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Life

Style

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Beyond bright COLOURS

WHEN IT IS NOT MUSIC FOR YOUR EARS **P3**
AUDIO FOR A BIBLIOPHILE
LYRICAL STUDY OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL **C**
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CHIT DELIGHTS **P8**
FLAVOURS FROM THE HILLS

PHOTO: SAZZAD IBNE SAYED
MODEL: SHELA
WARDROBE: SADAKALO
MAKE-UP: NOYON AHAMED
STYLING: ZABIN IQBAL
LOCATION: INTERCONTINENTAL DHAKA

**সুরক্ষিত দেয়াল
নিরাপদ পরিবার**

এলো বার্জার ব্রিড ইজি ভাইরাকেরয়ার। এর সিলভার আয়ন টেকনোলজি তৈরি করে অ্যান্টি-ভাইরাস কোটিং, যা দেয়ালে আসা ভাইরাস ও ব্যাকটেরিয়া ধ্বংস করে। পরিবারের সুরক্ষায় কোনো আপোস নয়। বার্জার ব্রিড ইজি ভাইরাকেরয়ার যখন দেয়ালে, আমরা নিশ্চিত্তে সবসময়।

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Aarong opens new multi-brand shopping destination

With an unparalleled motto of making shopping 'inclusive,' Aarong launched its latest multi-brand retail outlet on 5 February. Aarong has given up its iconic Gulshan outlet and has now set up shop in a new location to enthral and excite swarms of shoppers in the capital's Tejgaon. The event was gracefully inaugurated by Tamara Hasan Abed, Managing Director of BRAC Social Enterprises.

"The new outlet gives the full Aarong experience; it houses all the sub brands created under Aarong so shoppers can see what we have to offer in our entirety. When a shopper enters through the doors here, we want to excite their senses and calm



their souls," reveals Tamara.

In reality though, exciting all five of our senses starts even before you saunter into Tejgaon's Aarong; it starts when you drive into its premises to notice a wall of vibrant art that is quintessentially Bengali. Inspired from the majestic peacock, this wall features 10 artists as they take us on a journey of hope and renewal.

It's only natural for hope to be a theme at the new Aarong, especially since the economy and retail businesses continue to face an uphill battle recovering from last year's viral hit.

"Recovering from last years unprecedented losses has been difficult. What kept us going was hope and

optimism, rather than fear, with everyone in our team working exceptionally hard. Our artisans are resilient and our customers have remained loyal and we're super excited about this expansion. This is what Aarong has to show for itself and that it proudly does," reiterated Tamara.

Occupying a 35,000 square feet outlet, the latest Aarong houses all that the brand is loved for. Check out what's hot at TAAGA and TAAGA MAN and embrace everything hip and youthful that life has to offer. Stroll past HERSTORY by Aarong and appreciate how beautifully it plays with ethnicity while still keeping things modern. Drop by Aarong Earth and "come back to nature," as its tagline goes, to fall in love with



skincare and herbal remedies to discover a rejuvenated you. All these, of course, come alongside racks and racks of Aarong classics — kurtis, handbags, shoes, handicrafts, ornamental showpieces, toys and clothes for children — you name it, Aarong's got it!

More to come at this outlet is a two-story open-air café and restaurant to complete your shopping experience in its truest sense. Tagging Tejgaon's Aarong as a 'must-visit' is an understatement; you simply have to experience it rather than just read about it to know why!

By Ramisa Haque
Address: 210/B, Tejgaon-Gulshan Link Road, Dhaka 1208

us on /Sandalina

ঐতিহ্যের আর এক নাম আধুনিকতা
ঠিক যেমন রূপচর্চায় আভিজাত্য মানেই

স্যান্ডালিনা

সোপ

রূপচর্চায় আভিজাত্য...



The books talk, if you listen

We're going to assume that you've heard of audiobooks (no pun intended). While physical books will never go out of style, audiobooks are certainly making their presence known in the modern world.

