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PHOTO: SAZZAD IBNE SAYED
MODEL: NAZIA
MAKE-UP: SUMON
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#PRESS RELEASE

Pizza Hut launches Super Limo, in a 1-metre-long box!

After months of COVID-19 restrictions, restaurants have finally opened their doors for their loyal customers, maintaining stringent precautions of course! Pizza Hut, has gone one step further by introducing the Super Limo, the pizza that comes in a meter-long box; 36 slices in three different delectable flavours, along with three separate dips. This is the most happening thing right now in the local food scene.

The large 1-metre Super Limo Box is priced at Tk 1999* (VAT and SD exclusive) and available at all Pizza Hut outlets for limited days only. For those who want to relish the taste at the comfort of their homes, there is always the takeaway option.

A lot of planning and preparation has gone before the introduction of the Super Limo, which adds the wow factor to the range Pizza Hut has on offer, and it is sure to entice the people's taste buds.

Amit Dev Thapa, CEO, Transcom Foods Limited (the sole franchisee of Pizza Hut in Bangladesh) commented that Pizza Hut is pleased to have the opportunity to stand by the people and launch this



pizza with an incredible level of spice and exceptional flavour. It is an exciting product for those who love to hang out in a group or with friends/family; creating a buzz in the market.



Cats Eye opens outlet at Mohammedpur

Renowned fashion brand Cats Eye has opened their latest outlet at Mohammedpur Krishi Market.

Apart from their brick and mortar stores they also offer their range of products via their online store, which now offers a 20 percent discount.

For details, visit www.catseye.com.bd

#HEALTH & FITNESS

Weight loss plateau and how to go over it

Hours in the gym, sore muscles, and not being able to munch away on your favourite snacks; a weight loss journey is not easy. This is what makes it so satisfying when the results begin to show.

Sometimes however, you may notice a slow down or even a temporary stop in this battle. This is when you know you have hit the plateau.

A weight loss plateau can be frustrating and utterly demoralising. Even though you are consuming the same amount of calories and following a regular workout routine, your weight refuses to budge. Don't worry though. Revising a few things in your daily routine can help overcome this predicament.

After the initial weight loss, your metabolism slows down as there is less body weight to support. The slow metabolism lets you burn the same amount of calories that you eat, resulting in a plateau.

Further cut back on calories maybe an easy option here, but it is not always a good idea. Going lower than 1200 calories per day can result in fatigue, nausea, constipation, headache, and in case of females, menstrual issues. Insufficient amount of calories causes the body to release hunger hormones and even reverse the weight loss.

A safer alternative is to cut back on carbohydrates while maintaining the minimal required amount of calories. Studies show that a low-carb diet is very effective for weight loss as it reduces hunger and promotes feeling of fullness. The best part of a low-carb diet is that it allows you to lose belly fat faster than other diet plans.

An increased protein intake boosts metabolism, hence reversing the plateau. It is also likely to restrict the amount of carbohydrates, which further contributes to weight loss by getting rid of the water weight.

Think outside the gym. When the body gets settled into a certain workout regime, it may become difficult to lose further weight with it.

Dance workouts have become increasingly popular in recent years as a fun alternative to regular workout routines.

We may sometimes trigger a sudden stop in weight loss due to increased level of stress. This feels like a vicious cycle because stressing about weight itself would slow it down even more! Hence, we take a different path to reverse this plateau.

Go for relaxation exercises like yoga, meditation, aromatherapy, and music and art therapy. Sometimes, practicing some simple deep breathing exercises will also help you get over a weight loss plateau.

Identifying a plateau is tricky. Oftentimes we tend to set unrealistic weight goals for ourselves which may make our ideal weight look bad. This is why it is an absolute to be in touch with a dietician when aiming to lose weight.

Either way, the goal is to be healthy, not necessarily skinny. Always remember to appreciate your sincere efforts and the weight you have managed to lose already.

