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Star LIFE

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RETRO Vibes

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THE MAGIC OF BLACK & WHITE
MAKING COFFEE LIKE A PRO P4-5
GUIDE TO BECOMING A BARISTA
NOSTALGIA REVISITED P12
ARCADE GAMES

PHOTO: ADNAN RAHMAN
MODEL: FAZLA RABBI KHAN
STYLING: SONIA YEASMIN ISHA
MAKEUP: SUMON RAHAT

#FASHION & BEAUTY

Rain or shine, keep your glow: Monsoon skincare hacks

Hot and humid, the Bangladeshi monsoon can create havoc on your skin. The merciless heatwave that we experience even in the rainy season makes the skin vulnerable to increased secretion from sebaceous glands. This makes the skin appear oily; dry skin becomes rough and patchy. To prevent such nightmares, try these simple, monsoon skincare tips that can help you navigate the season without compromising glowing skin.

Make a routine

Make yourself a skincare routine during the monsoon. Go for minimal makeup to avoid clogged pores.

Start with cleansing, followed by toning and moisturising in the morning and at night.

Exfoliation is key

As we sweat, the skin accumulates dirt that clogs skin pores. The benefits of exfoliation are many, especially if you are battling against breakouts that look awful.

Exfoliation, the process of removing dead cells from the surface of your skin, can help remove clogged pores and improve the texture and tone of the skin. It can also stimulate the growth of new skin cells, which will give a smoother look.

Stay hydrated

Needless to say, even in monsoon, you need to replenish the water lost in the heat. Hydration can help you expel toxins from the body and help retain the elasticity of the skin. Well-hydrated skin appears radiant and youthful and can help prevent dry skin and acne.

Eat healthy

For maintaining skin health, eat foods rich in vitamin C and antioxidants, as these can prevent or delay cell damage. Antioxidants are found in fruits and vegetables and also dietary supplements. Eat in moderation foods that are rich in sugar and low in fibre. Also, avoid fast food and a high-carb diet.

Wear protective clothes

This may seem obvious, but we cannot reiterate the importance of comfortable clothing during monsoon. This will not only shield your skin against the harsh rays of the sun but also allow the skin to "breathe".

Never forget the sunscreen when the sun shines

An SPF 30 sunscreen can help block UV rays and prevent painful sunburns. It also slows down the signs of ageing in your skin and maintains an even skin tone.

By Mannan Mashhur Zarif
Photo: Shahrear Kabir Heemel
Model: Neelanjana
Styling: Sonia Yeasmin Isha
Mua: Piash
Location: Le Meridian Dhaka

#FOOD & RECIPES

Architect by day, baker by passion:

Arifa Malik Bristy on crafting delightful cookies

The worlds of architecture and baking are certainly quite different. Yet, both require precision and planning, which architect Arifa Malik Bristy — the CEO of architectural firm, Irenderer — has mastered. Cookie Craft BD is Bristy's online venture that turns flour, sugar, and passion into delicious cookies.

"Baking has always been a hobby, but the idea of turning it into a business was inspired by the support from my friends and family," Arifa reflects.

While as an architect, buildings may be Bristy's professional canvas, cookies have become her personal one, allowing the talented architect to sculpt sweetness into every bite and rewind.

"I bake cookies when I feel bored or exhausted from my professional responsibilities. So, I would say Cookie Craft BD is like my pet project, which is still flourishing," she says.

Cookies from her shop have been showcased in various corporate events, garnering good reviews and encouraging feedback. "The response I got is pretty much heartening for me to go forward," says Bristy.

Despite the success and popularity, Bristy remains cautious about expansion. "As it is a niche market and requires a substantial investment, I am still pursuing my research and have yet to open a physical store," Arifa Malik Bristy explains.

Bristy has introduced healthy options like her popular oats cookies. "Clients appreciate our healthier options, particularly the oats cookies made with brown sugar. This positive reception encourages me to explore and create more health-conscious recipes," she shares.

This approach not only meets customer demands but also aligns with modern dietary trends, broadening her market reach.

Bristy believes in the joy and creativity baking can bring, not just as a business but also as a recreational activity. To share this passion, she has designed DIY cookie kits for children, which include creative tools like colouring templates.

"These kits are more than just about baking; they provide a creative outlet for children to express themselves while having fun with their culinary creations," Bristy comments, emphasising the dual benefits of her products.