It's an amazing idea, especially when you think about visually challenged people. For people who cannot see or whose eyesight is poor; audiobooks are a revolutionary medium.

The benefits don't just stop there. Audiobooks are said to increase reading accuracy. Since listening is faster than reading, and these books are narrated by professionals, your reading speed increases significantly. This is extremely helpful for those serial readers who aim to finish books quickly and move on to the next one so that they can finish their targeted number of books.

If you are one of those people who are always busy but deep down, you wish that you had more time, then audiobooks are definitely for you. You can play a book in the background while you take care of your chores or walk to the market.

Stuck in the unavoidable traffic jam in the streets of Dhaka? Plug in your headphones and play an audiobook.

We recommend audiobooks over physical books in vehicles. Firstly, because the roads can get bumpy and it's difficult to keep your focus on your pages, resulting in a strain on your eyes which is a health hazard, along with motion sickness. Secondly, audiobooks can be soothing and intense at the same time, adding to your travel experience.

As mentioned earlier, audiobooks are narrated by professionals. Therefore, one will get the chance to work on his pronunciations while playing an audiobook. Whether you are playing an audiobook for study purpose or just to appreciate the literature, it's an innovative approach.

Listening to the same book while reading it can increase your comprehension and it also helps you process the information with more efficiency.

But this is the month of February. The month of language and we remember all those who laid down their lives for our mother tongue. And with that in mind, we want to appreciate Bengali literature.

Our literature is who we are. It is a reflection of our history and we strongly



recommend that you pick one of our native classics every now and then so that we can comprehend how rich our culture is. It is easy to get lost in the apps in your smartphone but if you allow it, audiobooks will provide you with moments that will be embedded in your memory, even years later.

"Khokike ekbar dekhite paibo na?" — those words hit me in ways I never imagined before. I had read Rabindranath's *Kabuliwala* before but this time, with the narrator putting in such effort and emotion behind the words, I actually teared up," said Ahmed, an avid reader and a graduate student at the University of Dhaka.

"I have known about audiobooks for years but only recently, I found out about Bangla audiobooks and discovered how well done they were," he added, pointing out that more and more people are getting interested in audiobooks every day.

At this point, you might be wondering

where can you get Bangla audiobooks. We've looked it up for you and here are some of the ways to get yourself a Bangla audiobook.

Shuni

With its lime green theme, Shuni reminds you of Bangladesh. The app is available on Play Store and App Store. You will need to register to get an audiobook but worry not, the app is completely free. With their podcasts and free audiobooks, Shuni is worth a try if you are interested in Bangla audiobooks.

GolpoKotha

This is another app that you can get on your Android or iOS device and get access to a lofty number of audiobooks. From classics to bestsellers, thrillers to comedy, you have the option to choose from a wide variety of categories. With a panel of narrators like Subrata Nath Mukhopadhyay or Satya Priya Sarkar, you are in for a treat. The compelling



storytelling and well organised app will keep you hooked.

Bongobook

This is a free app that allows you a very user-friendly experience. You can pick a genre as soon as you log onto the app. All it takes is one tap on the thumbnail of the book that you desire. You don't need a subscription to listen to an audiobook from this app.

Sunday Suspense

Sunday Suspense is a long-running radio

show on Radio Mirchi in Kolkata. But one can find their channel on YouTube and amongst their playlists, Sunday suspense contents are available. From *Feluda* to *Byomkesh* and *Sherlock* to original stories, you can find them well organised, playlist by playlist; just pick one and play. Sunday suspense is known for their dramatic manifestation of the stories with added voice and sound effects.

audiobooks.khichuri.net

This one is a website where a number of audiobooks are available for instant play. You don't need an account. You can just go on the web, enter the url and pick a book that you would like to play. Paulo Coelho's *Alchemist* or Rabindranath's *Shesher Kabita*, whichever suits your mood, just hit play and enjoy.

