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TEA and RAINY evenings

LIVING WITH RESPONSIBILITY
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THE JUGGLERS ACT
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FOOD FOR A RAINY DAY AT HOME
SNACK RECIPES FOR MONSOON **PG 8 AND 9**

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BMW introduces first-ever 2 Series Gran Coupe in Bangladesh

German car manufacturer BMW has recently unveiled its BMW 2 Series Gran Coupé in Bangladesh, via a virtual launch by Executive Motors Ltd., the official dealer for BMW in the country.

With its sporty look, the BMW 2 Series Gran Coupé boasts advanced BMW front-wheel-drive architecture. Armed with a cutting-edge chassis and innovative system, especially in its control system technology, the four-door coupé raises



the bar in terms of driving dynamics and agility.

The standout characteristic of the

model is its dynamically stretched silhouette and the four doors with frameless windows — a modern spin on the classic coupé blueprint.

Inside, passengers are well catered for space-wise. And the air conditioning and lighting controls are grouped and laid out intuitively. Access to the infotainment system is via the familiar BMW iDrive interface, or a touchscreen 8.8-inch Central Information Display — all part of the

seamless BMW Live Cockpit.

The price of the BMW 218i Gran Coupé starts from Tk 68,00,000 and comes with five years (or up to 60,000 km in Bangladesh) of free service, free parts, and free repair and maintenance.

Christopher Wehner, managing director of BMW Group Asia, was the chief guest of the virtual inauguration programme. M Shamsul Arefeen, director-operations at Executive Motors, also attended.

TIPS

Skincare during Monsoon

The rain is here, giving us some relief from the heat that June-July is about to pack in. The clouds are roaring and it is pouring rain when it is not hot from the constant sunshine. Your skin, just like the seasons, change their needs because the environment is now different.

Taking care of our skin is merely a way of life, incorporating simple practices and adopting basic ideas can take you a long way to having healthy glowing skin. The tips below are applicable for both oily and dry skin, it is only a matter of using of the right products geared for your skin type.

Cleansing

Stepping outside our houses is not advised unless it is for necessities. Wash your face with a soap free cleanser that is gentle on the skin, as harsh cleansers can strip the skin of moisture and can damage it further. If you are going out, be sure to immediately wash your face when you come back home as a necessary protocol to steer clear from any outside pollutants and germs.

Exfoliate

Be sure to exfoliate your skin once a week with a facial scrub. Exfoliating promotes healthy skin regeneration and renewal by physically removing the uppermost layer of the skin to reveal new cells underneath.

Toning

After a cleanser, many seem to disregard the use of a toner, but in reality, it is highly recommended as using a toner balances the pH level of the skin, calms the

skin and improves texture. Refrain from using toners that contain alcohol, and include toners that have beneficial ingredients like vitamins, and hyaluronic acid. After cleansing, apply toner using a cotton pad or fingertips.

Moisturise

There is no escape from moisturising. It is essential to complete your skincare with a moisturiser. People with oilier skin types are advised to use oil free moisturisers, while those with dry skin should try moisturisers with more emollient properties.

Hydrate

Aside from moisturising the skin, it is important to keep it hydrated and supple as well. You can achieve this by using several sheet masks that are available on the market. You can also use do-it-yourself (DIYs) facial masks that you can make at home, which include hydrating ingredients like rose water and honey.

SPF

Finally, it is advised to always use sunscreen when out of the home. Don't put it off just because its cloudy outside! Wearing a sunscreen is a must, come rain or shine. Using anything below SPF 30 is not recommended for our harsher climate. Protect your skin against the sun, and your skin will thank you.

By **Ahmed A Raeeda**

Photo: **LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed**

Creative masks from Mitara

Mitara is the brainchild of three friends, two Bangladeshis and one Japanese resident, with a focus to make Bangladeshi culture well known in Japan. Md Anisur Rahman is a fashion designer by profession; Shadia Sarmin is an artist, and an art instructor; and Hiro Takahashi studied business management in Japan.

Ever since masks have become an essential item in our daily lives, the trio thought of presenting Bangladeshi culture through them. The masks feature the design of Bangladesh's first stamps, Nakshi kantha forms, Ludo game, 'alpona', flora and fauna, etc. Another notable aspect is that five child artists from Dhaka's renowned 'Monseez Art Academy' has worked with Mitara. They are Sayma Ahad Khan, Mashrur Rahman, Fahmida Islam, Sanjida, and Taskina. For details, follow them on social media: <https://www.facebook.com/mitarafashionandcrafts>

Aarong offers amazing discounts

Valued customers can avail exciting offers and save big this August at all Aarong outlets and on aarong.com. Customers can save Tk. 1000 on purchases of Tk. 10,000 or more on apparel, home décor, and accessories. Also available are special offers when making a minimum qualifying purchase — Tk. 500 off on all children's apparel, Tk. 300 off on home textiles, décor and leather goods and Tk. 500 on any TAAGA or TAAGA MAN apparel and accessories. To learn more about August Deals at Aarong, visit aarong.com. The campaign ends 29 August 2020.

To ensure safe shopping, customers are required to book a shopping timeslot at aarong.com before visiting Aarong outlets.

us on /Sandalina

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রূপচর্চায় আভিজাত্য...



KOHINOOR
CHEMICAL

SPOTLIGHT

Love for dogs



Every now and then, we hear of a selfless story. Of people around us trying their best to make things right. In a world full of chaos and instability, these stories help us believe that good is ever-present and silently fighting a battle to curb malice.