By Nusrath Jahan

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#FOOD

CHIANGMI TALUKDER
LENA



Bamboo shoot recipes from the Chittagong Hill Tracts

It may once seem like the oddest of picks for a recipe, but the ever-rising popularity of bamboo shoots as a delicacy now makes fresh edible shoots available in the local market, especially during monsoon. Hill shoots are also available in the supermarket nowadays, not to mention online food pages.



Modern research has revealed that bamboo shoots have many health benefits such as improving appetite and digestion, weight loss and curing few diseases as shoots may



possibly have antibacterial and antiviral properties.

Traditionally, people like to cook and consume fresh or fermented shoots with sidol or dry fish paste gravy with other vegetables, and sometimes by stir frying with dried shrimp. Bamboo shoot meat curry is also a popular dish now. Bamboo shoots are versatile and allow pairings with a range of items like noodles, fried rice, soup to dal.

How to process —

To prepare fresh bamboo shoots, trim the fibrous outer layers and excess leaves starting from the base and working on towards its tip. Trim away any tough

portion at the base but reserve the tender leaves, as they are edible. Then dice the shoot to your desired sizes. Dip the cubes in a bowl of cold water to avoid them turning brown. As raw shoots contain toxins, cook the shoots uncovered in boiling, salted water for about 20 minutes to detoxify them.

BACHCHURI MALAH

Bachchuri malah or stuffed bamboo shoots is a traditional and popular dish to the indigenous people. Traditionally the stuffing is prepared with sautéed dry fish paste, but it can be prepared as one's preference with any minced meat or prawns, cheese etc.

Ingredients

- 6-8 pcs whole bamboo shoots, boiled
- ¼ cup sidol/fish paste/shrimp paste
- 10-15 green chilies, made into a coarse paste
- ¼ tsp turmeric powder
- ½ tsp red chilli powder
- 1 cup onion diced
- ½ cup lemon basil/coriander leaves/parsley/cilantro
- Oil

Method

To prepare the stuffing, heat a pan on medium flame. Add 2 tablespoons oil, onion, chilli paste, turmeric, red chilli powder, shrimp paste and sauté for a few minutes until the oil separates. Add basil, sauté for another minute and set aside to cool down.

Take the shoots and make holes through it vertically by using a spoon and then stuffed with the sautéed stuffing. Set aside and heat a frying pan with oil in low-medium flame. Sauté the stuffed bamboo shoots for a few minutes until skin colour changes to brown. Serve with hot steaming rice.

PRAWN BAMBOO SHOOT STIR-FRY

An easy bamboo shoots stir frying recipe that can be paired with any meat or ground meat and with seafood as well.

Ingredients

- 6-8 pcs boiled bamboo shoots
- 8-10 pcs prawn
- ½ cup onion, chopped
- 1 tbsp garlic, chopped
- 5-8 pcs green chillies, slit
- ¼ tsp turmeric powder
- ½ tsp black pepper powder
- 2 tsp soya sauce
- Salt to taste
- 2 tbsp oil

#LS EDITOR'S NOTE

Managing household expenditure: A family runs on two wheels

"If you are the bread earner, then I am the butter earner" — rounds with my husband always starts with this sentence. And indeed, it is true!

This debate is not something you make light of and toss away. You have to think about this very hard, it is about striking a financial balance within the family bounds and definitely not any wisecrack by me.

If your husband pays for the monthly infrastructural bills of your household, you pay for the daily expenditure of his home, which comes close to or even more at times than what he pays. So, next time you two sit with the household budget, please remember to add the cheesecake, the beef stew and the steak nights in.

Household management is tricky business; somehow you can never manage



the car mechanic's. And of course, the entertainment bills, snacks for movies nights, men's nights; ladies don't eat much so I rest my case.

By the 23rd day of the month, you are close to being broke and you are forced to order a Tk 90 lunch from the office cafeteria of half rice, an omelette and mashed potatoes. Strangely, it's one of your best lunches.