Running a niche business like Cookie Craft BD comes with its set of hurdles, especially in logistics and client acquisition. Bristy candidly discusses these obstacles: "Navigating the small business landscape is challenging, particularly in a niche market. We have faced significant issues with delivery, where many cookies were damaged en route, leading us to adopt a more reliable but costly private delivery service."

Her resilience in the face of these challenges reflects her dedication to maintaining quality and customer satisfaction. She encourages other aspiring entrepreneurs to start, regardless of external scepticism.

"Starting your own business is undoubtedly challenging, but immensely rewarding. It's important to persevere, even when support seems sparse," she asserts, offering a dose of inspiration drawn from her own experiences.

Perhaps by taking motivation from Bristy's story, we can also turn our hobbies into successful businesses. It requires a leap of faith, dedication, and of course, strategic planning and determination.

If you wish to try out the delicious cookies from Cookie Craft BD, please visit: https://www.instagram.com/cookiecraft.bd

By Ayman Anika
Photos: Courtesy

#LIFE EXPERIENCES

TURNING COFFEE HABIT INTO A HOT CAREER

Train to become a barista

Imagine being an expert at making the ideal cup of coffee, discovering the subtleties of creating the perfect latté, and comprehending the intricacies of coffee beans worldwide. It is a profitable career choice for students intending to study abroad. Skilled baristas are in high demand, making a barista training programme a gateway to a successful career. And this is where Awake Coffee Roasters comes in.

Navid Hasan, a culinary expert and serial entrepreneur, shares how his passion for coffee took him across the globe. "I wanted to work in the coffee industry for a long time," Navid recalls. So, I got an SCA certification (Specialty Coffee Association of America). This lengthy process involves studying and taking an exam to get the certificate."

After years of training and research with coffee experts in India, China, Singapore, Nepal, and Italy, Navid started Coffee Roasters in Bashundhara R/A in late 2020. The venture was born out of countless hours of research and development, sometimes working for 34 hours straight.

"Coffee has a lot of intricacies and several factors leading to a good taste," Navid explains. These include moisture, altitude, origin, bean density, and flavour profile.

Speciality cafes worldwide offer customised products, with baristas who are incredibly well-versed in their craft. This inspired Navid to create a specialised Barista skill workshop in Dhaka. "We offered this not only to our baristas but to anyone looking to enter the coffee industry," he says. "A speciality cafe has more nuances and is a knowledge-driven practice where the people are passionate about what they do, and the product is of the highest quality."

The barista training course is a comprehensive journey that covers everything from the fundamental ten attributes of roasted coffee to sensory evaluation and flavour profiles.

"Coffee tasting starts with your olfactory senses and is a very complex product with more than 800 volatile chemicals," Navid explains. "The training takes your coffee experience to the next level because the barista knows the intricacies and flavour profiles behind the coffee they are using."

This thorough training ensures that you are well-prepared for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead in the coffee industry.

The six-day programme kicks off with the fundamentals of coffee—understanding the ten attributes of roasted coffee. This basic understanding is essential for anyone who wants to become an expert brewer.

The magic occurs during the practical training phase. To guarantee consistency and quality in each cup, trainees practise various aspects of espresso extraction and master procedures. They learn the nuances of boiling milk and honing the technique of latte art, which is both an art and a science. This hands-on learning experience boosts self-assurance and prepares them for the real world of coffee.

The course also includes lessons on alternative drink processes and single-origin espresso. To ensure they are knowledgeable about various coffee preparation techniques, trainees are exposed to multiple brewing techniques, such as Aeropress, Chemex, and V60. They also delve into the realm of single-origin espresso to comprehend how the origin of the beans influences the flavour profile and overall coffee experience.

Lastly, the business aspect of becoming a barista is covered throughout the training. This covers equipment upkeep, customer service abilities, and even some managerial tips for coffee shops. The goal is to create well-rounded baristas who can

positively impact the business they work for and are adept at brewing coffee.

Beyond mastering the art of coffee, the course also emphasises environmental consciousness. Coffee Roasters serves water in glass bottles to avoid plastics, promoting a more environmentally friendly and sustainable approach.

"We want to create more awareness and be more conscious of people and their actions," Navid says. We want to positively impact the coffee chain, starting with farmers, producers, baristas, and customers," he said.

