



ECHOES BY
 ASRAR CHOWDHURY

HOW I KEPT MY NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

I
 It is easy to make a New Year's resolution, but almost impossible to stick to it. Unforeseen events emerge to distract you. However, if you target something close to your heart, then maybe, you can stick to a resolution for 365 days.

In December 2020, it had been one year since my heart attack. My music centre was lying idle. I looked at my turntable and decided to rebuild my music library with mainly vinyls. It was a challenging task, but one that I can now comfortably say, in December 2021, was an enjoyable experience.

II
 After my SSC in 1985, my parents gifted me a National Panasonic cassette and radio player. The price, Tk 5,500, was a hefty amount in those days. Soon, this two-in-one became my portal with the outside world.

The radio opened the world of BBC, VOA, Australian Broadcasting, All India Radio, and Radio Ceylon. The cassette player made me fall in love with music. Whatever pocket money I could muster, I would spend on recording cassettes from Rainbow, Rhythm, Soor Bichitra, Geetali and Soor Kallal in New Elephant Road.

The recording stores would tape from 12 inch LPs or 7 inch EPs to an audio cassette. I loved going through the LPs. There would be information about the album, sometimes little posters in the inner sleeves, too. This romanticism of LPs made me dream that one day I would have a collection of LPs in a grand music library.

By 1995, I had a decent collection of cassettes and CDs in my music library,

but few LPs. I made an effort then to collect LPs, but failed. Then came December 2020. Could I stick to a target for 365 days? I was adamant this time, but had to be organised.

III
 In an Excel file, each sheet was the source of where I collected the LPs. Dates of purchase and price details were noted. I would follow-up on the sources in a separate sheet at the end of the month. I was aware of a few things.

First: LPs in Bangladesh are available, but sources and supply are erratic.

Second: Prices vary. I had to be prepared to pay a higher price.

Third: There could be unforeseen events and expenses.

Fourth: Look away from the money spent. The objective is to rebuild.

Fifth: Try attaining the target a few months earlier. So I could collect in a relaxed mood.

I followed all the above religiously. I passed my target by June or July. The last golden rule I followed was not to make the resolution public. Only and only after the task has been achieved, would I come out of my shell.

IV
 I am happy having achieved a dream I had from childhood to listen to albums on LPs. I am happier to share the New Year's resolution this year. Now, to listen to my music library in 2022 and beyond.

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satire.

Local borhani connoisseur looks to set new standards

ABIR HOSSAIN

A string of flavours, a scrumptious kick, a warm embrace – these are the makings of the finest *borhani* one might have the privilege of tasting. This excellent drink is a testament to the staples of Bangladeshi cuisine and celebrates our refined palate. *Borhani* is made up of a bunch of ingredients that may sound like a juxtaposition but possesses the perfect “marriage” of flavours.

However, apart from the seasonal appearance at weddings and a rare glass here and there, *borhani* appears to fly under the radar but a collective has sought to change that. The Fine Borhani Club is a group that bleeds *borhani* and strives to share their passion with the world.

“The beverage completes the gap between a regular meal and the perfect wedding feast. It might also be interpreted as the remedy that prevents middle-aged wedding attendees from being blown into oblivion,” said Mrs Shantana, founder of The Fine Borhani Club.

The group had humble beginnings. From crashing one wedding to another, being confronted and eventually kicked out, the members had to fight for their place, just not literally.

“We were providing wonderful insight into the mediocre abomination they were serving. I mean, who even needs an invitation to express their opinions?” exclaimed a bewildered Mrs Shantana.

According to her, the average Dhaka resident is invited to four weddings each year; seven if they're lucky. But that implies no one takes notice of their presence. Such meagre numbers are not enough.

Nonetheless, having attended enough receptions, she has developed a sophisticated process of tasting *borhani*. It may be judged based on texture, the kick, and the experience, or “drink, delegate, and derive,” as Mrs. Shantana has phrased it.

“The drink may exude grit or serenade coolness, it may be thick and buttery or acidic and tangy,” continues the connoisseur. “There is a rare threshold where everything just clicks.”

The Fine Borhani Club deviates from numbers and instead prefers using alternatives such as “Divorce on the fourth week” or “A happily ever after.” Anything in between is left to the reviewer's creativity.

Mrs. Shantana says she started this out of love. *Borhani*, for her, is the ultimate form of tying a stronger knot.

“Each member we have here is like family. We recruited some because they threatened to expose our identities at uninvited weddings but you learn to love them.”

After decades of sipping secretly and critiquing quietly, it is finally time for the Club to emerge. The Fine Borhani Club is ready to become a household name and a permanent presence in weddings across the country. Invite them and witness the mastery unravel before your eyes. They promise to be honest, although, for the right price, that too might change.

In due time, The Fine Borhani Club will be everywhere.

Abir Hossain is a failed SoundCloud Rapper. Tell him you too can't find anything to rhyme oranges with at: fb/abir.hossain.19



PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA