never-ending, limitless query. Therefore, I am accountable to know the subject matter than the subject itself. An artists' condition is freedom. When the subject is the image, the image cannot deconstruct the proportion of the context.

Conceiving portrait was not the ultimate intension of the artist, but rather the

essence was essential to be portrayed. Lines decode, they never declare permanence, they always resolve in either atmospheric dimension or illusive continuation. Seen in public or even in private space, it's like a person with layers, engaging, exploring, navigating and discovering. Art is like a magnet, there are two sides, positive and negative.

Simplicity enacts complexity – therefore, an artist's intuitiveness is her/his simplicity that provokes the complex nature of contextual interpretation of the visual expression. So, the painter, with her work, is already at the end of the journey, where it began to start again.

As the process is ongoing, none could assume the fine lines of the pictorial history of an abstract artistic language. It's not why we see rather what we experienced through our senses, observation and imagination. Hence, the interpretation must be different.

Artistic expressions are always intrigued by the deeper statement that spurs from and within. All of these images create trajectory, the lines, colour and space determine the volume of the subject. Here, the subject itself deliver a story that is interconnected with a multi-layered dimension of the external atmosphere within an internal behavioural pattern. An artwork would never be memorable if there is no love affair in between. One must close their eyes and immediately recall what is being experienced right before. The image lingers until it's been replaced. Art, therefore is not a myth; it is a co-existence with mythical realism.

**By Nazia Andaleeb Preema**

*The writer is one of the nation's leading contemporary artist, activist and entrepreneur.*

IMPROVED

with color guard

**Fast wash**

DETERGENT POWDER

POWER WASH

এখন  
নতুন মোড়কে

আরো  
উন্নত ফর্মুলায়

KOHINOOR CHEMICAL



# The Sauce Couture

Seasoned cooks all agree that barbecue is an all-American experience, stemming from the South, of turning raw meat into delectable dishes through marinating in a sauce of spices and grilling over charcoal, outdoors. That is the basics of a good barbecue, and truthfully, that is all that there is to it.

The sauce, which makes the meat moist and tender, is primarily made of three ingredients — vinegar, tomato puree, and/or ketchup. With these as staples, a seasoned cook can simply add or subtract as per taste and create a whole array of dishes differing in flavour.

Having said all that, it would be wrong to assume that the grilling experience is all but for the seasoned chef. Even for the rookies, there is much to explore and reap.

## The Sauce

As alluded to earlier, the secret to a great BBQ lies in the sauce, and every seasoned cook has his/her own favourite concoction. That does not mean you need to exclude that easy store-bought BBQ sauce from the grocery list. The primary problem with store-bought sauce is in the sweetness of it, due to the high-fructose corn syrup. To override, add vinegar — apple cider vinegar is most commonly used, but you can even choose rice vinegar. You can look to citrus fruit for the desired acidity as well.

Every region of the United States has an answer to what constitutes the right BBQ sauce, but if left to us, we would suggest that the best blend is made that hits all the high notes, and is a harmonious combination of smoky, spicy, and sweet with a dash of vinegar to balance out the flavours.

## The Newbies

Do you have ketchup, mustard and honey? Then try this.

### Ingredients

- 1 cup ketchup
- ¼ cup prepared yellow mustard
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ½ tsp Worcestershire sauce
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1/8 tsp hot sauce

### Method

Combine all ingredients in a medium bowl. Stir until sugar dissolves.

### The Intermediate

To make this homemade BBQ sauce recipe, you will need the following ingredients —

Tomato sauce: Just puréed tomatoes, no extra ingredients.

Apple cider vinegar: To add some tang to the sauce.

Honey: We really prefer the taste of honey, but you could also substitute with brown sugar.

Tomato paste: To intensify the rich tomato

flavour in this sauce.

Molasses: A must in Kansas City bbq sauce!

Worcestershire sauce

Spices: A combo of smoked paprika, garlic powder, black pepper, onion powder and salt.

### Method

Combine the ingredients. Stir everything together in a saucepan, and bring the sauce to a simmer, then let it continue to simmer for 15-20 minutes or until it has thickened slightly.

### Another

This mustard BBQ sauce is a wonderful mix of sweet and tangy, and spicy. You get a level of tang from the mix of apple cider vinegar along with yellow mustard, which has a respectable level of tang on its own.

### Ingredients

- ¾ cup yellow mustard
- ½ cup honey
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- ½ cup apple cider vinegar
- 2 tbsp ketchup
- 2 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- Pinch or more of cayenne
- ½ tsp salt
- Dash of hot sauce

### Method

Whisk all of the ingredients together in a large bowl. Add to a small pot and simmer for 10 minutes. Let cool.

Pour into a jar and cover. Refrigerate at least one day to let the flavours settle. To serve, warm it up in a small pot and get at it!

### For the advanced

As for advanced, there is no boundaries. Never fear to experiment. The beauty of a sauce base is that you can change it if you are in the mood. There are many ways to vary the base, and then you get to add other ingredients to deepen it more, things like Worcestershire sauce, Tabasco sauce, garlic powder, or smoked paprika, or all of the above!

Grilling outdoors is an essential part of the barbecue, but not a necessary one. One can easily opt for doing it on a much smaller scale, indoors. However, it is quite understandable that the smoky, charred taste will be compromised to a great degree, but for the newbies, this is a start.

A grilling pan can serve the same purpose as a charcoal grill, sans the elaborate setting. In addition, a gentle nudge into the world of BBQ is all that is needed. With the right kind of sauce and meat, one is just steps away in turning out great dishes from basic raw ingredients.

— Recipes compiled by Mannan Mashhur Zarif

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed  
Food Styling: RBR

## CHECK IT OUT



# Galleri Kaya launches 16th anniversary exhibition

On Saturday, 25 July, 2020, renowned gallery of the city, Galleri Kaya, launched their 16th anniversary exhibition, featuring the works by 42 modern and contemporary artists. A selection of 103 works done in

acrylic, oil, watercolour, ink, charcoal, ceramic, bronze, pastel pencil and mixed media on paper and canvas are being showcased in this exhibition. The ADN Group sponsors the event; online partner is [www.artitude.com.bd](http://www.artitude.com.bd); media

partner is [bdnews24.com](http://bdnews24.com).

The exhibition will continue until 22 August, 2020.

For more information, contact [gallkaya@gmail.com](mailto:gallkaya@gmail.com) or [rajengain@gmail.com](mailto:rajengain@gmail.com).

Call them at +88 01754755246, +88 01752-684900, +88 02 58956902.

Follow them on social media: [www.facebook.com/gallerikaya](http://www.facebook.com/gallerikaya)

Galleri Kaya is located at House 20, Road 16, Sector 04, Uttara, Dhaka.