Money management for families is a joint venture, never underestimate your better halves' contribution; be it for house rent and driver's salary or the purchasing of butter and sauces. The family runs on two wheels!

— RBR
Photo: LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed



to stay within the budget, no matter how hard you vouch to not cross the utopian line of staying within the financial plan.

The first week goes like a breeze, then you get stuck with kitchen plumbing. The sudden water clogging in the sink goes

straight to the house's default pipe lines and the smug plumber hands you a bill.

Well, you can still pay him because it's only the seventh day of the month.

Then out of the blue, your dog starts to have her hernia pain or epileptic fits, and you need to run to the vet and the tab is nothing less than your monthly grocery bill. Then the washing machine circuit burns out, refrigerator ice making filter gets stuck, the 'socket jumper' (read: shock absorber) of the car cranks up. Any one of these need an expensive unexpected repair along the 15th day of the month, devouring out of your precious family monthly funds. Eerily enough, a big crisis is bound to fall up on you around the 15th

invariably!

It doesn't matter if you have a separate budgetary envelop for any unforeseen expenditure. By the way, you have envelopes for everything from the purchase of the chicken to the cheese; yet by the third week, your electricity pre-paid bills are pulled out to pay the car mechanic, or the fishmonger's dues are given to the electric handyman. High financing, basically financial transaction involving large sums, is the way of life.

So, when you sit for another mid-month urgent expenditure meeting with your husband and when he asks you where your salary went, hand him the 'butter' receipts, which should include the plumber's and



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ARIES
(MAR. 21-APR. 20)

Take advantage of your good fortune. Don't ignore your family's needs. Avoid upsetting your partner. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



TAURUS
(APR. 21-MAY 21)

Joint financial ventures will be profitable. Don't let yourself be too open. Don't fall for damaging rumours. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



GEMINI
(MAY 22-JUN. 21)

Not everyone will be trustworthy. Your partner will be difficult this week. Work can get hectic. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



CANCER
(JUN. 22-JUL. 22)

Helping others will carry favour. Make sure to pitch realistic solutions. Get involved in financial investments. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



LEO
(JUL. 23-AUG. 22)

Get busy with neglected projects. Get involved in humanitarian groups. Communications with loved ones may be strained. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



VRIGO
(AUG. 23-SEP. 23)

Seek a change of pace. Overindulgence could lead to problems. Be careful what you say. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



LIBRA
(SEP. 24-OCT. 23)

Formulate a course of action. Spend time with your partner this week. Make plans with loved ones. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



SCORPIO
(OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Don't bother impressing others. Avoid stressing out your partner. Plan a business venture. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



SAGITTARIUS
(NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

It's time to either fight or flee. Don't ask for favours. Keep your temper tantrums in check. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



CAPRICORN
(DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

Don't discuss personal matters openly. Its ok to have fun sometimes. Read carefully before signing contracts. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



AQUARIUS
(JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

Focus on your job. Avoid unsavoury situations. Avoid any overindulgences. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



PISCES
(FEB. 20-MAR. 20)

Unexpected romance may blossom on pleasure trips. Understand both sides of the situation. Don't avoid problems. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



HEALING cracked heels



Cracked heels are a common problem. The cold air, dehydration and a lack of moisture, taking long hot baths, using harsh, drying soaps on feet or scrubbing feet dry can cause heels to dry out fast and crack. Nowadays, getting a pedicure is not always possible to give our feet the care it needs. So, it only makes sense to start tending to dry and cracked heels at home.

Here are some steps to follow to keep your heels looking and feeling soft and supple, and ready for sandals —

Soak and exfoliate

One might consider setting some time aside once a week after showering to treat their feet. The main objective of sulking is to soften calloused and dry feet. So, soaking feet in warm water for

10 to 15 minutes will allow for cracked fields to hydrate and make it easier to use pumice stone or foot file. A pumice stone, a light-yet abrasive stone, is used to remove dry skin and dead skin.

