

HERITAGE

Whats not to love about a layered, thin crunchy bunch of Bakarkhanis? Beside its taste, the history of this traditional snack made of white flour and mawa of Old Dhaka, as stated in "Kingbadantir Dhaka" by Nazir Hossain, makes this even more of a favourite to everyone.

Back in 1700 A.D when Dewan Murshid Quli Khan came to this part of Bengal, a small boy named Aga Bakar Khan accompanied him. Growing up, Aga Bakar learnt different war tactics and was appointed the commander of military forces in the Chittagong district when he fell in love with Khani Begum, a dancer of Arambag.

But Bakar and Khani had a villain in their love story- kotwal Jainul Khan who also desired Khani in his life. As he was about to kidnap Khani, Aga Bakar fought with Jainul and rescued Khani's life. However this led to an arrest and death sentence of both of them. Aga Bakar ended up in a cage with a tiger while Jainul abducted Khani and fled to the forests of South-East Bengal. Aga, the warrior, fought with the tiger, and started his journey to find Khani. But the time he reached the forest he found his love, Khani, dying, being stabbed with Jainul's sword. Khani's death made Aga Bakar completely lose his mind.

Even though Aga Bakar survived rest of his life without her, he could never forget his true love, Khani Begum. So he named this specially prepared bread, 'bakar-khani', after his and Khani Begum's name.

A LEGENDARY DELICACY

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PHOTOS: PRABIR DAS



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