

LIVING

Finery for the Festive Occasion

THEY say that men make the best chefs and dress designers. That may be an opinion but the four young designers Zahir Hussain Newton, Kauser Mahmood, Tinku and Salim of "Karuj", who recently held an exhibition of their works at the Alliance Francaise, that was inaugurated by the well-known model and fashion designer Bibi, were promising, going by their output.

There was a flaming red kurta on sale with a white yoke and sleeves, which was for Tk 1,600. A white water print with silver embroidery on the yoke and sleeves, with tassels on the dupatta was for Tk 1,800.

A maroon velvet kameez and dupatta in maroon with fine gold embroidered work on the neck of the kameez, and the dupatta cost Tk 3,000. A fascinating black print set with chess game motifs on the dupatta and kameez in black and cream aroused considerable interest. This three piece set was for Tk 1,400.

There was a kameez with a traditional embroidered front, using hand weave in black, blue and red stripes, with a cluster of cowries at the neck. This was on a white background. The sleeves were worked upon too. There was a set with Sindhi design, with gathers at the yoke. Large floral motifs in silver decorated the yoke and sleeves, and it cost Tk 1,500.

Paisley patterns in gold and green decorated an orange chiffon set, which had an ethereal look. The dupatta had gold and green tassels. Tiger print in black and white cotton with lace on the sleeves and yoke with rose motifs was another attractive display.

Something rather unusual was a red kurta and shalwar with pleats on the skirt and long choridar sleeves. The yoke was covered with thick white floral lace and this set cost Tk 1,500. A set of three had a screen black pattern with black entwining squares and this was available for Tk 900.

A chicken kurta with floral crochet embroidered on the yoke, with white on white was for Tk 1,500. Another set had gold and black on the hem, yoke and dupatta, with inter-

lacing floral pattern and this cost Tk 1,300. An ensemble with tiger print in black and white with gold brush paint and lace, with a delicate chemise and black culottes to match was for Tk 1,500.

A four piece crepe and marble saffron coloured chiffon, with seed pearls and gold embroidery was available for Tk 1,800. There was a delightful four piece in tie-and-dye chiffon with gold thread work in paisley pattern on front and gold tassels on the dupatta to match.

The sale catered for male wear as well. There was chess-board patterns on a kurta with with check pattern done with threads. This was for Tk 500. There was one with a jhorna print with multicoloured neck and front in traditional Manipuri weave. This was for Tk 550. Abstract silver calligraphy done with paints decorated a blue kurta shot with mauve. This had wooden buttons and was priced at Tk 575.

There was a pale saffron chicken with squares, with tie-and-dye motifs on the front and collar. It was priced at Tk 410. A maroon white and beige khaddar kurta had brush paint on the front and shoulders and looked quite chic. Translucent shells were used for buttons. Another attractive piece was a striped blue and gold khaddar kurta with mauve and black block print in front, costing Tk 375.

There were T-shirts to delight the younger generation. There were many with a kotli weave of triangles, squares and rectangles in various colours, seen in a single piece.

Tinku, one of the designers commented, "We try not to follow the foreign fashion. We aim at making the kameez cuts different. We take special care over the embroidery and get Art College students to design it for us. We try to vary the materials and experiment with screenprint. It is difficult to get good materials in Dhaka and local buyers sometimes fail to understand or appreciate the latest designs. In order to present good quality the price has to go up."

There were 90 shalwar kameez sets and 250 men's wear at the sale which found buyers without much difficulty.



Examining a "kameez" at the sale

Beating the Challenge of Anxiety

ANXIETY is part of our life. Those who have got varied experience in life go to the length of asserting that you can't advance in life without getting that jittery feeling called anxiety. This, however, does not refer to the severe state of anxiety which requires medical attention. The anxiety that acts as a sort of challenge in life is that kind of anxiety we call stage fright, butterflies in the stomach, a case of nerves — the feelings we have at a job interview, when we are going on a long journey abroad or when we have to make an important presentation at a big function.

The great Danish philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard believed that anxiety arises always when we confront the possibility of our own development. Even as children we discover this when we try to expand ourselves by, say, learning to ride a bicycle or trying out for the school play. Later in life, we get nervous when we think about joining our first job or uprooting the family from the old home-town to find a better opportunity at a far away place. Any time, it seems, that when we set out aggressively to get something we want, we meet up with anxiety. And it is going to be our travelling companion, at least part of the way, with any new venture.

However, one may experience a redeeming aspect — from a process psychologists call "extinction". If you are put in an anxiety-provoking situation often enough, you will eventually learn that there is not anything to be worried about. The important thing is that you will never eliminate anxiety by avoiding the things that caused it.