Golpokothon by Kollo

This is a YouTube channel that will draw you as soon as you find it. The well decorated playlist features some of the classics like *Dracula* and *The Invisible Man*. Popular books from our literature such as *Putul Nacher Itikotha* and *Gavi Bittanto* are also available. What's great about this channel is that the host is active and continues to upload new contents.

'Audiobook in Bangla by Fahim' and 'My Audiobook' are two more channels on YouTube that are worth a look.

The Doctor (From *Doctor Who*) once said: "Books are the best weapons in the world. Arm yourself!"

We couldn't agree more. But sometimes physical books can't be reached for many reasons and sometimes you just don't feel like reading from a page. Either way, audiobooks are a great alternative for those who want to keep in touch with books. Let's listen to what they have to say.

By Ashif Ahmed Rudro
Photo: Collected



#PRESS RELEASE

Grand opening of Garlic 'n Ginger, Gulshan branch

Garlic 'n Ginger, a multi cuisine restaurant with a wide array of food arrangement including Thai, Chinese, Japanese, Indian, Italian and Continental items has now announced their new branch launch at Gulshan-1. The restaurant holds the perfect contemporary environment and maintains a serene ambience for family gatherings, events or parties and corporate programmes. With two existing branches at Jamuna Future Park and Dhanmondi, their signature items include the famous buffet of 120+ items at Jamuna Future Park and 100+ items in Dhanmondi branch.

The restaurant also has A La Carte in their menu along with desserts, juice bar,

barista, BBQ, fast foods, soups and salads. Besides, they have takeaway service which is quite useful for a large portion of customers, especially ones who want to enjoy restaurant food in the most COVID-19 restriction abiding manner.

The exclusive and classy look of the restaurant makes it one of a kind. While maintaining a positively clean and spacious outlook, the restaurant ensures complete care when it comes to hygiene and takes special cleanliness measures for the current pandemic situation.

The exciting news of the Gulshan branch launch brings more new promises of

interesting offers. Currently, Garlic 'n Ginger provides special discounts for birthdays and maintains a regular name day offer, where a particular name is picked for the day and shared on Garlic 'n Ginger's social media page. Any customer with that specific name gets a special discount. Moving to Gulshan, these offers will be

specially customised for corporates. The restaurant also holds special discounts for special occasions.

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ARIES
(MAR. 21-APR. 20)

Put your best efforts at work. Don't let anyone take credit for your job. Invite loved ones over. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



TAURUS
(APR. 21-MAY 21)

Don't entertain difficult people. Manage your finances. Think about starting your own venture. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



GEMINI
(MAY 22-JUN. 21)

Financial gains from investments are likely. Try to relate to children. Prove your worth. Avoid emotional upsets at work. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



CANCER
(JUN. 22-JUL. 22)

Attend lectures that will broaden your senses. Plan family outings. Residential moves will be favourable. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



LEO
(JUL. 23-AUG. 22)

You may be deceived by a loved one. Enjoy your accomplishments. Rely on your quick wit. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



VIRGO
(AUG. 23-SEP. 23)

Pleasure trips will be favourable. Don't meddle in volatile situations. Re-evaluate your own motives. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



LIBRA
(SEP. 24-OCT. 23)

Stay calm and power through. Disturbing matters are likely to appear. Avoid taking on too much. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



SCORPIO
(OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Keep your secrets to yourself. Your knowledge will be appreciated. You may have problems with co-workers. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



SAGITTARIUS
(NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

You could end up in a serious relationship. Channel your energy into projects. Collect all the information before acting. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



CAPRICORN
(DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

Include friends into plans. Travel may be game changing. Your partner may be forceful on certain matters. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



AQUARIUS
(JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

Anger may cause you grief. Give your partner the freedom they need. Business and emotional partnerships will run smoothly. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



PISCES
(FEB. 20-MAR. 20)

Socialising will bring you to important individuals. Get to the bottom of things. Secret intrigues could spell trouble. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.