The training has proven beneficial for many students. It opens up opportunities abroad for part-time jobs at cafes.

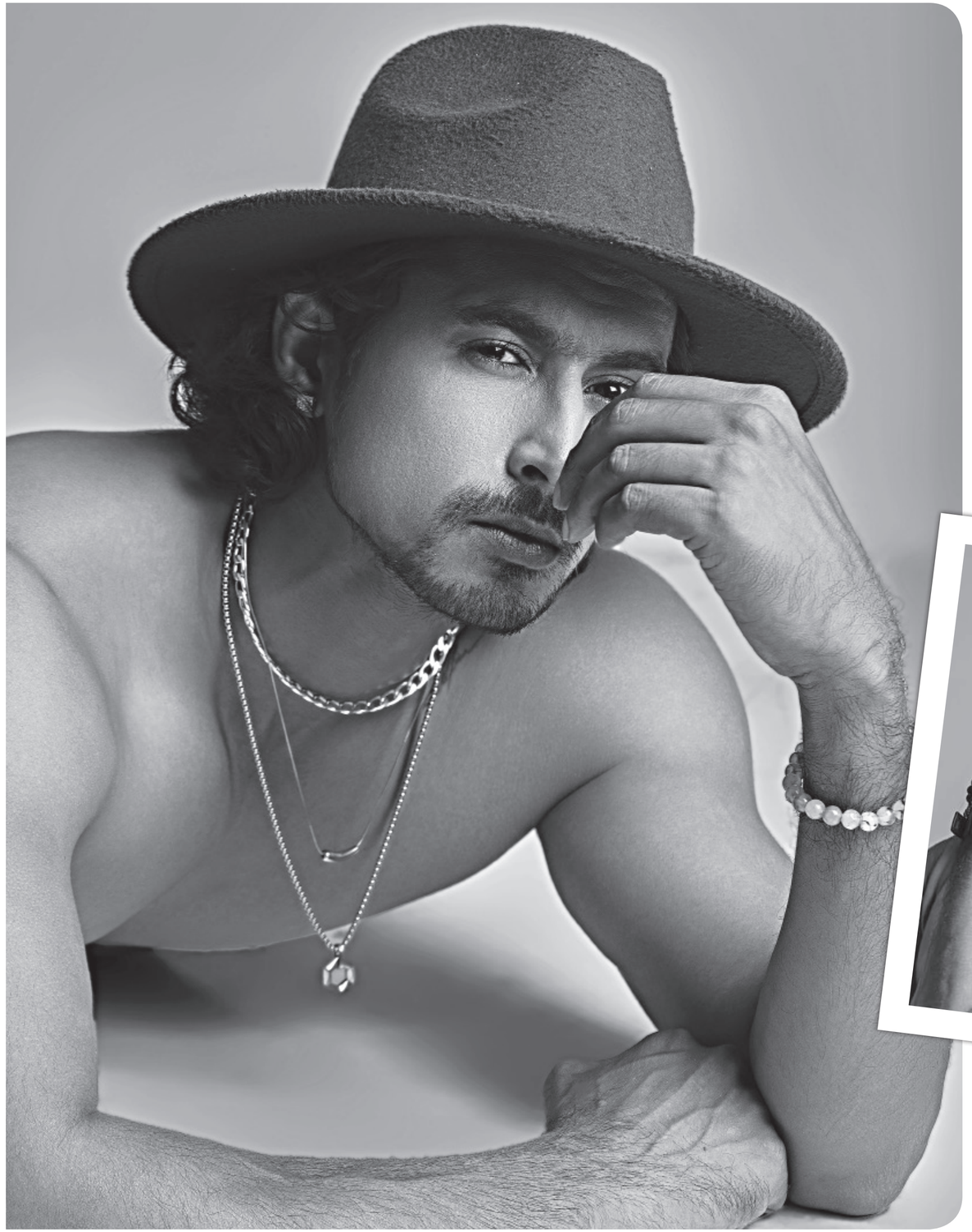
"We have a good amount of students going abroad, and this course helps them as the coffee industry is huge in the West," Navid notes. Additionally, skilled baristas from the programme are finding opportunities in the Middle East.

So, if you are in Dhaka and seeking a fun and fulfilling extracurricular activity, try barista training. It's a talent that enhances your personal experience and leads to fascinating work chances worldwide. Whether you are a coffee connoisseur or a student wanting to study abroad, learning the art of coffee might open up a world of possibilities. And who knows? You may be the next great star in Dhaka's coffee scene.

