

## UNDER A DIFFERENT SKY



BY IFFAT NAWAZ

## My piece of Bengal

**"A**RE you sure you want to do this?" the voice of reason in my life uttered with all seriousness, "you want to get involved with the Bengali community in America, knowing the baggage that comes with it, the gossip, the backstabbing? All of that, are you sure?"

I knew what she was telling me was true, I knew she was right, and if I was a fond of logic and practicality I should have listened to her. But I didn't.

The group is called Dhroopad. A cultural organization based in the DC metro area. They have been around for a while, I have seen them perform at North American Bengali Conference in 2004, they did a piece on 21st February and they were good, I felt proud to be Bangladeshi watching it, I remember that...I don't remember much else, but the impression I had on my mind was positive which is not something I can say for all cultural organizations abroad...sadly...

I knew some of them, the Dhroopadians, they were good people, people who went to school with my mother, were friends with my Father, they were well established Bengalis in America, they had weekend parties and music shows, they had young kids in classical dance classes, they practiced Bengali culture regularly and fluently just like they drove their American or Japanese cars and ate Mexican or Chinese. But that's all I knew about them...that's where it ended.

Few years ago I heard they were doing a production of "Sojon Badiar Ghaat" Jasim Uddin's well acclaimed play, and that sounded intriguing. I got an invitation to be a part of it, and the girl inside of me gladly and silently said yes, while the girl outside declined thinking she didn't have enough power to commit. In the next few years my priorities in life kept me away, so far that although I heard tidbits about the show and Dhroopad I didn't really listen, I was removed, going through one of those no-space-time-for-anyone-or-anything phases of life.

Last Summer I got a call again, with the same invitation, and the girl outside once again said no without thinking but the girl inside this time didn't want to stay as silent. She was curious, a fan of all things nostalgic she wanted a piece of Bangladesh right here and right now, and she fought and fought and won over the girl outside, and together we said, yes to the invitation and joined Dhroopad.

I have been around different cultural organizations in the past 15 years of living in USA and like many others have had positive and negative or no-so-memorable experiences. I know the stereotype says that Bengali aunties will gossip, the Bengali uncles will judge, but for the first time those things didn't come to mind when I met this team. Sure there were side conversations and delicious food, sure there were talk of sari and jewelry and jobs and cars, but they were hardly noticeable next to the talent and devotion of Dhroopad. Every person set aside their personal biases and negatives, they came to rehearsals on time, spent numerous hours working every weekend on singing, dancing and acting, and each free moment went on planning about the actual shows. And time flew, it flew so amazingly.

Last weekend Dhroopad performed "Sojon Badiar Ghaat" in front of five hundred Bengalis. With a fast beating heart I said my lines, laughed, cried, sang and died as the script required, we helped each other and worked together and fulfilled any flaw if there was ever any. We heard many positives from the audiences as they were awed but even more than that, I was in awe because I saw that it can exist- a Bengali organization without drama that can produce something well worth your while, from the love of our country, our culture and our language and out of respect for each other. We did...we created a piece of Bangladesh for each person to take home, and I am carrying it still, hoping to keep it forever inside where nostalgia doesn't hurt.

## DENTAL WISE



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## Dental wise

Dear Dr.Khan,

**I am 42 years old. I have gum disease (bleeding and swelling) and when I take antibiotics then it seems better. Is there any permanent solution? Please do write something about gum diseases as well.**

H. Akhter

Dear H. Akhter,

Gum disease is a chronic bacterial infection that affects the gums and bone supporting the teeth and if left untreated, can lead to tooth loss. It can affect one tooth or many teeth. It begins when the bacteria in plaque (the sticky, colorless film that constantly forms on your teeth) causes the gums to become inflamed. At the intermediate stage of gum disease (Gingivitis), the gum reddens, swells and bleeds easily. Gingivitis is reversible with professional treatment and good oral home care.

Untreated gingivitis can advance to periodontitis. With time, plaque can spread and grow below the gum line. Gums separate from the teeth, forming pockets (spaces between the teeth and gums) that become infected. As the disease progresses, the pockets deepen and more gum tissue and bone are destroyed. Often, this destructive process has very mild symptoms. Eventually, teeth can become loose and may have to be removed.

Causes of gum disease:

The main cause of gum disease is bacterial plaque, a sticky, colourless film that constantly forms on your teeth. However, factors like the following also affect the health of your gums.

1) Smoking/tobacco Use

As you probably already know, tobacco use is linked with many serious illnesses

such as cancer, lung disease and heart disease, as well as numerous other health problems. What you may not know is that tobacco users also are at increased risk for gum disease.

2) Genetics

Research proves that up to 30% of the population may be genetically susceptible to gum disease. Despite aggressive oral care habits, these people may be six times more likely to develop periodontal disease.