#FASHION

SADAKALO

Wearing history *in* BLACK and WHITE



The way we dress and present ourselves has been woven into our cultural identities as far as one can recall. As cultural holidays and events come along, our clothing and appearance reflect the essence of the Bengali history and tradition. One of the recognisable and go-to fashion houses which cater to engulf and enhance the Bengali tradition and history is Sadakalo.



For nearly two decades, Sadakalo has been a brand with unique concepts, featuring designer clothing only in the monochrome colours of black and white. With time, the brand has expanded and the designs have become more playful, intricate and a symbol of patriotism and bold emotions. Their new line is a heartfelt expression of respect and gratitude towards the legacy behind Ekushey February.

As Ekushey February is right around the corner, Sadakalo's new line of designs lives up to its reputation of exceeding elegance and embodying the glory and mourning which comes with this day. Utilising Bengali alphabets and intricate motifs and patterns, the line stays true to the day's historical significance with elegance and sophistication.

With its roots deeply embedded in

the Bengali heritage, the designs in this year's line are not only appropriate for the current status quo but also highlights nationalism by featuring Bengali calligraphy or 'bornomala' in playful and dynamic prints. The signature monochromatic appeal combined with minimalistic block prints and dynamic motifs add elegance, while the use of slab cotton brings in comfort.

This year's line offers saris, single kurtis and kameezs for women and single panjabis for men in simplistic yet detailed designs. Side by side, kameez sets and panjabis for children are also available. Sadakalo is actively keeping up with time to keep traditional clothing in trend by introducing a plethora of designs and styles for people of all ages.

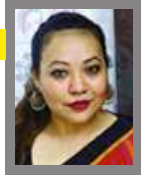
Sadakalo's wide range of designs,

patterns, styles and bold contrast of colours within the monochromatic platform remains iconic for any national holiday or event. All in all, the patriotism and heritage attached to the fashion house remains evident on its clothing and is a fluid expression of the Bengali essence.

Sadakalo exhibits all their designs online and offers home deliveries through <http://sadakalo.net/> and their Facebook page.

By Puja Sarkar
Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed
Model: Shela and Jessia
Wardrobe: Sadakalo
Make-up: Noyon Ahamed
Styling: Zabin Iqbal
Location: InterContinental Dhaka

FUSION FLAVOURS
CHIANGMI TALUKDER
LENA



Flavours from the hills

Cuisine is an important part of Chakma lifestyle. Like their distinctive culture, the unique style of cooking, and techniques using natural ingredients makes their cuisine distinguishably flavourful. From meat to poultry, wild vegetables, roots, and stems are prepared and consumed in different ways.

Sidol and suguni are probably the two ingredients most people think of when it comes to Chakma food. Sidol is a paste made from fermented shrimp and various fishes, whereas suguni is sun-dried fish or sun-dried shrimp, known as 'eje guri' in Chakma dialect.

Chakma cuisine is also known for the lack of spices, and profuse use of fresh herbs, which are the leaves, flowers, or stems of various seasonal hillside plants for flavouring, as well as serving as a garnish.

There are also many lesser known edible plants of Chittagong Hill Tracts used as ingredients, eaten raw or cooked



as vegetables. Many of these are seasonal plants that grow during monsoon and remain available for the next four to six months only.

Ingredients like bamboo shoots, edible ginger flower, turmeric flower, wild mushrooms, Thai dragon tongue, kanai dinga in Bangla etc. are only available from mid-April to mid-September. Due to this reason, to ensure local supplies year-round, Chakma cooks preserve many ingredients



from early winter by sun-drying or using other traditional drying techniques. Sliced vegetables are hung or spread out on cane trays and kept on a cane shelf made at a height above traditional mud stoves.

In most recipes, the basic ingredients are sidol, suguni, garlic, onions, bird-eye-chilli, sabarang, lemon basil, coriander leaves, fuji or wild parsley, cilantro, turmeric powder, salt and sometimes few drops of oil.