The problem, of course, is that it is one thing to urge somebody else to take on the anxiety-producing challenges; it is quite another to get ourselves to do it.

In our life, we are sometimes faced with assignments to which we feel ourselves unequal. On such occasions we feel tempted to withdraw from them. But those who have been able to meet successfully the challenge of anxiety insist that you can't learn if you don't try. The point is that the new, the different is almost by definition scary. But each time you try something, you learn, and as the learning piles up, the world opens to you and do not let the butterflies stop you from doing what you want. It is wise to accept anxiety as another name for challenge and thus you can accomplish wonders.

In his book "The Conquest of Fear" by Basil King, it is stated that be bold and mighty forces will come to your aid. Anxiety or fear is the most paralyzing of all emotions. It can stiffen the muscles and stupefy the mind and the will. On the other hand, whenever one becomes anxiety-free and plunges into deep water, impelled by a flash of courage or just pushed by the rude hand of circumstance, one always finds himself able to swim and get his feet on the ground again.

Conquering anxiety inevitably requires boldness. It is not an exhortation to be reckless or foolhardy. It means a deliberate decision from time to time to bite off more than you are sure you can chew. There are latent powers in all of us more or less: skill, sound judgement, creative ideas in greater measure than most of us realize. If we succeed in conquering anxiety and be bold, it creates a state of emergency to which the organism responds.

The trait — a willingness to extend yourself in any new situation creating anxiety — is not one that can be acquired overnight. But it can be developed gradually. The bottom line is that always try to live a little bit beyond your capacities and you will find your capacities are greater than you ever dreamed of.



Waiting anxiously for a letter from her beloved —Photo: M. Harisuddin

Sending Flowers

A gift of flowers can say a thousand things from thanks for a party to welcome home after a period spent away, or an apology for inconvenience caused. A personal note in an envelope should always accompany flowers, either on a plain card or written on your visiting card.

Flowers in Hospital

So often, people, full of good intentions, send flowers right at the beginning of an illness. The patient is inundated with flowers for a few days and is probably feeling too ill at that stage to appreciate them fully. Try to time your gift according to the condition of your friend. If it is a long illness, send fewer flowers but send them more than once. The time when flowers are most appreciated is during convalescence, when people feel cut off from life in the outside world.

Cut flowers with a strong scent, such as narcissi, some roses or stocks, are not really suitable for someone in hospital. They can easily make the patient feel sick because their scent hangs so heavy on the air.

Flowers for a Hostess

Many hostesses, though delighted by the courtesy of a bunch of flowers, find it difficult to cope with the dinner, introduce guests and arrange flowers all at the same time. If the dinner party is a formal one, it is more thoughtful to send flowers beforehand, so that your hostess can arrange them in time for the party and thank you graciously when you arrive. If the flowers arrive with the guest they are usually relegated to the kitchen sink because a vase cannot be found immediately, or otherwise the hostess feels bound to ruin the flower arrangement she already has by placing the fresh bunch in a prominent position.

Guests can also send flowers the day after a party with a note of thanks. But if you know that the invitation is just to an informal luncheon or supper, then by all means bring a bunch of flowers with you. You can go and talk with your hostess while she arranges them.

Flowers for a Funeral

Usually, the funeral notice in the papers will tell you where flowers should be sent. As a rule it is to the undertaker and they should be sent the day before or on the morning of the funeral. On other occasions flowers may be requested at the church or the house from which the coffin will leave for the cemetery.

On the envelope should be written, "For the funeral of the late..." Inside is your card with a note of love, affection or respect, according to how well you knew the person who has died. "With all our love from..." or "With most affectionate memories," or if you did not know him at all well, just "from..." Memories rather than sympathy should be stressed. The sympathy should go to relatives. The flowers are your last tribute to the dead. If you send the flowers through a florist, the person responsible for delivering them at the other end will remove your card from the envelope and pin it to the flowers.

Today, many people prefer a beautifully arranged bunch, as fresh and natural as possible, rather than a classic wreath. This, however, is a matter of personal feeling.

Flowers and Weekend Guests

Flowers are not the best gift for a weekend guest to take with her. If you take them with you they are bound to arrive a little the worse for the journey. People who live in the country are usually less in need of flowers than those who live in towns. But, if you especially want to send flowers, either send them before you arrive or arrange for them to be delivered afterwards with your thank-you letter.

Sending Flowers in General

When at a loss, send flowers. This is the best advice when you want to make a charming gesture and do not know what to do. No one can object or feel bribed or embarrassed. It is as correct to send them to the boss's wife on the birth of her baby as it is to send a bunch, with an apology, to the Doctor's wife whom you unintentionally cut dead in the High Street.