By K Tanzeel Zaman
Photo: Collected

RETRO *rewind*

When vintage style leads to modern swag



Retro fashion has a timeless appeal that draws us. Whether it's the glamorous elegance of the 1920s, the rebellious flair of the '50s, or the bold statements of the '80s —the fashion of the eras was so iconic that every generation wants to add its spin to it.

The retro style is all about uncovering history, not just about discovering clothes. Designers are always reinventing classic looks to make it relevant to current trends. Consider 60s-inspired slim-fit suits or contemporary cotton shirts that draw inspiration from the 1940s military style. These items are designed to meet modern tastes and silhouettes while retaining the essence of their retro ancestors.

Although the style owes its origins in ancient Greece, tank tops made their first appearance in the fashion of the common man in the '50s, ushered by the popular look of Marlon Brando in the film, A Streetcar Named Desire.

We owe the counterculture of the 60s more than we think for our fashion inspirations, and tank tops are no different. Successive decades brought its distinct style to wearing sleeveless tops.

Today, tank tops come in a wide variety of styles and fabrics following the cue from the 1980s, when they were made popular by the workout culture.

There are many unique textures and patterns in retro clothing. The vivid checks and stripes are coming back in style. These can be used with contemporary items to produce a well-balanced, nostalgic, yet fresh style. Try wearing velvet blazers, suede jackets, and cotton trousers; they give your outfit depth and personality.

A great approach to add to retro style without fully committing to a look is through accessories. Any ensemble can be enhanced with vintage watches, leather belts, and classic aviator sunglasses. Something as basic as a pair of suspenders can make heads turn.

Social media deserves a round of applause for keeping retro fashion relevant. There are several influencers on platforms like Instagram and TikTok who can guide you to combine antique pieces with modern aesthetics.

These influencers are bringing retro fashion back into the mainstream and proving that you do not have to spend a fortune to appear fashionable and original.

By Maisha Tarannum Iqbal
Photo: Adnan Rahman
Model: Fazla Rabbi Khan
Styling: Sonia Yeasmin isha
Makeup: Sumon Rahat

Embracing retro fashion WITH CONFIDENCE

Men's clothes will continue to feature retro style as long as designers continue to be inspired by them. Confidence is the key to looking great in retro fashion; it is a means of self-expression. Here are some ways to help you stylishly embrace retro style:

START SMALL: If you are new to retro fashion, start with accessories or a single statement piece. Chunky rings or a retro hat can be the safest options to start with.

MIX AND MATCH: Combine vintage items with what you already own. The ideal balance can be achieved by teaming a contemporary ensemble with retro-style shoes or a blazer.

TAILORING IS KEY: Make sure your retro pieces fit well. A good tailor can make a vintage suit look like it was made just for you.

STAY TRUE TO YOURSELF: If it does not feel right, do not feel obligated to give it your all. Include pieces that express your individuality and that speak to you.

EXPERIMENT AND HAVE FUN: Fashion is all about having fun. Until you discover something you enjoy, experiment your way into fashion.

A NOTE ON NUTRITION

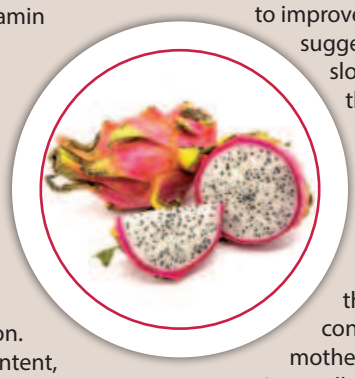
CHOWDHURY TASNEEM HASIN
Chief Clinical Dietician & HOD, Clinical Dietetics and Nutrition Dept, United Hospital ltd. She is also the AGS, BNDF.

Why dragon fruit is the best thing to happen to your diet

Once an exotic fruit grown in China and neighbouring countries, it has now become a summer staple in Bangladesh. Farming of pitaya — dragon fruit — is common and the tropical fruit has become popular for its unique external structure, sweet taste, and texture. As a superfood, dragon fruit offers maximum nutritional benefits with minimal calories and is packed with vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants.