3) Pregnancy and puberty

As a woman, you know that your health needs are unique. You know that brushing and flossing daily, a healthy diet, and regular exercise are all important to help you stay in shape. You also know that at specific times in your life, you need to take extra care of yourself. Times when you mature and change, for example, puberty or menopause, and times when you have special health needs, such as menstruation or pregnancy. During these particular times, your body experiences hormonal changes. These changes can affect many of the tissues in your body, including your gums. Your gums can become sensitive, and at times react strongly to the hormonal fluctuations. This may make you more susceptible to gum disease. Additionally, recent studies suggest that pregnant women with gum disease are seven times more likely to deliver preterm, low birth weight babies.

4) Stress

As you probably already know, stress is linked to many serious conditions such as hypertension, cancer, and numerous other health problems. What you may not know is that stress also is a risk factor for periodontal disease. Research demonstrates that stress can make it more difficult for the body to fight off infection, including periodontal diseases.

5) Medications

Some drugs, such as oral contraceptives, anti-depressants, and certain heart medicines, can affect your oral health. Just as you notify your pharmacist and other health care providers of all medicines you are taking and any changes in your overall health, you should also inform your dental care provider.

6) Clenching or grinding your teeth

Has anyone ever told you that you grind your teeth at night? Is your jaw sore from clenching your teeth when you're taking a test or solving a problem at work? Clenching or grinding your teeth can put excess force on the supporting tissues of the teeth and could speed up the rate at which these periodontal tissues are destroyed.

7) Diabetes

Diabetes is a disease that causes altered levels of sugar in the blood. Diabetes develops from either a deficiency in insulin production (a hormone that is the key component in the body's ability to use blood sugars) or the body's inability to use insulin correctly. If you are diabetic, you are at higher risk for developing infections, including periodontal diseases. These infections can impair the ability to process and/or utilise insulin, which may cause your diabetes to be more difficult to control and your infection to be more severe than a non-diabetic.

8) Poor nutrition

As you may already know, a diet low in important nutrients can compromise the body's immune system and make it harder for the body to fight off infection. This can ultimately cause gum disease.

9) Failure to have professional scaling (cleaning).

Dental scaling should be done every year.

## BANKING TIPS TAHIA KHALIL Director &amp; Head of Wholesale Bank Operational Risk, Wholesale Bank, Standard Chartered Bank



## Banking Tips

**How many types of accounts are there?**

The different types of accounts are individual/personal, joint account between individuals, sole proprietorship, partnership, joint stock company, NGO, Trusts, clubs and associations.

**What is meant by Business Organizations?**

Business organizations can be grouped in three major categories: sole proprietorship,

partnership and joint stock company.

**What is a Trustee account?**

Individual, company or association to whom property is given in trust to deal with it according to directions given by the creator of the trust.

**What is a negotiable instrument?**

According to the Negotiable instrument Act, a negotiable instrument means a

Promissory note, Bill of Exchange or Cheque payable whether to order or bearer. It is a piece of paper which entitles a person to a sum of money and which is transferable from person to person by mere delivery and by endorsement and delivery. The person to whom it is transferred becomes entitled to the money and also gains the right to further transfer it.

## BY THE WAY

**Dill**

Fresh dill with its feathery leaves is ideal with egg, potato and fish dishes. It is often used in Scandinavian cooking, particularly in pickles and in gravlax (preserved raw salmon). It has a delicate, slightly aniseed taste and is best eaten raw or added to food at the last minute. Try chopped dill sprinkled over cucumber and sour cream salad.

**Ginger**

Dried powdered ginger is a spice, but the fresh root is used as an aromatic. Do not try to substitute one for the other -- their flavours are quite different. Fresh ginger is used extensively in Asian cooking, often first heated with garlic and chili to release its flavour. Peel a piece of ginger root and slice, chop or grate it according to the recipe's requirements.

**Rosemary**

Rosemary is a spiky plant so chop the leaves finely when using in cooked dishes or use whole sprigs which can be removed before serving. Rosemary is most well-known for its affinity with lamb. Try it with any strong-flavoured meat or with vegetables such as zucchini and eggplant. Always use rosemary in moderation: it can be overpowering.

**Parsley**

The two most familiar types of parsley are curly-leaf and flat-leaf. Flat-leaf has more flavour and is more versatile -- as well as the flavour it imparts in cooking, the whole leaves of flat-leaf parsley are a delicious addition to green salads, and are indispensable in tabbouleh.

**Watercress**

Delicious and nutty-tasting, watercress can

be eaten raw in salads, cooked and pureed like spinach, or made into a creamy soup with potatoes and chicken stock.

**Tarragon**

Most commonly used as a flavouring for vinegar, in bearnaise sauce or with chicken dishes, tarragon is also good in a buttery sauce for artichokes. There are two types of tarragon: French and Russian. French is by far the most flavoursome and is the one most often used in cooking.

**Rocket**

A peppery, nutty, green salad herb. When young, the leaves are quite mild; they become more bitter as they grow and are especially so after flowering. Use in mixed salads or on its own as a salad with shaved parmesan and a lemon and oil dressing.