Saying "Thank You" for flowers sent

There is no need to thank for flowers sent to you as a "thank you". This merely becomes a vicious circle. But flowers sent for any other reason should always be acknowledged.

Analysing your Skin Type

YOU may be baffled by the number of skin types that are categorized by the cosmetics industry — normal, dry, sensitive, oily and combination. Which one are you? Skin type has a lot to do with the following factors, some of which are beyond your control:

Heredity

Along with the colour of your eyes and your hair, you will have inherited your skin type and condition from your parents. So, if your mother was blessed with beautiful skin, the chances are you will be too!

Climate

People who live in hot, dry climates need oily skin with extra sebum (the skin's natural oil) to lubricate and protect it, which is why Afro-Caribbean skin is oilier than European skin. Cool, moist climates result in fine, translucent skin, which is typified by the 'English rose' complexion. However, this has a tendency to become dry.

Age

Your skin will generally be oilier in your youth and will get drier as you age, as sebum output and the skin's natural moisture content decrease.

Other Factors

Environmental factors, such as central heating, air conditioning and pollutants, bodily changes, such as periods, pregnancy, hormonal changes, the menopause and the contraceptive pill, as well as stress, emotional factors and diet can all have an effect on your skin type.

Your skin type may change from oily to sensitive, or from normal to combination. You should keep an eye on your skin type, especially if you begin to develop adverse reactions or become sensitive to a particular product or ingredient.

Now let us see how you can further analyse your skin type.

Normal Skin

Normal skin is 'perfect skin'. It is soft, smooth and finely textured, does not flake, become dry or oily or develop spots. Babies and children usually have normal skin, but it needs attention, care, a good diet and the right beauty treatments to keep it that way.

Dry Skin

Dry skin is close textured and fine, but it can feel tight, flake and is predisposed to developing facial lines. It should not be subjected to extreme weather conditions of hot and cold or to wind. Moisturizers to replace the lack of the natural skin lubricant, sebum, are essential for this skin type.

Sensitive Skin

Sensitive skin is fine and translucent, but it can develop lines and small surface veins. It can suffer redness and irritation when exposed to allergens in the air and to products such as perfume, lanolin, pollen or other pollutants. Keep it away from extreme weather and complex cosmetic products.

Oily Skin

Oily skin has a characteristic shiny look and is prone to develop spots. The increased sebum production is generated by the male hormone, testosterone, which is present also in small quantities in women. The skin is thicker and can have enlarged pores, with a tendency towards blackheads and blemishes. Avoid the temptation to use harsh cleansers, which can overstrip the natural oils and hence overstimulate oil production. Gentle cleansing is best to maintain the skin's balance.

Combination Skin

Combination skin is most common between the ages of twenty and forty. The chin, nose and forehead, the T-zone of the face, contain more sebaceous glands and so are oilier than the rest of the face. The skin around the eyes, cheeks and neck will be dry. Areas other than the T-zone.

Remember that skin type is not static and your skin will generally become drier with time. If you suffered from spot-prone skin as a teenager, do not dismiss yourself as having oily skin, even though you may be well into your twenties or thirties. Most of all, be honest if you are to treat your skin correctly because products are specifically designed for the skin type stated. Examine your skin in good light, without any make-up, and preferably in a magnifying mirror. Circle the points that best match your skin. For example, if the most circles are in the combination skin column, your overall skin type is combination and you should use products made for combination skins.



Whitney Houston on "MTV"



"Obsessed with a Married Woman" on "Star Plus"

Cookery

Coconut Custard Pudding

1 1/2 teaspoonfuls finely grated coconut
2 teaspoonfuls milk
2 tablespoonfuls sugar
3 eggs
vanilla flavouring
a pinch of salt

Soak the coconut in the milk for half an hour, then mix in the sugar, flavouring, salt and the eggs well beaten. Pour into a greased pie-dish and bake in a moderate oven until firm to the touch and lightly browned. The pudding should be stirred up once or twice towards the beginning of the baking to prevent the coconut settling at the bottom of the dish.

N. B. If liked, the pie-dish may be lined with pastry before putting in the pudding mixture.

Coffee Meringue Pudding

1 rounded dessertspoonful cornflour
2 gills milk
1 gill strong black coffee
2 eggs
1 1/2 oz. sugar
1 oz. butter
a little rum for flavouring
1 small apricot jam sponge sandwich
2 level tablespoonfuls castor sugar

Mix the cornflour with a little of the cold milk and heat the rest. Beat the yolks of eggs with the sugar, and stir in the hot milk. Return to the saucepan, stir in the cornflour and coffee, and cook over gentle heat, stirring all the time, until smooth and thickened. Stir in the rum and butter.