Despite being sweet, the fruit contains low sugar — only 9 grams of sugar from 100 grams of dragon. It has low cholesterol and can be included in a low-sodium diet. Pitaya has a burst of antioxidants and vitamin C, enough to meet our daily needs just by consumption of a single fruit. It is also high in magnesium and contains plenty of folates.

Dragon fruit comes in several colours — purple and white are more common. Due to its low sugar content, people suffering from diabetes can consume one medium-sized fruit or half of a large dragon fruit daily. They are best consumed after the main meal, which will have a minimal effect on blood sugar.



It contains a large number of oligosaccharides that stimulate the good bacterial flora in our body, helping to improve digestion. Research suggests that dragon fruit can slow down cataracts and their maturation process.

Contrary to popular belief, dragon fruit suits pregnant and nursing mothers. Rich in vitamins B and C, and high in iron content, the fruit is ideal for consumption by expecting mothers.

As we all worry about the ageing process, pitaya can help to reduce wrinkles, pigmentation, and discolouration of our skin. The fruit's pulp can be used as a face pack for direct application on the skin.

Making smoothies with dragon fruit and milk can easily become a high-calcium food in our daily diet.

However, one word of caution — some people may be allergic to dragon fruit.

Photo: Collected

The writer is the Chief Clinical Dietitian and Head of the Department, United Hospital Limited

Dragon fruit smoothie for a burst of flavours

Start your day with this fruit smoothie for a burst of flavours and vibrant colours. Packed with the goodness of bananas and dragon fruit, its lavender hue and slightly tart taste make for a delightful breakfast. Customise your bowl with your favourite toppings to make it uniquely yours.

Ingredients

2 small dragon fruits
4 large strawberries (optional)
1 large banana
½ cup milk

For topping –

1 tbsp desiccated coconuts
¼ cup pomegranate arils
1 tbsp slivered almonds

Method

Remove the leafy parts of strawberries and cut them into halves. Peel the banana and dragon fruit and slice them as well. Blend everything with milk until the consistency is smooth. Pour this into a bowl and top with desiccated coconut, slivered almonds, and pomegranate arils.

Pioneering AI Smartphone Building Life: OPPO Reno12 Series arrives in Bangladesh

In the ever-evolving landscape of technology, OPPO has once again positioned itself at the forefront of innovation with the unveiling of its latest masterpiece - Reno12 Series: an AI smartphone series that promises to redefine the boundaries of what is possible in life. This isn't just a phone; it's a bold statement of intent, a testament to the future of mobile technology, and a glimpse into the next era of intelligent devices.

Revolutionizing the Smartphone Industry

The journey of smartphone development has been marked by incremental advancements, but OPPO's new AI phone is a giant leap forward. This device is designed not only to meet the needs of today's users but to anticipate and exceed the expectations of tomorrow. Integrating advanced AI capabilities, it offers unparalleled performance, seamless user experience, and intuitive interactions that make it a true extension of the user's life.

AI at the Core

At the heart of this groundbreaking device

is its AI engine. This sophisticated technology enables the phone to learn from its user, adapting and optimizing its functions to provide a personalized experience. Whether it's enhancing photography with intelligent imaging technology, customized features based on usage patterns and so on, the AI capabilities of this phone are designed to simplify and enrich daily life.

With its suite of advanced AI capabilities, users stay in complete control of the phone's photography department. Its AI Eraser can remove unwanted objects with clicks, while the AI Magic Studio feature lets you open your eyes in photos where they were closed.

OPPO's self-developed AI LinkBoost full-link network data transmission engine combines intelligent network selection and other technologies to improve weak signals, network congestion, and stuttering problems. Furthermore, BeaconLink ensures you can make voice calls even when there's no mobile signal.

A Symphony of Colors

OPPO understands that a phone is not just a tool but an expression of personal style. The new AI phone comes in three stunning colors: Amber Orange, Olive Green, and Matte Grey. Each hue has been carefully selected to resonate with different facets of the user's personality and preferences.

Amber Orange: Radiating warmth and energy, it's perfect for the bold and adventurous spirit. This vibrant hue symbolizes passion and creativity, making it an ideal choice for those who live life to the fullest.

Olive Green: A serene and calming color, it speaks to individuals who value balance and harmony. This earthy tone reflects a connection to nature and a preference for tranquility and peace.

Matte Grey: Embodying modern sophistication, this elegant shade is for those who appreciate subtlety and refinement. It's the epitome of contemporary style, perfect for the discerning and the understated.