When it comes to fish or meat recipes, traditionally there is no use of spice, garam masala or curry powder; only herbs such as lemon basil, wild parsley, coriander leaves, and cilantro, along with onions, garlic, good amount of wild ginger, bird-eye-chilli, turmeric powder, salt and little amount of oil are used. Some prefer to use only small amounts of cumin powder in meat dishes.

Almost all leafy vegetables and herbs are eaten raw. Some are pre-boiled for a few minutes and eaten with a side dip, chilli-coal roasted sidol sauce, sidol-morich-battye or



garlic-chilli salsa like ron-morich battye, or consumed as green salads by mixing these sauces. There is also a popular charcoal roasted or burnt dry-fish salsa, suguni-morich battye or suguni hurbo (dry-fish-salad) served as a side dish to be consumed with leafy vegetables. This is a must-have for those who love to eat dry fish.

Besides using unique ingredients for preparation of food, Chakma cooking utilises varied local customs and techniques in preparing the dishes.

Sumoh gorang

Sumoh in Chakma dialect refers to a tube. Any dish cooked using a bamboo sumoh is called a sumoh-gorang. Thus, bamboo-chicken is known as sumoh-huro.

The traditional sumoh cooking process is used to cook most meat, fish, dry fish dishes, and glutinous rice.

The meat or fish are mixed with all other ingredients. This serves as the marinade which makes the meat tender. This is a crucial aspect of the sumoh method of cooking.

After an hour of marination, the mixture is used to stuff bamboo stems, and the mouth is sealed securely using banana leaf. While the bamboo tube gets cooked on open firewood or coal embers for about 1-2 hours, they are turned periodically so that food is cooked evenly from all sides.

Hebaang

This is a typical Chakma cooking technique

of burnt baking. Marinated meat, fish, dry fish, egg or vegetable are wrapped in banana leaf and baked inside a mud/clay stove or on open coal embers.

Traditionally, as only banana leaf layers are used, it is necessary to prepare the leaves by heating both side to make them soft and flexible. Placing all leaves one over another make a thick layer, and protects the dish from direct heat.

The marinated mixture is placed in the middle of the layered leaves, which are then folded to turn into a little pouch. The leaves are carefully tied with the fibre extracted from banana leaves.

The leaves are not themselves eaten, but used only to get the sweet subtle leafy aroma.

Maalah

Maalah dishes are any stuffed dishes prepared traditionally with sautéed sidol, mixed with other ingredients and stuffing such as peeled young bamboo shoots. This is known as bachchuri-maalah. Teasel gourd, wild snake gourd, bitter melon, and wild eggplant maalah can also be prepared in this way.

The vegetables are first boiled and blanched. Then for preparing the filling, they are sautéed to get a shallow-fried, brown skin.

Taaba

A healthy way of cooking and consuming boiled green vegetables with a clear broth. Firstly, dry fish pieces or dry shrimp with required amount of water and salt are simmered for 5-10 minutes. Vegetables are then added to the boiling water over high flame for few minutes until vegetables get cooked. The mixture is transferred into a bowl, leaving uncovered to release all steam. It requires special skills to cook greens without losing their existing colour.

Photo and Food by Chiangmi Talukder Lena



BENGAL MEAT

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My exploration of Bengali literature — better late than never

If someone asks me what I have achieved in this long stay-at-home situation, I will say that I have relished the rich and exciting works of Bengali wordsmiths! During this time at home, I have explored and read works of Bengali writers, many of whose works I had not read earlier. Thanks to the Internet, which brings Bengali books to the palm of my hand 8,000 miles away from my homeland.

As someone who is a product of the English-medium education system of Bangladesh, my exposure to Bengali literature was rather limited, I admit. As a teen, I devoured works of Humayun Ahmed, Muhammed Zafar Iqbal, and Satyajit Ray. I enjoyed Sunil Gangopadhyay's Kakababu series, Rakib Hasan's Tin Goyenda, and Sukumar Ray's unique gibberish. However, my exploration of Bengali literature stopped short for reasons I cannot recall now. I did read Bengali novels, however, every now and then, but it was English paperbacks which kept me engrossed for two decades.