For an extra flair, one could try adding a few drops of their favourite essential oil into the water to soak their feet.

Regular moisturising

Daily moisturising is crucial for healing cracked fields. Doing so, keeps the skin hydrated and soft, preventing damage.

The right footwear

If the heels are constantly cracked despite taking measures, it may be worth reevaluating one's shoe collection. Certain pairs can aggravate the heels, particularly tighter shoes that tend to restrict movement or shoes that have a stiff heel counter (the slightly elevated part on the back of the shoe which might touch the ankle).

Just like skincare routine, it is just as important to invest in foot-care even after the cracks have healed. The best remedy for cracked heels is to prevent it in the first place and this can be done through regular moisturising and weekly exfoliating in both cold and warm weather. In doing so, one will always be ready to put their best foot forward!

By Puja Sarkar

Photo: LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed

#HEALTH & FITNESS

HOME REMEDIES for brittle nails

Like hair fall and skin issues, an improper diet and a lack of nutrients contributes to brittle nails. A balanced nutrient-rich diet would be beneficial for making nails stronger and healthier.

Nail care is a part of self-care. Taking about 10 minutes daily to nourish the nails will not only add to the beauty of one's hand but also make one feel healthy and confident!

Often times, our nails lack moisture becoming dry and brittle due to repeated washing and drying of



Vitamin E oil massage

Vitamin E oil works as an effective cure for brittle nails proving a boost of moisturisation and hydration, and also noticing nail cuticles.

No biting!

Biting nails makes nails weaker and more prone to breaking. Putting a Band-Aid or tape around each nail or applying nail polish with a bitter taste should prevent one from biting.

Nail care

Keeping nails clean to prevent infections and dirt accumulation aids nail growth. Never leave nails wet as wet nails are more susceptible to infection.

By Puja Sarkar

Photo: LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed

finger nails. However, soft and brittle nails which break easily, are caused by too much moisture being overexposed to detergents, cleaners, and sometimes, even nail polish remover.

For those who experience slow nail growth, brittle nails, nail breakage and splitting, here are some natural, home remedies for healthy and strong nails —

Coconut oil and honey

Combining three teaspoons of coconut oil and one teaspoon of honey, it needs to be warmed in the microwave for about 20 seconds. Soaking nails in this mixture for about 10 minutes daily or letting the mixture soak overnight wearing cotton gloves is an effective natural overnight treatment. This could be done for a month before results appear.

Olive oil and lemon

Soaking nails in a mixture of three tablespoons of olive oil and one tablespoon of lemon juice for 10 minutes daily is one of the best natural ways to grow and strengthen nails. Applying only warm olive oil to the end of the nails is also effective.

Moisturise

Dry and brittle nails break easily. Moisturising nails with tea tree oil, almond oil, jojoba oil, flaxseed oil, pumpkin seed oil, or vitamin E oil daily for about 10 minutes makes nails stronger, preventing them from breaking.





Casual, comfortable and generally affordable, flip flops, in addition to being the summer style staple, have become the new go-to fashion choice for present-day fashionistas along with baggy jeans and crop tops. From donning a laid-back look to helping you channel a polished appearance; flip flops are here to be your classic and fashionable footwear choice.

FLIP FLOPS *can be* fashionable too



Back in the day, flip flops were traditionally chosen for their casualness and comfort, but nowadays these are worn on various occasions along with causal outings.

One thing we should keep in mind that flip flops are not the same as sandals. They have been designed to slip on and off easily, and commonly consist of a flat sole held loosely on feet by a Y-shaped strap, the toe thong. For this reason, flip flops are called thong sandals. Interestingly, this type of footwear gets its name from the literal flip-flopping sound it makes!

Varieties of flip flops

Tonnes of flip flops belonging to a variety of styles, brands and designs are available on the market today. The most common and average one is the rubber flip flops. This type of flip flop can frequently be seen during summertime.