A Vision of Tomorrow

With this new AI smartphone, OPPO is not just launching a product; it's heralding a new era of intelligent technology. The device represents a harmonious blend of cutting-edge innovation and aesthetic refinement, setting a new standard for the industry. It is a testament to OPPO's commitment to pushing the boundaries of what is possible and delivering an unparalleled user experience.

As we stand on the brink of this exciting new chapter in smartphone development, one thing is clear: the future of mobile technology is here, and it's more intelligent, more beautiful, and more personalized than

ever before. OPPO's new AI phone is not just a stage forward; it's a giant Step into the AI. Bangladeshi users can look forward to experiencing inspiring innovations of the

OPPO Reno12 Series with these offerings:

Reno12 F (8GB+256GB) @34,990 BDT, Reno12 F 5G (12GB+256GB) @42,990 BDT, Reno12 (12GB+512GB) @59,990 BDT.

Enthusiasts and prospective buyers can learn more about the OPPO Reno12 Series by visiting the official OPPO Bangladesh Facebook page.

#CHECK IT OUT

Grameenphone launches the latest episode of Lumière featuring Shusmita Anis

Grameenphone has unveiled the newest episode in its Lumière series, this time featuring the illustrious Shusmita Anis, a revered name in the Bangladeshi music industry. Renowned for her versatile singing and emotive performances, Shusmita Anis's episode provides viewers with an intimate exploration of her career, life choices, and personal philosophy.

Shusmita Anis, a celebrated artist, has left an indelible mark on the music scene with her soulful renditions and dynamic musical range. In this episode of Lumière, viewers are taken on a journey through Anis's multifaceted career, her personal transitions, and the philosophies that have shaped her artistic endeavours. The candid conversation with host Nabila Khalid delves deep into Anis's life, offering insights into her professional milestones and personal reflections.

The Lumière series by Grameenphone is designed to spotlight individuals who have significantly impacted Bangladeshi society. It narrates the inspiring stories of these remarkable figures, highlighting their personal and professional journeys, the obstacles they have surmounted, and their unique experiences. The series aims to inspire the youth by presenting in-depth narratives of personalities who have profoundly influenced the cultural and social landscape of Bangladesh.

Now in its second season, following a highly successful first, Lumière continues its tradition of featuring influential figures while reinforcing Grameenphone's commitment to inspiring the youth of Bangladesh. The format of the show, characterised by candid and engaging dialogues with a congenial host, facilitates deeper storytelling and uncovers lesser-known aspects of these extraordinary individuals.

In the latest episode, host Nabila Khalid engages with Shusmita Anis in a heartfelt conversation, exploring her career journey, personal life, and the philosophies that guide her. Anis shares stories from her childhood, her journey through the music industry, and the pivotal moments that have defined her path.

The episode invites viewers to connect with Anis on a personal level, understanding her motivations, inspirations, and the underlying philosophy of her work. Through her narrative, viewers gain insight into the depth of her passion for music, her life transitions, and her significant influence on the cultural fabric of Bangladesh.

Photo: Courtesy

#PERSPECTIVE

Can we take a joke? The struggle of stand-up comedy in Bangladesh

Bangladeshis have a great sense of humour, whether it be witty banters at tea stalls or coming up with the most brilliant memes every time our cricket team loses a match. However, when it comes to stand-up comedy, there seems to be a disconnection. Our neighbouring countries such as India have embraced the realm of stand-up comedy and produced some big names as well, we for some reason just cannot fathom this concept as an entertainment option.

Sami Doha, a comedian and artist of our country, believes the conditioning of our minds is the biggest obstacle to the success of this industry, "People of our country do not want to spend money on art. The concept of going to a comedy club and enjoying a fun skit still is not considered a form of entertainment," explained Sami.