This is one such tale, two girls who never thought they would have to fight the odds on a daily basis simply to ensure the survival of other living beings that share space with us on this beautiful planet.

Our story begins with Sabrina Sabbir, an ex-student of University of Dhaka (DU), and her friend Sayma Hasan, discovering a run-over stray dog near Curzon Hall. They personally took care of the wounded dog until it had recovered completely. But unfortunately, this dog, which they had lovingly named



'Furless,' was erroneously killed a few weeks later by an anonymous teenager who pelted stones at him, that too, under the sick notion of fun.

This is when Sayma and Sabrina realised how helpless animals were in this city, and with a few like-minded students, they immediately decided to form a group called Animal Welfare Club of Curzon Hall, and strive to put an end to the nastiness and cruelty. Their first and foremost task was to raise awareness in the DU area about the importance of the lives of all animals, including stray dogs.

They distributed leaflets amongst passers-by, and most importantly, amongst the guards and tea-stall owners of the area. According to the group, these people were the most crucial in ensuring a peaceful life for the animals, because they are the most vigilant regarding all activities occurring in and around the campus. Once the awareness campaign gained traction, other necessary activities like vaccination etc. materialised.

"Throughout the entire process, we received help from quite a few organisations like Obhoyaronno — which did a mass rabies vaccination campaign in 2015. We also got support from welfare organisations like People for Animal Welfare (PAW), Preserve the Earth (PTE), Stand for Animals (SFA) etc. Also joining our causes are Dr Md Anwarul Islam, Department Head of Zoology, DU, on various aspects during our journey," Sabrina said.

Things were going smoothly, until of course the pandemic happened and everything fell apart. And just a week after lockdown, it seemed like there

were a massive increase in hungry strays everywhere, according to the members.

"However, we refrained from panicking and being overwhelmed by extra work, because help came from all sides; our group joined hands with another group called the Dog lovers of Mokarram, ALB Animal Shelter, and we tried our best to feed the strays before and during Ramadan. Few selfless individuals, who's named must be mentioned; Taohid Tanjim, Md Julhas Mia, Anika Samin, our team members, Dhaka University Central Students' Union (DUCSU) committee members Tanbir Hasan Shaikat, and Golam Rabbani worked tirelessly, day and night, even during the lockdown, to help feed the strays of our university area. But for any programme to last, it needs funding. And all the while, we were getting donations from students and locals only, which were not enough to meet demand created by the pandemic chaos," Sabrina added.

Regardless of funding however, the social welfare club's work has not stopped. They are hoping against hope to make it through the pandemic alongside all their animal friends.

Likewise, we believe that good always triumphs over evil. And every good initiative will be successful, no matter how demanding and stressful the journey may be.

By Mehrin Mubdi Chowdhury
Photo courtesy: Animal Welfare Club of Curzon Hall

Essentials:
To donate to Animal Welfare Club of Curzon Hall, you can send any amount via Bkash at 01683317353
Reference: Stray Feeding, DU

A night at the InterContinental

So, all the painting, gardening, cooking, baking and other verbs ending in 'ings' that we did to keep ourselves happy and occupied during this lockdown have run dry. We are just tired of inventing ideas and taking up new hobbies to keep a check on our sanity; at least it holds true for me.

I took long drives, went as far as Zinda Park to see the lotus and water lily in bloom, drove to Singair to buy fresh vegetables from a village market, crossed Bilertek bridge to visit Tanvir Ahmed's exotic nursery and collect a sapling of the ever elusive Agnishikha, my favourite lily. I did a lot of crazy things in order to be joyful and entertained during this lockdown.

Then, I took it a notch up and decided to stay the night at the InterContinental Dhaka to finally make use of that coupon gathering dust in my wallet.

My first brush with a five-star hotel is the brown bread from the Hotel



InterContinental of old, of the assorted bakery goodies my father would bring from the hotel while returning from his office conferences held at the venue. And the memory of the soft moist chicken sandwich made with it for my school tiffin the next day is still intact.

The InterContinental Hotel at that time was the set for many important histories

associated with our glorious War of Liberation, and has always held a special place in the mind of the people of Dhaka. I still remember passing it on the way to Sakura Market with my mother; I was and am still in awe with the architecture of the grand hotel and its luxurious interiors.

The hotel re-opened with gusto recently, and kept us enthralled with its brilliant services and activities. I, for one, loved their creative buffet dinner spreads of exquisite dishes and desserts, their artsy deli and tea bar called Café Social has the best pizza and fruit tart in town. The London Cheese cake from their bakery is a soft mascarpone delight that melts in your mouth, leaving you grasping for a second spoon. Their gorgeous azure swimming pool is the perfect setting for the restaurant's Aqua Deck. The tangy sips of whatever

masterfully crafted drink you ordered are complimented by the crunchy potato wedges dipped in mayonnaise and Dijon mustard; indeed, a luxurious way to spend the breezy mid-August evenings.

The deck's special beef burger is a must-have; the juicy minced patty in the soft bun is a marriage made in heaven, the caprese sandwich in focaccia bread generously smeared in melted mozzarella, with a hint of pesto is a definite winner, and if you complement it with their cream of mushroom soup, you are bound to reach a food coma.