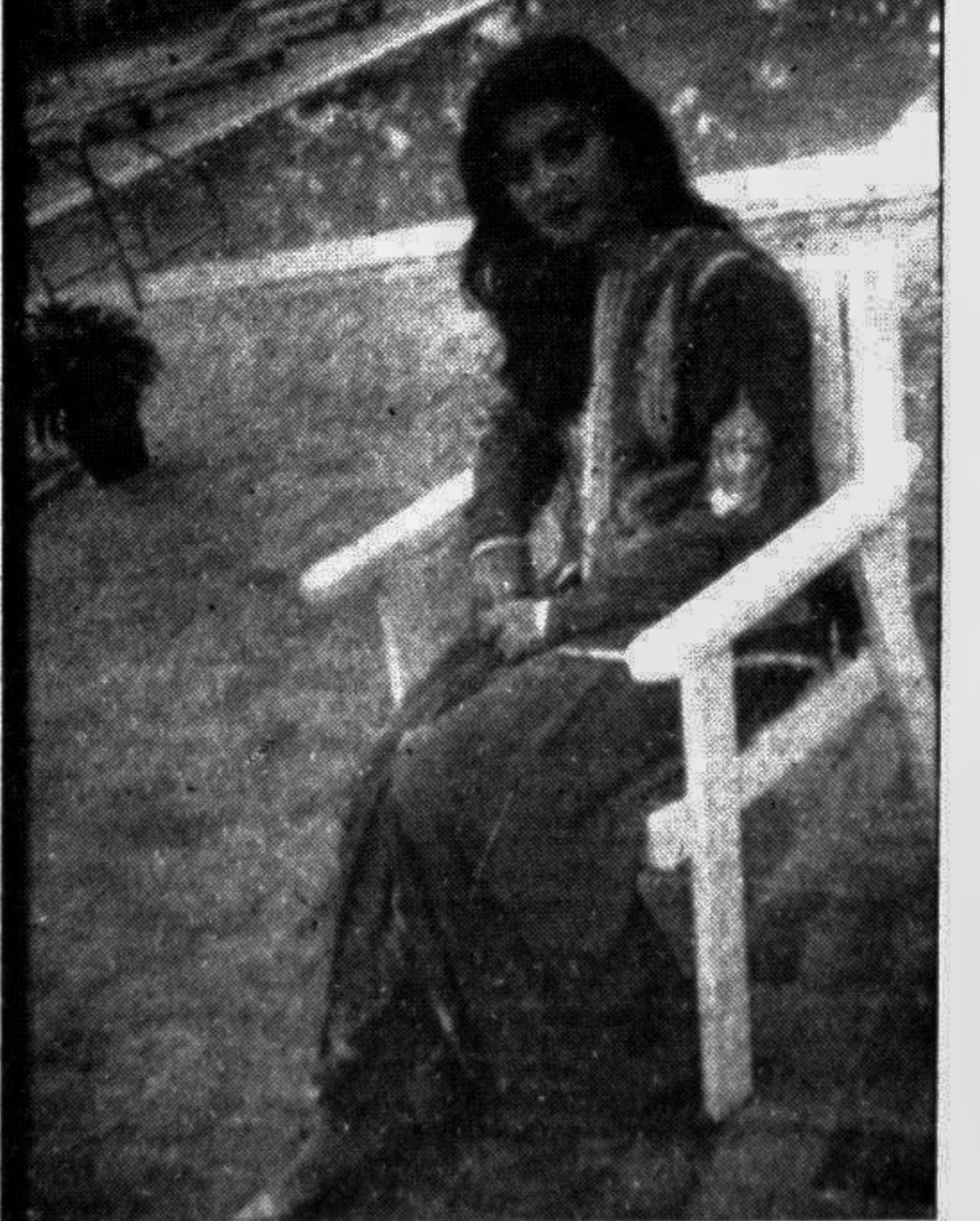
Pour a little in the bottom of a glass baking dish, put the cake in the centre, and pour the rest of the custard over. Allow to cool.

Whisk the whites of the eggs to a very stiff froth, stir in the castor sugar, and whisk again until thick and glossy. Spread over the top with the blade of a knife, and pipe the rest of the mixture round the edge. Bake in a moderate oven until the meringue is very lightly browned and set. Serve hot or cold.

Fig Pudding

stewed figs
2 oz. butter
2 oz. flour
2 oz. soft sugar
3 eggs
a pinch of salt
1 teaspoon baking powder

Beat the butter and sugar to a cream, add the eggs, and lastly the flour with baking powder mixed in it. Butter a shallow pie-dish and put some stewed figs at the bottom. Pour the batter on the top and bake in a moderate oven for about half an hour or until nicely browned and well risen. Sprinkle with sugar and serve hot.



Modest evening wear - "Anokhi"