Flip flops made of leather strap are great

for casual outings, and these give a stylish edge to a casual look. Then we have the suede flip flops which are usually worn by men, and suede gives the flip flop a very polished finish. Moreover, many people prefer to wear suede flip flops while going to a party or informal gatherings.

Wedge heel flip flops or also known as the platform slides have been a very popular choice among women. This type of footwear is basically made of rubber, but it has a wedge heel extending its height. And the extended part is also made from the same material.

Similar to wedge flip flops, there are the heeled flip flops. It features a heel at the back of the shoe, and this type of heel can be tall or short. Regardless, it has Y-shaped straps with nothing on the back. Furthermore, slides are also considered flip flops; however, these usually have one wide band that covers the foot instead of a Y-shaped strap.

Other types of flip flops include toe hole flip flops, slipper flip flops and the Birkenstock flip flops.

Styling

While many of us prefer to wear them only for casual outings and consider it the ideal footwear for rainy summer weather, we must know that if styled properly flip flops can help us don a chic look. These strappy sandals can be even used as semi-formal footwear, for example, you can put together an elegant look donned with trousers, an oversized button-down, and simple, well-designed platform slides. Likewise, long or flared pants or skinny jeans look well with flip flops.

Choose the type of flip flop that suits you the best, but make sure to get a pedicure or paint your nails. As pedicured and painted toes always make look everyone a lot more stylish.

Where to look —

They are almost everyone's go-to footwear choice, and these are plentifully available in many departmental shoe stores. Nonetheless, if you want to explore a wide range of variety, our very familiar Gawsia Market is the best option for you. Here you can find vendors selling just about every type. The price is also quite reasonable; the flip flops sold here are around Tk 200-350. However, if you are more concerned about the quality of the footwear and looking to buy a more sustainable one, you can try out the shops such as Bata or Apex.

By Ayman Anika

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

Model: Nazia

Make-up: Sumon

Styling: Sonia Yeasmin Isha



The 'no makeup' look

It has been on the trends for quite some time now and looks like it is here to stay. This only makes sense because it accentuates your appearance without having to use a lot of products. This is a minimalistic and effortless look for your everyday use. The heavy foundation, winged eyes, fake lashes, made up broad eyebrows and bold lips is not something you would want to wear at a college class, a casual outing with friends or even at work. That is where the 'no makeup' look comes into action.

However, it is not as easy as it seems to pull the look off properly. Certain hacks must be followed to get the desired result.

The most important step is to prep your skin before applying anything. The secret behind that perfect glow is a thoroughly cleansed face. Make sure to properly exfoliate your skin that will allow better absorption of products later on. You can also use a hydrating face mask beforehand to get the extra radiance.

The next step is using a primer. It will give you a smooth texture and hide any pores, without clogging them. Once you are done priming, you can use a tinted moisturiser, BB or CC cream, instead of foundation. These products further smoothen out the texture of your skin while keeping some imperfections like spots or redness visible. This gives you a more 'natural' look in contrast to foundations which make your skin look flawless.

If you think your blemishes and dark circles are still quite visible, you can use a lightweight concealer. It is wise to use a cream bronzer instead of its powder counterpart as the former gives you a more natural dewy look.

As for highlighting, it is good to use ones with less shimmer. Cream blushes blend in with your skin very well and thus give you that perfect natural flush.

As you want to keep things simple, it is wise not to draw your brows. Instead, just use a brow gel with fibres and brush them up into place.

You can leave your lashes just as they are. But if you must do something to them, either curl them a bit or use a very small amount of mascara to give some extra volume.

The last step in completing your natural look is your lips. To achieve popsicle lips, you can use tinted lip balms, or use a tissue to dab off excess lipstick after application.