InterContinental Dhaka's food has indeed been excellent, though, due to COVID-19, many of their facilities have been scaled down, yet their services remain top class. My suite had the most spacious bathroom overlooking the Ramna greenery.

Soaking myself in a bubble bath, listening to soft jazz and enjoying the sundown from the wide glass window was indeed a dreamy way to unwind. I made memories at the InterContinental Dhaka and would love to go back when the new normal becomes more regular for us.

I would be doing all sort of activities to keep myself engaged during these trying times, but never compromising with safety measures.

Remember, it is important to keep yourself happy.

This week, in Star Lifestyle, read our piece on disciplined leisure, monsoon evening snacks, and a great piece on Islamic history regarding the events of Karbala.

— RBR

Photo Courtesy: InterContinental Dhaka

HOROSCOPE



ARIES
(MAR. 21-APR. 20)

Plan a date with your partner. Avoid confrontations. Secret affairs can be damaging. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



TAURUS
(APR. 21-MAY 21)

Keep yourself busy. Give your projects time. Don't push your opinions on others. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



GEMINI
(MAY 22-JUN. 21)

Keep your opinions to yourself. Don't lose your cool. Make plans for travel. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



CANCER
(JUN. 22-JUL. 22)

Social events will be favourable. Your partner can be difficult. Difficulties with children can arise. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



LEO
(JUL. 23-AUG. 22)

Don't trust anyone at work. Opportunities for travel will arise. Children will be difficult to handle. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



VIRGO
(AUG. 23-SEP. 23)

Focus your time at work. Find new ways of entertaining yourself. Sudden disruptions will be upsetting. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



LIBRA
(SEP. 24-OCT. 23)

Don't spend unnecessarily. Keep your personal matters private. Keep your nose out of people's business. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



SCORPIO
(OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Find ways to save your money. Put time into learning something. Co-workers will support your endeavours. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



SAGITTARIUS
(NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

You will be rewarded for your work. Take part in events. Communication will be important you're your partner. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



CAPRICORN
(DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

Find something adventurous to do. Take care of your finances. Plan an outing with loved ones. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



AQUARIUS
(JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

Goals can be accomplished this week. Find new career opportunities. Be discreet when talking to others. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



PISCES
(FEB. 20-MAR. 20)

Discuss long term plans with your partner. Business ventures will be successful. Take on extra work. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



SPECIAL FEATURE

The eternal juggle of work and family during pandemic

“For a working mother to be able to successfully blend and balance work and family lives, the key ingredients are planning, planning, and planning. Even during normal times, this involved setting out a basic routine for myself and the kids for weekdays, and even weekends,” said Nadia Tabassum, regional manager at Unilever Bangladesh, and mother of three boys aged 11, 7, and 3. “I thrive on routine and for me, a single unplanned day can truly create havoc!”

So, one of the biggest hurdles that working mothers like Tabassum faced, especially in the early days of the pandemic, was the complete meltdown of all established routines.

Career women have always shouldered a heavy burden of responsibilities and social expectations, long before COVID-19 was a thing. A working woman was already juggling work, family, and life, but at the onset of the pandemic, their responsibilities suddenly increased. Overnight, a working mother became a teacher and a childcare provider, duties that she could otherwise relegate to schools, grandparents, and nannies during her office hours. In Bangladesh, many families let go of their part-time domestic helpers during this pandemic to contain the spread of the coronavirus. For many working mothers, therefore, this meant cooking for the family and doing the household chores, too.

“In Bangladesh, mothers are expected to shoulder the entire responsibility for child rearing. This invisible burden leaves the mothers drained,” said Vidita Gazi, a communications specialist at a development agency. Gazi believes that family and society should be more sensitive towards mothers that are teleworking, during this pandemic.

“Managing both work and family during this lockdown is taking a toll on the physical

and mental health of working mothers,” she added. “A neglected mother means a neglected child, so we must take care of our mothers first.”

With workplaces, schools, and day-care centres closed, Bangladeshi expatriates, especially working mothers, living around the world are also finding it difficult to balance career and family. The stories of their struggles sound similar to the struggles that are being experienced by working mothers living in Bangladesh.

“It gets quite difficult to focus on my work when there are two kids at home who want and need constant attention. My 13-year-old daughter keeps asking me to help her with her home-school assignments, and my four-year-old son wants me to play with him all the time,” said Dr Haseen Cherry, a British-Bangladeshi microbiologist, who lives in Ipswich, England. “The lockdown has meant additional household and childcare responsibilities for me.”

Then there are productivity pitfalls, too. “I have experienced loss of work productivity during this lockdown,” said Reema Akhter, a Bangladeshi Australian, who is a human resources specialist in Sydney.

Akhter has two children, aged nine and two. “On top of cooking and doing essential household chores during the day, I have to look after my two children, especially my toddler, who needs a lot of care and attention. All this makes it difficult for me to concentrate on my office work,” she said.

Akhter says she finishes her office work late at night, when both kids are asleep, so this pandemic has also meant working longer hours for many mothers. “There are days when I fall asleep with the laptop in my bed,” she said.

“At home, we now work in chaotic and unsuitable work spaces, which results in falling work productivity,” she added.

There are many working mothers out there who are finding it exceptionally challenging to keep a work-life balance during this lockdown, because not all workplaces are equally accommodating.

“My employer thinks that I do not need a lunch break anymore, just because I am working from home,” said Vidita Gazi. “I need a lunch break now more than ever, because I have a husband and two kids at home, who expect me to be at the dining table with them.”