I am the kind of reader who enjoys papers books more than electronic ones, which means that here in the US, I cannot purchase Bengali books at local bookstores. Last June, however, I began to explore works of Bengali writers on the Internet. Almost anything and everything written by Bengali literary minds was available. I began to re-read Humayun Ahmed and Satyajit Ray. I also embarked on



a journey to read works of authors whose works I had not read before.

In a very short time, I became a fan of Tarapada Roy's satirical sense of humour; Ashapura Devi's strong female protagonists; Sharadindu Bandyopadhyay's fictional detective Byomkesh a.k.a. the truth seeker; Syed Mujtaba Ali's "Ramya Rachana" and his incredible life and experience as a writer, journalist, and travel enthusiast.

Over the last seven months, I believe I have greatly enriched and enhanced my mind and soul by reading works of literary maestros like Shirshendu Mukhopadhyay, Ahmed Sofa, Buddhadeb Bosu, Tarasankar Bandyopadhyay, and Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay. The more I read, the more I appreciate the richness, the vastness, and the depth of Bengali literature. It would have been a great loss to me if I had died before reading any works of these great creative minds.

Every time I read a writer's work, I do a quick search on the Google to learn more about him or her. I have learned that Sunil Gangopadhyay, Tarapada Roy, Buddhadeb Bosu, Shirshendu Mukhopadhyay were born in Faridpur, Tangail, Cumilla and Mymensingh respectively. I am gaining insight into the political history of our region as I am reading works of Bengali authors.

Before we discover and explore other countries, languages, and cultures, it is imperative that we explore our own first.



If we are unaware of our own heritage, we can never find the shoes that fit us right. You will always try to fit in, but never can. As a first-generation immigrant in the US, I understand the importance of searching and finding "that" right pair of shoes.

In order to appreciate other cultures and languages, we ought to know our own first, for if you do not know yours, then you would

never know how you became who you are. These are the clues to our past!

We would never know how our societies evolved if we do not read, re-read, explore, and re-explore our history and literature in its native language. I made attempts to read translated works of Bengali literature, but translated works rarely do justice to great creative endeavours, I think. It is like the book-is-almost-always-better-than-the-film situation. Therefore, if you can read Bengali, enjoy Bengali literature in its original form.

On my Dhaka trips, I buy Bengali books to bring them back to the US. I already know what books I want to acquire on my next visit! As someone who enjoys paper books more than e-books, I think I would love to re-read some of the Bengali novels and short stories that I have read in this pandemic.

I wish I had started exploring Bengali literature much earlier, but I am finding solace in what wise men say: better late than never!

I see my journey into reading works of Bengali wordsmiths as a way to enrich myself and as a way to connect and reconnect with my roots. The journey that I have just embarked on will take more than a lifetime to end, simply because there is a plethora of rich Bengali literary works out there, and there is no way I can finish reading them all.

Wara Karim
Photo: LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed

#PRESS RELEASE

Battle of the beef at Pizza Hut!

Stepping onto their 18th year of successful operations, Pizza Hut started the new decade in the best manner possible by introducing two brand new flavours for Bangladesh on 28 January, 2021. Pizza lovers — be prepared to tantalise your taste buds because these flavours are nothing like your ordinary pizza options!

Being the forerunner when it comes to playing with exciting flavours to concoct innovative and lip-smacking creations in their kitchen, Pizza Hut has rolled out a couple of beefy additions to their menu in the non-veg line, Mejbani Beef and Beef Kala Bhuna. Pretty explanatory from the names, this is the international chain's take on our local flavours to provide customers with the best of fusion food.

In regards to this, Amit Dev Thapa, CEO of Transcom Foods Ltd. and sole franchisee of Pizza Hut Bangladesh, said, "We constantly update our menu with new flavours and items but this is the first time we chose to provide something to our customers that perfectly caters to their nativetaste palette by satiating their local cravings whilst maintaining our international standards."