By Faiza Khondokar

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

Model: Efa

Make-up: Sumon

Styling: Sonia Yeasmin Isha



Bamboo shoot recipes from the Chittagong Hill Tracts

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Method

Chop bamboo shoots vertically and discard prawn shells and set aside. Heat a pan on medium flame with oil. Add chopped garlic and sauté until brown. Add onion, chillies, turmeric powder, prawn and sauté for a few minutes. Add chopped shoots and soya sauce, black pepper powder and stir fry until bamboo shoots become tender. Adjust the salt. Garnish with any herb leaves.

BACHCHURI BODA HOLA

This is another Chakma style 'hola' or stir-fry where traditionally dry shrimps and 'boda' or eggs are used to get the authentic flavour.

Ingredients

5-6 pcs boiled bamboo shoots, chopped thinly
2 eggs
10-15 pcs large dry shrimp
2 medium onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, chopped
5-6 green chillies, slit
¼ tsp turmeric powder
3 tbsp oil
Salt to taste
Any herbs for garnishing

Method

Heat oil in a pan on medium flame. Add garlic and onion, sauté for a minute. Add turmeric, green chillies and dry shrimp, sauté for another minute until dry shrimp become crispy. Add thinly chopped bamboo shoots, salt and fry until shoots get tender. Add beaten eggs over the shoots and stir fry until eggs get mixed and cooked properly. Garnish with any herb leaves such as basil, coriander etc. Serve hot with steam rice.

DUCK CURRY WITH BAMBOO SHOOTS

Ingredients

1 whole young duck (approx. 1.5 kg)
6-8 pcs boiled bamboo shoots
2 cups chopped onion
2 tbsp ginger-garlic paste
1 cup oil
1 tsp turmeric powder
3 tsp red chilli powder
1 tsp cumin powder
1 tsp coriander powder
1 big cinnamon stick
5 green cardamoms
1 star anise
6-8 pcs green chilli
6-8 cups water
Salt to taste

Method

Clean and skin the duck. Cut into 3- to 4-inch-long pieces and set aside. Heat a cooking pot with oil on medium flame. Add onion and salt and fry until golden. Add ½ cup of water. Cook the fried onion for a minute. Add ginger garlic paste and fry. Add all the whole garam masalas and let fry for another minute. Add ½ cup water along with turmeric, red chilli and all powdered masala. Stir and cook for a minute until the spicy aromas fill the air. Add duck pieces and cook, stirring often until water goes and oil comes out. Add a little bit of water at a time and cook in the same process for 2-3 times.

Add bamboo shoots and let them sauté in the duck masala oil for a few minutes, stirring often. Add water, cover with lid and let it cook in low-medium flame until meat gets tender. Adjust the gravy amount by adding water if needed. Adjust salt amount. Add green chillies and cook with a cover for another minute.

Food and Photo: Chiangmi Talukder Lena



#FOOD

Grilling techniques for smoky flavours!

A grill or barbeque is perhaps the most commonly used equipment here to seal that charred flavour, which has become a home staple. And to every foodie's excitement, it is that time of the year again – to pull out your grilling machines and get your skewers ready!

If done right, charring meat not only adds a depth of flavour, but imparts a subtle bitterness that tantalises the taste buds. Alongside, this technique enhances the colour of food and infuses a potent aroma making food seem more appetising.

The use of charcoal is what packs that unique woody flavour and a distinctive hit of smokiness. But that doesn't mean you cannot receive similar results without firing up your barbeque. Much to our delight, modern cooks have found smarter ways to mimic that smoky flavour.

One such technique is to burn a piece of coal until it becomes incandescently orange. Place that in a small bowl, drop a little amount of ghee, and cover instantly. Puffs of smoke will rise, which shall infuse with the meat, whether you are grilling on a pan or marinating.

Another clever way to sneak that delectable smoky flavour is by using smoked spices or marinades. If your marinade requires vegetable puree, such as tomatoes, bell peppers, or onions, try scorching them over open flame, much like we do with grilled corn.

As a last resort, a good old grill pan with ridges can be your grilling partner. Although it takes time, labour, and patience, by grilling the right protein at the right temperature, it is possible to capture that distinctive charred flavour.