Others like Samreen Abid, who is a mother of a 9-month-old infant and works at a private financial institution in Dhaka, goes to work five days a week, because her company does not have a work-from-home system in place. “I am always worried about my safety, the safety of my child, and other members of my family,” she said.

For single mothers, the situation is even more difficult, as often, they are the sole primary caregivers of the children.

Jafrin Sabrina is a single mother and a lecturer at a private university in Dhaka. “In addition to adjusting to a new kind of instruction method at work that is online teaching, I am also home-schooling my 9-year-old son, who now needs more attention with his school work. Then, I also have to make sure that my house is running smoothly,” Sabrina said.

“The COVID-19 pandemic is taking a toll on everyone, but for women like me, who have no intimate partners to share the struggles around this unprecedented situation, it has been particularly challenging,” she added.

However, most working mothers we interviewed are happy about certain results of the lockdown, and are actively looking for coping mechanisms as well.

“To stay mentally active, I have been doing a lot of online learning and reading. There are some fantastic courses available

on different platforms like Degreed and LinkedIn, which my employer has made available to its employees,” said Nadia Tabassum.

Tabassum also said that she has used this lockdown to work on her cooking and baking skills.

Like Tabassum, Jafrin Sabrina also spends her leisure reading. “Rising Strong by Brené Brown and The Power of Now by Eckhart Tolle have had profound motivational effects on me during this pandemic,” she said.

Our working mothers said that in spite of the tremendous amounts of stress that they are experiencing every day, they are enjoying their family time, something that they seldom enjoyed when they worked out of home and the kids went to school.

“My husband and I now sit down and discuss a wide array of subjects, something that we never did in the last 10 years,” said Vidita Gazi. “The lockdown has also made it possible for me to spend more time in the company of my husband and children.”

Reema Akhter also thinks that if there has been any positive effect of this pandemic, then it must be that it has allowed families to come closer. “My two-year-old son has never seen both of his parents at home 24/7. To him, it is a fun and wonderful thing that he can get to see his parents whenever he wants!”

Trying to juggle work and family in a pandemic situation is more than just stressful, but our career women are finding creative ways to cope with their stress; they are re-defining what a productive day should look like; and they are using the current situation to their advantage by connecting with their loved ones on a deeper level.

By Wara Karim
Photo: LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed



Stephen Duneier, an American professional investment manager, strategy consultant, speaker, lecturer, author, artist and Guinness World Record holder (pew!), once relayed a story about his school years at a Ted Talk.

“The power of DISCIPLINED LEISURE”

“I wasn’t doing well at school through the second year of college,” he described, “Instead of approaching studies as a big goal to work on, I decided to make only very slight adjustments. I decided to assume I wouldn’t get focused and settled down for more than 5-10 minutes, and instead, let myself work for just a bit, get up and play videogames or shoot hoops, and then come back again for just a bit.”

That was all it took to make the difference. Not only did he end up being on the Dean’s Honour list in college, Duneier is a polymath of many unique talents — parkour, speaking Deutsch, and flying a helicopter to name a few — even as a Guinness record holder for knitting. Instead of approaching the activity as a giant, complex mountain, he had broken it down into the smallest possible unit of task, and tick that off. And then enjoy the relaxation after it.

“What stands between us and our goals is not magical skills or talent, but how we approach the problem,” described Dunnier. This is the power of marginal adjustments. It can discipline leisure as well as get things done in a way that is rewarding and truly relaxing.

This leisure is synonymous to “relaxing,” or “downtime” or just being intentionally lazy. Aristotle, the great Greek philosopher, on the other hand took it another step further — the idea of “noble leisure.” Far from being mere passivity/relaxation, true leisure is an activity in which a person finds their greatest fulfilment.

Leisure, unlike mere amusement, involves pleasure, happiness, and living blessedly, he described. And this is not possible for those who are occupied, as occupations aim at some necessary end. So, there should be education with a view to leisure, that is, with a view to things done for their own sake, according to the philosopher. It consists of the activities that are most properly human. To be at leisure is to be free to pursue studies and activities aimed at the cultivation of virtue (such as music, poetry, and philosophy).

When was the last time you chalked in time to paint for fun, or dance alone in a locked room?

We train our children, our employees, and ourselves to be disciplined in our work, in setting and achieving goals, and in pursuing both financial and material surplus. Why not a discipline aimed at leisure? This discipline should not be a boring regimen or a scoreboard (unless you like that), but a slow, deliberate, marginal shift in habits. The main reason things like diets or New Years’ Resolutions don’t usually sustain is because the emphasis is on a timed scoreboard, rather than building habits that last.

If we apply the same discipline that we exhibit in other areas of our life — such as work and family — and use it as a tool to approach leisure, we can actually enjoy the hobbies we long lost. Painting, for example, is a widely used psychological tool to release stress and trauma. Incorporating a painting hobby into your week can help relax, but also be closer to activities that elevate humans, if we are still talking about Aristotle.



from Facebook and finish five pages of your new book.