Inspired by authentic Chittagonian flavours, Mejbani Beef and Beef Kala Bhuna are available across all outlets of Pizza Hut countrywide. More so, these new additions have been highly appreciated by the citizens of Chattogram as well, giving them not only something to savour but also something they take pride in.

The two flavours are available only in their signature pan-crust style pizza in three different sizes, personal, medium, and family.

Each of these are available in four delectable avatars as well. The hot version has a tinge of spiciness exuding from red paprika and capsicum sitting atop while the chilli rendition has that fiery kick emanating from spicy jalapenos and green chillies dispersed throughout.

On the other hand, the spicy version will embrace your taste buds with a burst of freshness and pungency due to the addition of tomatoes that complement the chunks of beef perfectly. The same can be said for the deluxe version, with its triad of toppings—capsicum, mushroom, and tomatoes—scattered evenly.

The price starts at only Tk 299, which means they are easy on the wallet. Furthermore, Mejbani Beef and Beef Kala Bhuna are available for both dine-in and takeaway with the option of free home delivery as well.

"It was easier for a global franchise like ours to quickly get accustomed to the drastic changes brought about by the pandemic because we had already been maintaining such hygiene measures since several years," noted Thapa.

So, whether you need something delicious to munch on while binge watching your favourite series curled up in your blanket at home or are finally giving into the strict safety protocols that we dutifully adhered to for the most part of last year — you know where to head! The only question is, which team will you be in — Mejbani Beef squad or Beef Kala Bhuna squad?

By Fariha Amber

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#FASHION

Jonaki by Nasreen Zamir

Fascinating bottles of magical concoctions, Jonaki by Nasreen Zamir is a bold venture into the enchanting world of perfumery and has been, in one word, a triumph. An interior designer by heart and profession, permeating the walls between décor and fragrance was all too natural a move for her, especially when beautiful scents have always spoken to her on a deeper level. Her captivation finally found eloquence in unique blends and simple bottles. And so, Jonaki, a premium brand brewing up a storm in Bangladesh's local perfume industry, was born.



"Jonaki is the ultimate symbol of romance and beauty in whatever culture you look at. The Assamese associate the creatures with moonlight and Tagore himself wrote incredible verses on jonaki that I profoundly resonate with. It's something that has always illuminated the world around me and breathed life into me. Naming my perfume brand anything else just would not be the same," explains Nasreen Zamir, Founder and Managing Director of the label.

And, so, sharing the light with us, Jonaki is an honest attempt on its best day. The idea is simply to convey to anyone wearing Jonaki by diffusing the air around them with familiar traces of Nasreen Zamir's old memories and inexplicable emotions. An ode to this sentiment is a premium line of five different fragrances, all launched under the label. Each mix carries a story of its own, and exploring them is a journey.

Freesia Nights

A floral scent that reminds you of romance and inner beauty, Freesia Nights is a fresh fragrance. Perfect for daytime or any innocent evening affair, spritzes of this on your wrists and neck will make you taste of water-lilies

and roses at its peak. As daylight weans off and your pour of coffee reaches the end of the mug, you will be left with refreshing notes of bergamot and musk that will leave your company wondering what smells so good!

Neroli Blossom

Still floral, still fresh, but tangy like a tangerine soaked in the blooms of a garden in full spring, Neroli Blossom is a flirtatious scent. Utterly chic and very elegant to the nose, this fragrance would perfectly complement a brunch out with girlfriends or lunch dates with your boyfriend and leave them wanting more of you.

Initial whiffs of this scent are dominantly citrusy and will remind you of lemons, but make no mistake, at its heart this is an alluring brew of bergamot, neroli, and musk. Embrace



the free-spirit in you and do everything contradicting "prim and proper" with this one!

Oriental Jasmine

A risqué choice and much stronger than its companions, Oriental Jasmine is what you want to smell like on a night out dressed to the nines. Whether it's a black-tie event or a festive celebration, walk in wearing a few puffs of this and see the intoxicating scent of jasmines and bergamot cut through the air and anything else standing in your way! Still fresh as it opens with roses but crisper to encourage dares, Oriental Jasmine is mysterious. Wearing this, you will saunter past enchanted crowds to leave behind woody

wafts of sandalwood and patchouli only to come back home feeling the picture of power.