Charred and smoky flavour is a unique cuisine of its own. There is something extremely piquant about a perfectly scorched piece of meat that everybody likes. After all, we all love munching on those burnt bits of grilled meat, don't we?

By Fariha Amber
Photo: LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed



#GARDENING

WARA KARIM

Writer, painter, gardener, content creator
Website: <http://www.scratchingout.com>



Of plant, plate, and palate

Ask anyone who has grown fruits, vegetables, or even culinary herbs if homegrown produce savour better in comparison with store-bought varieties. A gardener's answer will be an unequivocal yes. Even simple green chillies or coriander leaves taste so much better and fresher when they are grown at home.

I have a small backyard, most of which is dedicated to flowers. However, we have been growing edibles for the past two summers. Although not a seasoned vegetable gardener, I can still vouch for the freshness homegrown produce add to my meals. This year, we have grown Malabar spinach (pui shak), red amaranth (lal shak), lemon cucumber, Serrano pepper, two types of eggplants, and three varieties of tomatoes in our small space. We shared our harvest with friends and neighbours, too.

Growing fruits, veggies, and herbs at home gives you the freedom to choose the varieties you love to eat. When you grow your edibles from seeds, the options are even wider. Although it does take some time and effort to germinate seeds, it is still worth it. Some seeds sprout easily, others require controlled conditions. It took our Malabar spinach seeds almost three weeks to sprout, for instance.

I started this piece with praises for the savour and flavour that homegrown foods bring to our taste buds. So, why do homegrown foods taste so much better? There are a number of reasons. For instance, commercial producers tend to grow varieties that give them more yield but take less time to mature. For hobby growers like me, the emphasis is more on quality than quantity. We try to use high quality soil and steer clear of chemical pesticides and fertilisers, which all add to the taste of our produce. Not just taste, garden vegetables are also richer in nutrients.

Supermarket fruits and vegetables



travel long distances; days, even weeks pass before they reach our kitchen. How do you think they still manage to look fresh? They are treated with chemicals or stored in a controlled environment to

retain the fresh and shiny look that freshly harvested foods have. On the other hand, homegrown produce is either eaten or cooked almost right after they are picked. Nothing can beat this sort of freshness!

Homegrown food also tastes better because you have witnessed the whole process it took for the food to reach your plate. The facts that you took care of the plant, watered and fertilised it, clipped off dead leaves, killed bugs, and pulled weeds are enough for a gardener to feel differently towards homegrown foods.

For you to grow herbs and vegetables, it is not necessary to own a plot of ground



at all. We have grown tomatoes, chillies, cucumbers, okras, red amaranth, and eggplants in containers. Herbs are ever easier to grow; mint, basil, and coriander leaves can be conveniently grown in small pots.

Your rooftop or balcony garden can be a source of fresh-nutritious fruits, vegetables, and herbs for you and your family. Yes, you will need to make an investment of time and love, but this is the sort of investment that guarantees a pleasure of the palate. So, why not? The power to 'plant a plate' can be yours.

Photo: Wara Karim

এখন ফাস্ট ওয়াশ
ডিটারজেন্ট পাউডার
১ কেজির সাথে
১ টি **৫৭০** লব্ধীসোপ **ফ্রী!**

Fast wash
DETERGENT POWDER
১ টি **৫৭০** লব্ধী সাবান **ফ্রী!**

KOHINOOR CHEMICAL

#FASHION & BEAUTY

The dazzling Jamdanis of Rabindranath Ekhane Kokhono Khetee Ashenni



The cover of the book gave me an early introduction to Mushkan Zuberi; her deep-set eyes lined with pitch black kohl, olive toned skin, and an attractive red dot in the middle of her forehead, and somehow everything else fell into place from that point on. Srijit Mukherjee, the director of REKKA, and Anindo Banerjee from Hoichoi gave me more details and this made me understand Zuberi better. To recreate their ideation, I dressed myself in my mother's old cotton Jamdani and sent them a picture, and there was simply no turning back from that point on!