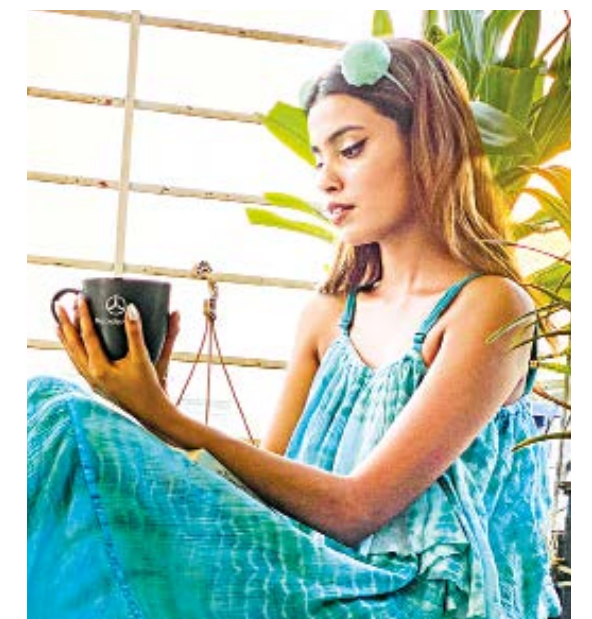
“I’m still that C-student. All I do is take big ambitious projects people seem to marvel, break them down into its simplest achievable form and then just make marginal adjustments along the way to increase the odds of achieving them,” concluded Dunnier.

**By Dibarah Mahboob
Model: Efa**

To create habits, one first needs discipline. And to change the way we look at discipline — via marginal adjustment to our day or task-span. And by creating these habits, the practice becomes self-fulfilling. Over time, when positive results yield, it further reinforces a renewed discipline to the habit. This includes being able to plug off from Netflix or Instagram while you are practicing said marginal adjustment.

“I learned German by deleting music from my iPod and putting in the Pimsleur programme,” recounted Dunnier. “I removed the temptation by removing all temptation — the music. So, when I’d be coming home from work, I had no option but to learn German!”

By removing yourself from tiny distractions, things get easier for those small tasks that’re now ridiculously easy for you (if not, simplify more!). Overtime, you will realise it’s not much, but you are turning into a “disciplined individual” who has the power to step away





ROASTED CORN

Who does not enjoy biting into a crunchy cob of corn, roasted on an open fire and drizzled with butter and spices! A squeeze of lemon is must to boost the flavour of this yummy snack, as it helps to highlight the salty and spicy notes well, along with the subtle sweetness of the corn itself.

Ingredients

- 2 sweet corn cobs
- 1 tsp chilli powder
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 tbsp melted butter
- 1 lemon, cut into halves and deseeded

Method

Combine the chilli powder and salt in a small bowl and mix well. Roast the corn cob over an open flame, till black spots appear on all the sides. Once roasted, brush ½ tablespoon of melted butter evenly over it. Take half of the lemon, dip in the chilli-salt mixture and rub it all over the roasted corn cob, while squeezing the lemon lightly. Serve immediately.

EGG PAKORA

Ingredients

- 4 boiled eggs, cut into half
- ½ cup chickpea flour
- 1 tsp corn flour
- 1 tsp red chilli powder
- Pinch of turmeric powder
- ½ tsp ginger-garlic paste
- ¼ tsp cooking soda
- Salt to taste

Oil for deep fry

Method

In a bowl, add chickpea flour, corn flour, chilli powder, turmeric powder, ginger-garlic paste, cooking soda and salt. Mix all of them together. Make a thick batter by adding a little water. Heat oil in a pan. Now dip each egg piece in the batter and deep fry until golden brown on a medium flame. Serve hot with chutney or sauce.

CHICKEN CHEESE BALL

Ingredients

- 1 cup chicken mince
- 10 pieces mozzarella cheese, cut into cubes

- 3 tbsp chopped onion
- 2 tbsp all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp ginger paste
- ½ tsp garlic paste
- ½ tsp black pepper powder
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tbsp chilli sauce
- 2 eggs
- Bread crumbs, as required
- Salt, to taste
- Oil, for deep fry

Method

In a bowl, mix chicken mince with onion, flour, ginger-garlic paste, sauce, black pepper powder, salt and egg yolk. Divide the mixture into equal sized round balls and press them lightly. Cut the mozzarella cheese into cubes. Take one ball and add one cube of cheese in the centre of the chicken and close all the corners and make a ball shape. Coat the balls with egg white and then coat with bread crumbs. Heat oil in a pan. Fry the ball until golden brown. Serve hot with tea or coffee.

PRAWN CUTLET

Ingredients

- 1 cup prawn
- 2 slices bread
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 green chillies, chopped
- ½ tsp garlic paste
- ½ tsp ginger paste
- ½ tsp coriander powder
- ½ tsp turmeric powder
- Salt, to taste



Tea time nibbles

Nothing quite sums up monsoon better than a plate of steaming pakoras as snacks, along with a hot cup of tea. When it's raining outside, your heart definitely wants just two things, romance and delicious, mouth-watering food. In order to calm your craving of food, I want to list a few food items that are synonymous with the monsoon season. So, enjoy this monsoon with these delicious delicacies.



- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp flour
- 1 beaten egg
- ½ cup bread crumbs
- Few sprigs of fresh coriander leaves
- Oil, for frying

Method

Shell, de-vein and wash the prawns thoroughly. Soak the bread in cold water for five minutes, squeeze out the water, and blend in food processor with the prawns until smooth. Take out from blender, and add onion, ginger-garlic paste, coriander powder, turmeric powder, lemon juice, coriander leaves and salt. Mix well and divide the mixture into 10 equal portions and shape into cutlets.