Comedy frequently stems from the unique experiences and cultural practices of a region. Indian comedians have crafted extremely relatable jokes by drawing on the richness of their culture, politics, and everyday lives. On the other hand, Bangladesh's stand-up culture is still relatively young, thus comedians may find it difficult to strike a balance between comedy and cultural background. The possible backlash creates another challenge. Comedians may be afraid to go too far and hurt people's feelings in a conservative environment. Whereas comedians abroad frequently break barriers and address taboos. "One of the biggest barriers might be the fear of censorship or worse, public outrage! The cancel culture right now is costing us some great skits that have the potential to bring social awareness," shared Sami. There is yet hope for stand-up comedy in Bangladesh despite these obstacles. Due to their exposure to worldwide content via the Internet, younger people are more open to a wider variety of entertainment options. They are eager to see more stand-up comedy performed locally and like the relatable humour. This change in the population may lead to the growth of a thriving comedy scene. The good news is, a few talented comedians are already gaining popularity. Shedding light on the success of the big names in the industry, Sami added, "Some brave comedians of our country are changing the narrative. They are taking risks, experimenting with material, and the audience is rewarding them with the love that they truly deserve."

Although there are many obstacles in the way of stand-up comedy in Bangladesh, the potential is there. With a little courage, cultural adjustment, and creativity, Bangladesh may soon be giggling with the rest of the world.

By Maisha Tarannum Iqbal
Photo: Collected

#HEALTH & FITNESS

Chamomile tea: The herbal elixir that helps fight sleepless nights

Whether you are winding down after a long day, seeking relief from a health ailment, or simply enjoying a moment of tranquillity chamomile tea stands out as a timeless and versatile herbal infusion.

Here are some of the benefits of chamomile tea that experts frequently highlight —

Alleviates insomnia
Chamomile tea enhances sleep quality. A study in the Journal of Advanced Nursing found that chamomile tea significantly improved the sleep quality of patients in intensive care units — suggesting potential benefits for those suffering from insomnia under less critical conditions as well.

An ally in immune defence
Brewing a cup of chamomile tea might also bolster your immune system. The tea contains compounds that are thought to have antibacterial properties, which can help prevent and ease colds while fighting off bacterial infections.

Furthermore, the presence of antioxidants in chamomile strengthens the body's defence against deep-seated ailments.

Supports digestive health
Drinking chamomile tea is also beneficial for the digestive system. It can help soothe the stomach, relieve bloating, and mitigate indigestion. A comprehensive review highlighted in the Journal of Herbal Medicine suggests that chamomile tea stimulates gastric juices, which aid in digestion and alleviate troublesome gastrointestinal symptoms.

It's a natural remedy often recommended for those suffering from irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and other inflammatory bowel diseases.

Skin health and more
Chamomile's healing properties are also good for skin health. Applied topically or ingested as tea, chamomile can help alleviate skin irritations and conditions like eczema, due to its anti-inflammatory and antibacterial properties. It's also used in cosmetic products for its ability to lighten the complexion and impart a healthy glow.

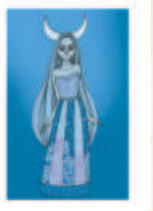
A word of caution:
While chamomile tea is generally safe for many, it can have potential side effects. It may cause allergic reactions in individuals sensitive to plants in the daisy family. Therefore, it's prudent to consult with a healthcare provider before incorporating it regularly into your regimen – especially if you have existing health concerns or are on medication.

By Ayman Anika
Photo: LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed

HOROSCOPE

ARIES
(MAR. 21-APR. 20)

Take advantage of moneymaking opportunities. Expect drastic changes to your luck. Avoid making any residential changes. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



TAURUS
(APR. 21-MAY 21)

Don't get involved in disputes. Get your family involved in a project. You will be able to communicate well this week. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.

GEMINI
(MAY 22-JUN. 21)

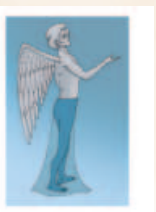
Don't let worries take a toll on you. Talk to someone you trust. Make time for your partner this week. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.

CANCER
(JUN. 22-JUL. 22)

You could happen upon an unexpected fortune. Take advantage of travel opportunities. Don't push your philosophies on others. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.

LEO
(JUL. 23-AUG. 22)

Help others emotionally. Your hard work may fail. Don't let your partner push you around. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



VIRGO
(AUG. 23-SEP. 23)

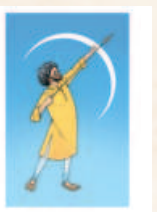
Family troubles will trivial. Promote your own interests. Consider making a fresh start. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.

LIBRA
(SEP. 24-OCT. 23)

You and your partner may have emotional problems. Seek out individuals who stimulate you. Investment deals will pay big dividends. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.