— Azmeri Haque Badhon

I watched the web series for three main reasons — my undying affection for thrillers written by Bengali writers (this particular one also had a hint of supernatural thrown into it – talk about luck!). For the protagonists of the series, played by favourites (colossal fan of Azmeri Haque Badhon and Rahul Bose). And last but not the least, a particular set of wardrobes, particularly that of the character Mushkan Zuberi, also played by Badhon.

Yes! Can't be glad enough that she was clad mostly in exquisite pieces of Dhakai Jamdani all throughout the series. The oozing splendour just made me fall in love with the craftsmanship all over again.

At times, when people have been experimenting with the regal Jamdani and almost stripping it off its authenticity with additional (read: unnecessary) embellishments, REKKA proved once

again the sophistication behind simplicity, especially when it's Jamdani, it means there's simply no space or even need for experimentation.

The web series begins with scenes where Zuberi is clad in a daisy-white Jamdani with paisley motifs and tiny red dots, a modern-cut blouse, antiquated silver jewellery, and a maroon-red shawl, the gorgeous Bengali girl shines like a pearl in her wardrobe. Had I not read the book by Mohammad Nazim Uddin earlier, it would have been hard for me to focus on the storyline because my eyes would be wandering in glorification of the apparel.

The second shot with Zuberi had been equally enthralling because this time, she was wearing a special Jamdani with wine-coloured motifs, a *mangalsutra* style neckpiece, matching lipstick and a tiny red dot on her forehead as *teep*.

Right when I thought nothing else could elevate the character more, Zuberi enters the screen in an emerald green Jamdani and an exquisite pearl necklace and the character immediately transforms into a

real-life person with her own thoughts, feelings and convictions.

Badhon playing Mushkan Zuberi proved once again that Bengali women, with their attractive olive skin tones, didn't need much to impress, except for the right attire, simplicity and a whole lot of confidence to revamp their looks any given day.

After the first few shots, there were not many wardrobe changes in between, maybe a plain ivory-white silk sari and speckled beige silk to carry through, but then the producers offered to make the ending trump the entire wardrobe collection. Zuberi shines like a star in this particular scene, clad a white and Chartreuse yellow Jamdani. To be more precise, the screens simply lit-up as she moved about in the classy sari with poise and élan.

Speaking about the styling magnificence, it seemed only justified that we speak to the actress herself. And Azmeri Haque Badhon, along with her infectious smile, had a lot to share with her ardent fan.

"The wizardry happened because of extremely creative people like Sanchita Bhattacharjee, our costume designer,

Somnath Kundu, makeup artist and Sima Ghosh, hair makeover artist. These people are no less than magicians; they helped me bring Mushkan Zuberi alive along with the script, direction and acting," opined Badhon.

Thanks to her approachable nature, we did get a lot of information on styling from the lead actor, but a major information had still been missing. We were yet to be familiarised with the source of the magnificent Jamdanis and Badhon was only 'all smiles' upon inquiry.

"Thank God you asked, I am a big fan of the brand Zaaya, it's a local Jamdani house with an active online presence. I asked the owner for several Jamdanis, right before leaving Dhaka for the part, and she willingly reached out in an extremely short time and the rest of the spellworking is visible on screen," said the revered actor.

Yes, we certainly did witness the magic on-screen. And what a 'special blend' it was! Something to etch into our memories for a long time to come.

While the story behind REKKA was all about a scheming woman who seduced men to do her bidding, it was mostly about her wardrobe and choice of styling for many of us. The backstory of the mysterious 19th century Bengali elite added to the plotline just made it ten times more interesting. After all, what identities would we have sans the unique stories of our past, our lineage and heritage crafts?

By Mehrin Mubdi Chowdhury
Photo: Collected – Azmeri Haque Badhon / Hoichoi