Dust them on flour, then dip in beaten egg and roll in bread crumbs.



Ensure that the cutlets are coated properly. Heat oil and deep fry till golden brown. Serve hot.

FISH ROE PAKORA

The very mention of pakora evokes the image of a hot cup of tea and a platter of tempura in a rainy afternoon. We are all familiar with pakoras made from different vegetables or lentil (daals). Pakoras can be made with fish-roe as well and yes, they are very tasty and can be served during tea-time.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup fish-roe (of any white fish)
- ¼ cup bread crump
- ½ tsp ginger paste
- ¼ tsp garlic paste
- ¼ tsp cumin paste
- ¼ tsp turmeric powder
- ½ tsp red chilli powder
- 1 tsp chopped green chillies
- 1 tsp chopped coriander leaves
- 1 tsp chopped mint
- ½ cup chopped onions
- Salt, to taste
- Cooking oil (for deep frying)

Method:

Rinse the fish-roe carefully and let the water drain away. Marinate the fish-roe by mixing all ingredients with it, except the oil. Wait until the breadcrumb absorbs the excess water from the fish-roe. Heat oil in a pan for deep frying. Take 1 spoonful amount of the mixture at a time and fry them until golden brown.

Tip: If you want crispiness to last for a long time, then add 2 teaspoonful of corn flour with the mixture.

PEYAJ PAKORA

Ingredients

- 8 pieces onion, sliced
- 1 cup chickpea flour
- ¼ cup rice flour
- ½ tsp ginger paste
- ½ tsp garlic paste
- 1tsp red chilli powder
- 12 tsp turmeric powder
- 4 green chilli paste
- ½ cup chopped coriander leaves
- ¼ tsp baking soda
- Salt, to taste
- Oil, for deep frying

Method

Take chickpea flour in a bowl, add rice flour, salt, ginger garlic paste, red chilli powder, turmeric powder, baking soda and green chilli to it. Mix the ingredients together and add coriander leaves. Make a thick batter by adding water. Heat oil in a pan. Now dip onion slices into the batter and fry them in the pan. Deep fry until crisp and golden brown. Serve hot with sauce.

MASALA TEA (SPICED TEA)

Masala tea as a hot beverage originated from India. The quantity of all the ingredients varies from person to person. Every household has their own style of making tea. Masala tea can soothe you when you are unwell, rejuvenate you when you are tired, and revive your spirits.

Ingredients

- 2 cups milk
- 2 cups water
- 2 tbsp tea powder
- 2 lemongrass stalks, each cut into pieces
- ½ tsp crushed ginger
- 2 cardamom pods, crushed
- 1 stick cinnamon
- Sugar, to taste

Method

Combine 2 cups of water, tea powder, sugar, lemongrass, ginger, cardamom and cinnamon in a pan. Boil on medium heat for 2 minutes. Add the milk, mix well and bring to a boil on medium heat. When the mixture boils till the brim, reduce the heat to prevent it from spilling out, and continue to boil for 4-5 minutes. Strain immediately using a strainer and discard the tea powder mixture. Serve the tea immediately.

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed
Food and Styling: RBR



Kaleidoscope of flowers

The year 2020 is very troubling for everyone as the whole world is suffering from a pandemic. Every country is trying its best to cope and fight. People are succumbing to COVID-19 and our hearts go to the family.

During this pandemic, we are all trying our best to stay indoors to keep ourselves healthy. Some have become creative and found themselves embracing their dreams, which remained unfulfilled all these years. It may represent one's life-long passion for something or perhaps a reflection of creativity. Creativeness always brings joy and satisfaction. We are all creative in our own way.

I was going through my folders of pictures, which were shot while taking



vacations, family visits, and museum and garden tours. For the past several months, I did not have the audacity to make those trips due to lockdown. I try my best to keep myself busy after working remotely for five days. I started writing my journal, and one such recollection is penned here.

My trip to the museum during the "Fine Arts & Flowers" show has some great collection of pictures of floral interpretation of artworks by the different garden clubs of the city. I selected some photographs to share as well.

In October 2018, it returned with the spectacular flowers, artworks, speakers, luncheons, workshops, fashion shows and other special programs that visitors enjoyed since "The Council of VMFA" began

sponsoring this event in 1987. Different Garden Clubs of the city use fresh flower arrangements to interpret works of art in the VMFA collection. About 87 artworks, including paintings, sculptures, antique furniture, Faberge collection, and many others, were featured spreading all over the galleries of VMFA.

The exhibition kicked off with a Kaleidoscope of Flowers, a festive gala with dazzling lighting and colourful motifs transforming the Atrium into a three-dimensional kaleidoscope of beauty.

Flower arrangement is an art. It not only includes floral blooms, but the container that holds them and the base on which the container may rest. But when the floral designers use fresh

flowers to interpret the works of arts of the museum collection, the floral interpretation of each art work becomes a rare beauty to watch.

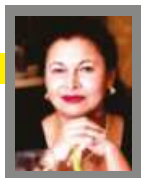
Since we are all on lockdown, we can use our time in a positive way and be optimistic during the time of pandemic. We can also choose a painting or any artwork from the website and practice interpreting the artwork with flowers or any objects which we have available at home. This will help us be creative as well.

I randomly chose some of the following floral interpretations of the art works by the garden clubs to share with readers.