SCORPIO
(OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Put your energy into behind-the-scenes activities. You might learn something good if you listen. Look into ways of making extra cash. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



SAGITTARIUS
(NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Find an outlet to release your anxiety. Explain your mood swings to your partner. Don't get involved in joint financial ventures. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.

CAPRICORN
(DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

Don't exaggerate in confrontations with loved ones. Don't overspend this week. Present your ideas at work. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.

AQUARIUS
(JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

Problems with loved ones are likely. New partnerships will in group activities. Luxuries will cost you more than you expect. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.

PISCES
(FEB. 20-MAR. 20)

Keep pushy people at arm's length. Your emotional state can suffer through conflicts with your partner. Make plans to travel. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.

Star LIFE Style

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#HOBBIES

Reliving the golden age of arcade games:

A nostalgic journey through Dhaka

Right in the middle of Dhaka, where the busy streets blend into a symphony of activity, are the once-glorious arcade lanes, a hidden treasure trove of memories. These havens of pixelated magic served as the furnaces for creating childhood fantasies for many, including Ollyo's creative founder and CEO, Kawshar Ahmed. For him, these places preserve his inner child.

The 1990s in Dhaka were a simpler era. The faces of the city's young people were frequently seen crowded around arcade machines, their displays flickering. Video games such as "Super Mario," "Cadillacs and Dinosaurs," and "Roadrash" served as more than simply entertainment; they were portals to otherworldly realms.

Having spent his early life in Cumilla, Kawshar Ahmed remembers playing video games for the first time at his cousin's house. His eyes brighten at the memories,

"I fell in love with them immediately. The characters' movements, the engaging gameplay, and the vibrant graphics were mesmerising and addictive," he said.

Kawshar's love of gaming was more than simply a hobby; it was a path marked by tenacity and fortitude. Buying a used game console for TK 700 — a significant amount for him at the time —was one noteworthy event.

"Unfortunately, the shop owner lied and sold me a broken machine," Kawshar recounts. His relentless visits to the shop until he reclaimed his money exemplify his undying love for gaming, a love that would fuel his future endeavours and inspire others to never give up on their passions.

Fast-forward to 2016, when Kawshar founded JoomShaper and saw an opportunity to weave his childhood passion into his professional life. The idea of building an arcade machine was born.

"The project faced challenges," he admits candidly. The structure, sourced from a local vendor, needed to be revised. But determined to make it work, I imported high-quality arcade joysticks from Amazon," Kawshar said.

The resulting machine, powered by a Raspberry Pi running RetroPie, became a source of immense joy and camaraderie among his team, fostering a sense of unity and belonging.

As Kawshar began constructing Ollyo's HQ, he envisioned an even grander gaming setup. "We built two new arcades, enhancing the experience further," he shares with a smile. The original JoomShaper machine found a new home at his residence, ensuring the magic of arcade gaming was always within reach. Now, I enjoy playing these games, not just at work but also at home."

He adds, "It's a wonderful way to keep my inner child alive."

Arcade games appeal to many people because they take us back to our early years. The legendary tunes, the competitive attitude, and the straightforward yet challenging gameplay evoke an exciting and comfortable nostalgia.

"Together, we relish the adventures of Mario, the battles of Street Fighter, and many other classic games," Kawshar says about his girls and his childhood. "These moments are more than just play—they are a bridge between the past and present, a way to share the joy of my childhood with my family."

At Ollyo and JoomShaper, the presence of arcade games has shaped a unique office culture.

"While we have modern sports equipment like the PS5, foosball, air hockey, ping pong, and basketball, the arcade games truly stand out," Kawshar explains. These vintage machines provide fun and relaxation and evoke a shared nostalgia that strengthens team bonds.

For those looking to recreate this magic, Kawshar offers practical advice —

"You can use a Raspberry Pi or purchase ready-made gaming consoles with pre-installed games. However, building your arcade is a must if you want to relive your childhood. There are plenty of tutorials on YouTube that guide you through the process. Pay attention to the quality of the components and customise the setup to reflect your style and preferences."

In a city like Dhaka, where the future is ever-looming, the past remains a cherished sanctuary. The yesteryears of arcade games remind us of simpler times and the timeless joy of pixelated adventures. Through the eyes of individuals like Kawshar Ahmed, we see how these digital relics continue to nurture the inner child within us, bridging the gap between generations and keeping the spirit of the '90s alive and kicking.

By K Tanzeel Zaman
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