Amaretto

A timeless classic that will ground you as you spritz this on, Amaretto is for men. It is fresh but strongly woody. A delightful make of citrus black pepper, neroli, rosemary, amaretto, leather and cedar wood and vetiver, this fragrance is long-lasting. Perfect for anything business or casual, Amaretto wears exceptionally well through any time of the day and pairs with either ends of the dandy personality: the experimental icon who fearlessly delves into different shapes, colours and patterns or an elegant gentleman who always prefers to throw in a blazer over a tucked-in shirt.

Santal Tabac

The kind of strong that nods a tad bit to royalty, Santal Tabac is the scent for the man with a taste for adventures and scandalous escapades. Light and floral with hints of lavender, this scent will thrust you into richer notes of musk leather and sandalwood as the fragrance climaxes to reveal the heart of this potion. Overwhelming whenever you lean in for a closer inhale, you can never go wrong with Santal Tabac.

All fragrances are priced consistently at Tk 2,800 and available for online orders, Jonaki is also sold at physical stores. Unimart, Bashundhara City, Shimanto Square and Jamuna Future Park – all keep stocks of Jonaki for you to conveniently pick up whenever.

Blissfully alive in its own light and enriching the air it infuses into, Jonaki is passion; it is freedom. The enlightening creatures of nature are a force to be reckoned with and Nasreen Zamir's line of fragrances create a magical world with a similar effect.

By Ramisa Haque

Website: <https://jonakifragrance.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/jonakifragrance>

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Photo: Jonaki by Nasreen Zamir

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#FASHION

The semi-bridal by Zubaida Faiza Clothing

Clad in blood-red sari with a tiny dot in her forehead, and loose braids entangled with the aromatic jasmine, she looked like a fairy that stepped down from the heavens.

This was perhaps a common scene in the bygone days for every bride sitting timidly on the wedding dais. And this very look in its versions is termed as the 'classic' in much of South Asian history. But there are so many amongst us, who want to try out our own looks, one that defines our personality, which may be anything but timid! For the bold amongst us, the wild, the creative, freedom-



hugging beautiful goddesses, who are not shy of expressing their styles, even on a very conservative occasion like the Bengali wedding —Zubaida Faiza, the proprietor of Zubaida Faiza Clothing line, introduces her latest 'semi-bridal' collection.

"The styles are very much tradition-inspired and yet, also very fusion based. The lehengas are minimalistic and yet

jam-packed with modern cuts and embroidery that will definitely make a bride stand out on her wedding day," revealed the designer.

There's nothing to fret for those who are not planning to get married this season but thinking of attending one in a brand-new avatar.

"Yes! Exactly so... The latest semi-bridal collection is super bubbly, spring inspired and fabulously in sync with the season's mood. So, anybody who has a loved one getting married in spring, can also wear the very trendy wedding outfit, especially to turn all the heads at the event," said a



beaming Faiza.

And true it was, with an amalgamation of exclusive zardozi work, trendy frills, embroidery, mirror work, modern cuts, floral imprints and bright colours, this collection is anything but common.

In fact, it is an exclusive collection that can only brighten up any occasion and bring out the bubbly personality of the wearer, even more so.

I know I am already a big fan.

By Fashion Police

Photo: Kaushik Iqbal Photography

Models: Sabrina Zaman Riba, Afia Tabassum Borno, Ansa Tasfiha Suhi, Salma Noor, Maua Zannatul

Hair and Makeup: Onnesha Rahman, Raisa Naushin

Styling: Isha Yeasmin

Wardrobe: Zubaida Faiza Clothing

Accessories: Minerva by Mahjabin

Ahmed Shiuly

Set design: Enchanted by Sausan Khan Moyeen

Location: United city