By Aeman T Rasul
Photo: Aeman T Rasul

THOUGHT CRAFT

BY NASRIN SOBHAN
Freelance Writer



Finding solace in books during times of strife

There is nothing book lovers like better than to curl up in a comfortable corner somewhere and immerse themselves in the pages of whatever book takes their fancy, and drift away into a different world.

In these sombre times when people are suffering, and almost every day brings news of someone passing away or falling ill, we need to help anyway we can to those we know, stay safe ourselves and above all, keep our spirits up, especially those of us who are vulnerable and house-bound. It is sometimes hard to find ways to pass the time, but all it requires is a bit of imagination. I for one wake up in the morning and count my blessings every moment of every day.

One of the comforts of these lush summer days when there is greenery everywhere, and we can sit somewhere near a window hearing the leaves rustle in the wind, a sound so soft as to be almost hypnotic, it is easy to let fall the book from our hands and just gaze out at the view, grateful for the beauty of the season, the flowers in full bloom and the lush fruit that we can almost see ripening on the trees.

The best days for reading are the rainy

days. One of my old cooks, named Abdul, would come in and say, "Today it looks like rain, should we have khichuri?" He always made us our preferred one, soft and mushy, garnished with green chillies and butter, accompanied by a good Kachumber salad.

But to return to the books and our cosy corner, in my childhood, I loved Emily Bronte and her 'Wuthering Heights,' and Sydney Carton in 'A Tale of Two Cities.' For complex stories, when I was a little older, I discovered Dorothy Dunnett and her 'Lymond' series, and for English light humour, Jilly Cooper. Still later, I began to love Stephen Leacock for his amazing humour. I could go on forever.

Recently, I have taken up again my oldest love, history and historical fiction. I have managed to read some books on Bengal, a trilogy by Hilary Mantel on the life of Thomas Cromwell, followed by Robert Graves writing on T E Lawrence and the Arabs.

When I read history, I am transported through time, and it becomes so intense and personal an experience that it is as if I was there myself. I grieved for Cromwell, the most competent minister King Henry

ever had, who devoted his life to his King, and got beheaded for his pains. I was devastated by the death of Prince Mustapha, executed by his father Suleiman the Magnificent.

I grieved for Sharif Husain, his sons, and Lawrence, who put their faith in the integrity and good faith of the British and the French. The arbitrary creating of unrealistic borders in the Middle East has been a source of hatred, resentment and contention ever since. For laypersons like me, it is so clear that cynical actions by the powerful, regardless of the time frame, can have consequences far beyond their lifetimes. We can see the results of those actions even today.

Worst of all in today's world is the hatred and racial prejudice that permeates so much in society. There is universal education in many countries in the world, but still, the ignorance continues. The world looks on in shock as the killing and incitement to violence and the demonising of 'the other' for political ends is exploited to the utmost whenever possible.

More objectively, and without getting quite so involved, I like reading the columns of David Brooks and George F

Will. Their politics aside, I admire their erudition and clear thinking. Most of all, I respect and admire Noam Chomsky. We all need to be reminded of the importance of moral integrity and the consequences of a compromise with, or a loss of, that moral compass which define us as sapient beings.

Chomsky reminds us of the pitfalls of complacency, political cynicism and lack of foresight when governing and planning for the world we hope to leave for our grandchildren. And the saddest part is that it is just for forty pieces of silver, to quote an old familiar phrase.

I feel nothing but sadness at the loss of so many of the hopes and dreams of our generation for a better world. All that comes to mind at this time, COVID aside, is Brave New World by Aldous Huxley, the film Fahrenheit 451, and 1984 and Animal Farm by George Orwell who predicted these times many years ago. And finally, I shall never forget the writings of the late great Edward Said, the voice for the people of Palestine.

Martin Luther King said "I Have a Dream." Will it ever be possible to achieve that dream?



READER'S CHIT

The teachings of the events of Karbala

Imam Hussain (RA) stands tall among even the giants peppering Islam's history, revered for his tenacity, indomitable spirit, and the ultimate sacrifice he and his people made. His spirit often provides inspiration to whenever people stand against tyranny, or even just to do the right thing.

Hussain was the beloved grandson of the Prophet Muhammad (S); he was the son of the Prophet's daughter Fatimah (RA) and Ali (RA), the fourth caliph of Islam.

The Prophet Muhammad (S) is reported to have said, "Hussain is from me and I am from Hussain" which scholars have

explained as meaning, "Hussain has acquired his existence through me and is the means of the survival of my religion."

He is an important figure in Islam as he was a member of the Household of Muhammad (Ahl al-Bayt) and the People of the Cloak (Ahl al-Kisā'), and extraordinary in the unique station granted to him by Allah.

His biggest contribution is understood to be the rejuvenation or revival of true nature of Islam, which the current rulers of the time, especially Yazid, was actively corrupting. His role, in essence, in the words of the preacher Hazrat Moinuddin Chishti,

also known as Khwājā Ghareeb Nawaz, is thus—

"*Sar dad, na dad dast, dar dast-e-yazeed, Haqaa key binaey La ila ast Hussain*". Literally, it means "Hussain gave his head but not his hand (allegiance) to Yazid, Maintainer of the truth is not anyone but Hussain."

