

WHAT I DID LAST WEEK

# There and back again

THE ROAD BEST AVOIDED

One of the first indications of adulthood is not the responsibility or earning, it is simply saying goodbye to vacations. Gone are the days of weeks and months off for Eid, or summer vacations. At this stage, you'd be lucky to just get two days off from work.

With vacations being such a rare commodity, you'd want to make it the best you can; usually an out of city trip. I had the fortune of getting a few days off last week, but I also had the misfortune of going somewhere I probably shouldn't have.

Resorts these days are one too many and the only distinguishing factors between them is their location and facilities. I had the misfortune of coming across one of these resorts which grossly oversold itself. For the purposes of this article, let's call them Balcony Hotel Imaginative. It promised to be a little drop of luxury, away from the madding crowd, featuring delicious local cuisine, unique local breakfast, and so on. What I found instead was someone's three-bedroom "graam er bari" 20 kilometres from the nearest city. The staff, which included a man and a woman, was

Hot tip; if your idea of a vacation is feeling like an unwelcome guest at someone's graam er bari, may I suggest just doing that, instead of paying for it at Balcony Hotels Imaginative.

probably the furthest thing to welcoming, couldn't even be bothered about our bags, or even take us to our rooms, not that that would have taken long as they only had

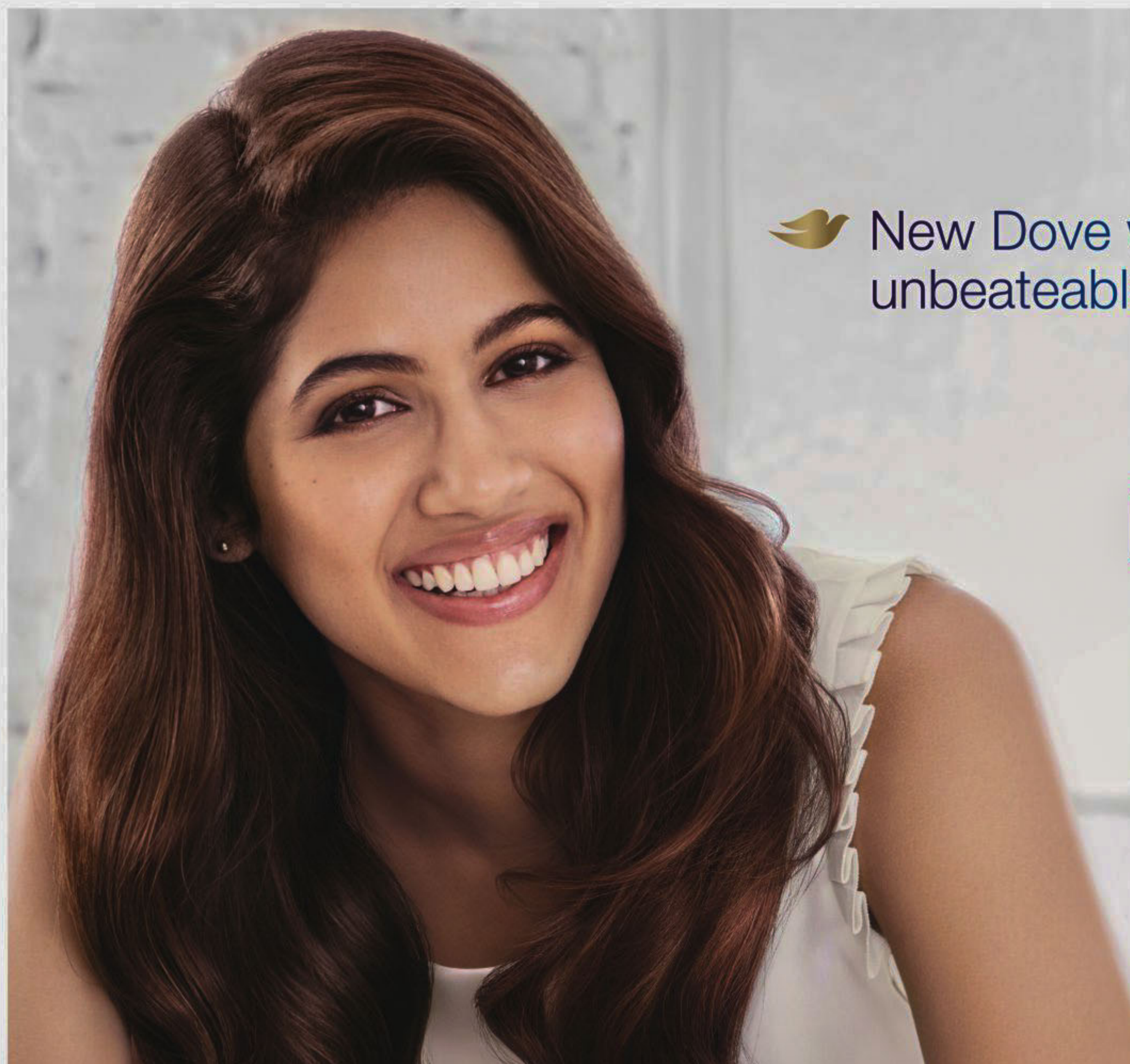
three rooms after all. The "unique" breakfast was the same thing I have at home, roti, alu bhaji, and of course, dim bhaji. Lunch and dinner was also stuff I have at home anyway, chicken, daal and rice. The rooms were in such a desperate state of affairs (i.e. dirty) that I think the last time they were cleaned was at least a year or so ago, and asking them to clean it only got them to say "But it is." Only one bathroom was done up properly, I suspect for photoshoots for their page and so on, but the rest were done up in the fine tradition of "that'll do." And by the end of this, it cost Tk 4,000 per night. I wanted to scream "highway robbery," but that would be rude right? I suspect this entire venture was the product of a get-rich-quick scheme as resorts are trending, but the execution is just beyond sloppy. Hot tip; if your idea of a vacation is feeling like an unwelcome guest at someone's graam er bari, may I suggest just doing that, instead of paying for it at Balcony Hotels Imaginative.

BY THE SEA, ALMOST

Thankfully, I don't have to end this segment

on a sour note as my week off didn't end with that one trip. If you want to know how a resort game should be played, I suggest you pack your bags and go to Cox's Bazar, and book a stay at Mermaid. You don't necessarily have to go to their more expensive Beach Resort, even their Eco Resort is leagues above most other places you will find. There is one drawback, and a big one if you ask me, and that is you cannot see the ocean. Other than that, this place is a temple of relaxation. Customer service matters, and it shows from the moment your feet land on their premises. Rustic, but luxurious and welcoming, even sitting in the lobby sipping from green coconuts is an experience. The room I was given had a good view of the canal the Eco Resort is situated by, and the view, even without the sea, is incredible. That, combined with the smooth slow music playing across the resort also reinforces the fact that I am on vacation. And the food, ahh.. I could write essays about that alone. Safe to say, if you need to unwind, this is still my top pick.

By Intisab Shahriyar



 New Dove with unbeatable damage repair\*.

Dove  
NUTRITIVE SOLUTIONS



 no digital distortion

\*Damage repair refers to signs of surface damage. Based on lab test on hair breakage and smoothness evaluation on Dove system vs shampoo and conditioner brands having at least 3% Volume Market Share (source: Nielsen FY 2018).

\*New refers to New pack

New pack and formulation