His legacy is the inspiration to stand up against wrongdoers and injustice, and has spurred on many a movement, and many men, like those that participated in the independence movement of India against the British (1947). This can be surmised from the fact that Gandhi reportedly said, "I

learned from Hussain how to be wronged and be a winner, I learnt from Hussain how to attain victory while being oppressed," and further, "If I had an army like the 72 soldiers of Hussain, I would have won freedom for India in 24 hours."

People like Nelson Mandela also followed Imam Hussain's teachings. Once Nelson Mandela said, "I have spent more than 20 years in prison, then one night I thought of surrendering by signing all the terms and conditions of the government.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



"If Hussain had fought to quench his worldly desires... then I do not understand why his sister, wife, and children accompanied him. It stands to reason therefore, that he sacrificed purely for Islam,"
– Charles Dickens

"Of that gallant band, male and female knew that the enemy forces around were implacable, and were not only ready to fight, but to kill. Denied even water for the children, they remained parched under the burning sun and scorching sands, yet not one faltered for a moment. Husain marched with his little company, not to glory, not to the power of wealth, but to a supreme sacrifice, and every member bravely faced the greatest odds without flinching,"
– Dr K Sheldrake

"Though Imam Hussain gave his life years ago, but his indestructible soul rules the hearts of people even today,"
– Dr Radha Krishnan

"No battle in the modern and past history of mankind has earned more sympathy and admiration as well as provided more lessons than the martyrdom of Hussain in the Battle of Karbala,"
– Antoine Bara (Lebanese writer)

Imam Hussain had stepped out of the tent to appeal to whatever shred of humanity was left in the cold and cruel hearts of Yazid's soldiers for a little water for the parched throat of the baby.

The story of Karbala is universal, the struggle true to all oppressed. Poet says, "Let humanity awaken and every nation will claim Hussain as their own. In the martyrdom of Imam Hussain lies the death of Yazid, for Islam resurrects after every Karbala."

The so called 'victors' left the battlefield on their horses, monstrous in their arrogance, trampling and mutilating

the martyred, under the hooves of the horses, leaving them unrecognisable. The evil forces buried their dead and disrespectfully left the Imam and his martyred companions decapitated on the burning sands of Karbala. They looted and burned the tents of Imam Hussain, and looted the women and children still alive.

The survivors were chained and made to walk barefoot on the burning desert sands, all the way from Karbala to Kufa, and from Kufa to Damascus, Syria. Throughout the journey the women and children were heinously tortured.

Karbala symbolises struggle against injustice: non-violent resistance, with grace and supreme determination, at the ultimate price— not taking a life, but sacrificing your own, for Islam.

In the modern era, Imam Hussain is remembered for just that. A great mausoleum was made for the martyred in Iraq, near Baghdad and Karbala. Millions go to Imam Hussain and his companion's shrine on the day of Ashura (10th of Muharram) and Arba'een (Chehlum, "the fortieth day", is a religious observance that occurs forty days after the Day of Ashura).

The Karbala martyrs proved that no matter how small the number, truth and justice shall ultimately prevail, even against the most formidable evil.

The spirit of Karbala and Imam Hussain live on to inspire and guide, and the palaces and forts of Yazid with all the wealth have perished and disappeared from the face of the earth. Such is the power of the blood of the martyrs of Karbala — Imam Hussain and his kinsmen, that it remains for all eternity, a defining moment in the history of Islam, the love for Hussain and his men etched in the hearts of all Muslims.

By Ali Kumayl Khan
Photo: LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed

FROM PAGE 11

But suddenly I thought of Imam Hussain and the Karbala movement. Imam Hussain gave me strength to stand for the right of freedom and liberation and I did."

The tragedy of Karbala is an unparalleled event in the history of mankind. The great sacrifice made by Imam Hussain, the grandson of the Holy Prophet (S), on Ashura (The 10th of Muharram 61 AH) and the steadfastness shown by him is a beacon for all oppressed, everywhere.

At Karbala, the small travelling party of Imam Hussain was besieged by more than 20,000 armed men of the tyrant Yazid ibn Muawiyah, a usurper of the caliphate. Imam Hussain denied him his allegiance, and as a result, Yazid's men carried out unspeakable torture on Hussain, his family, and entourage, until an almost complete annihilation of the group.

Yet, this impossible stand by a small group of steadfast people, and the torture carried out on them, is what ultimately struck the mightiest blow to the foundation of the oppressive Umayyad Dynasty, as it ignited a series of revolts. Although, Imam Hussain and his companions were martyred and their family members, especially the women of the household and Imam Hussain's only surviving son, Imam Zainul-Abiddin were taken as prisoners, history clearly shows the true victor— righteousness.

On Ashura, the world mourns Imam Hussain and his kith and kin. Imam Hussain, the symbol of truth, piety and justice had been representing Islam in its entirety stood on one side of the river Euphrates with his small group of only 72 comprising of his brothers, sons, nephews and companions, old and young. There was even one, Habib Ibne Mazahir, a friend of Hussain, being eighty years old but steadfast in his mission.

Opposite them, blocking access to water for days, stood Yazid's commander Umar ibne Saad, with thousands of well-armed soldiers.

Before the prayers of Asr on that fateful day in October, 680 AD, the Battle of Karbala was over. The 72 male companions of Imam Hussain were martyred along



with Imam Hussain's six-month-old son, Ali Asghar. He was killed by a three headed arrow that was used to hunt wild animals in the desert, shot by the enemy's ace archer Hurmullah Ibn Kahil Al Asadi Alkoofi.