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Star

LIFE

Style

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A Jamdani dream for **DURGA PUJA**

THE SACRED FEMININE
C TO P12

DEBUNKING MYTHS P10
GERIATRIC PREGNANCY

DANCE YOUR WAY TO HEALTH P09
THE ZUMBA REVOLUTION!

PHOTO: ADNAN RAHMAN ♦ MODEL: SIMMI ♦ STYLING: SONIA YEASMIN ISHA ♦ MUA: SUMON RAHAT & TEAM ♦ JEWELLERY: SHOILEE
WARDROBE: TANGAIL SAREE KUTIR ♦ SET: ESKAY DÉCOR BY SAIMUL KARIM

#CHECK IT OUT

Let's start Durga Puja celebrations early!

One of the biggest festivals in Bengal is knocking on the door. We are just a few days away from Durga Puja! It is almost that time of the year again when Maa Durga visits us — the days when large and beautiful mandaps call for celebrations, a time when the whole country is wrapped in excitement and merrymaking.

Some would busy themselves with the many rituals, some would eagerly munch on a variety of snacks and dishes, whilst others would go on a shopping spree to look their best at the many events scheduled. There are so many activities to partake in and enjoy!

Although monsoon seems to be a bit adamant in departing, and the signature clear blue skies and fluffy white clouds of autumn are yet to fully set in, the calendar, nevertheless, is striding forward to the Durga Puja dates. But the breathtakingly beautiful "kaash phool" has already started to adorn our country!

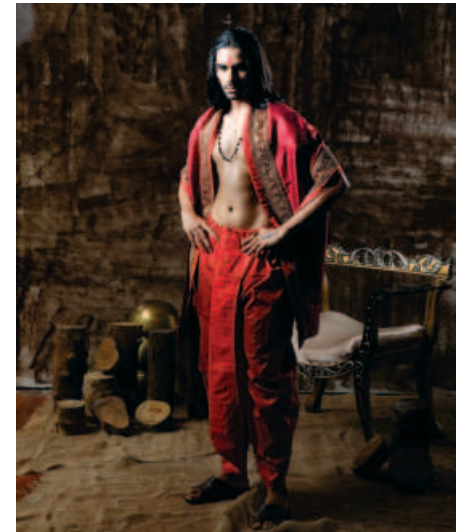
Hence, to kickstart your preparations and set the mood for the upcoming fiestas, this week's Star Lifestyle presents you with a Durga Puja-centric volume.

Flip through the pages to check out our special photoshoot, which will give you inspiration and ideas for planning your fashion ensemble for the programmes of the festivities. The graceful attires amidst the lotus background are sure to transport you to a different world whilst we wax lyrical about them.

On the other hand, we also invite you to take a deep dive into Old Dhaka's Shankhari Bazaar, the age-old street that not only celebrates the Puja in full gusto, but is also a major hub for traditional jewellery and

crafts shopping. Get to know about the community behind the trade and design of conch shell bangles and other such products!

Durga Puja encompasses a wide and diverse range of amazing and fascinating aspects and activities. It is not just about fashion, shopping, and crafts — it is also



about the delicious food, the beating of the drums, the vivid sights and the ambience at the mandaps. We hope to present some of that in our next edition and our online platforms as well. So, stay tuned!

For now, we hope that this week's Star Lifestyle will stir up the momentum with which Durga Puja will be celebrated. Here's to a happy Durga Puja ahead!

LS Desk

Photo: LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed



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PUJA / 24



Vibrant puja culture of Shankhari Bazar: Where tradition meets tomorrow



One of the oldest neighbourhoods in Dhaka, Shankhari Bazar is well-known for its colourful cultural heritage. During festivities, the roads are filled with a vibrant atmosphere reflecting the community's religious traditions. The lane wears a new look as colourful decorations and beautiful mandaps breathe renewed life into the locality.

Abir Sur Antu, a resident of the area says, "People might think it's only a market to sell *shankhas* and *polas*. You see, there are other items as well. From *Shankho* to *mukuts* — crowns made with *shola*, *ayasthi*, painted bamboo *kula*, musical instruments, and other puja essentials are sold in the market during Durga Puja season."

Walking down the street, one can observe how the shops come alive with displays of idols, jewellery, sarees, musical instruments, and sweetmeats. Attendants are found decorating their shops, waiting for customers, and negotiating deals.

"The lane is not all about trading," Antu adds. "More than 10 puja



mandaps are arranged to celebrate Durga Puja in this area alone. The pandals are built after Mahalaya, the auspicious event that signals the start of Puja festivities."

"Sur Products" is one of the oldest shops in Shankhari Bazar and continues to build its reputation by earning the trust of loyal customers. Sushmita, a resident of



Chankharpul recalls — "Ever since I was a child, I have come here. I used to come with my mother, but these days I either come with my sisters or my husband."

Speaking about the price range of *shankhas*, Amalash Nandi of the popular "Joy Guru Bhandar" says — "The price ranges between Tk 400 and Tk 4000, sometimes more. This range depends entirely on the quality, the thickness, and especially the design of *shankhas*."

As we were walking down the street observing the different products, Sukumar Sen welcomed us to his shop with a smile on his face and started sharing the story he always wanted to say: "I was not very good at school. My father saw my potential in painting, so at the tender age of 13, I joined a group of master artists — ustad Dulara Bai, Moheen Bai, and Ladla Bai. I used to paint cinema posters with them which led to rickshaw painting at a point. Today, here I am, painting *kula*, *ghoti*, *bati* etc. for my livelihood."

While we were discussing his life's achievements, a young lad came to buy a "*pradip*" that cost just Tk 5. Sen hands it over and says, "People used to respect us a lot as artists, Nowadays, as everything has become digital, it feels like we are lost."



The search for a *shankha* craftsman took us to Arun Kumar Sur, busy shaping a *shankha* using a machine. As a result of working there all day, his hair had turned white due to the conch dust.

"I have been in this profession for the past 45 years. My father introduced me to this craft. There are not many artisans left, possibly 10-12 are there. We make 20-25 pairs of *shankha* a day," he adds.

For the craftsmen, there has been a shift in how *shankhas* are now made. While in the past the bangles were handcrafted from slices of conch shells at the shops, today most items on sale are imported.

Artisans also heavily rely on the use of machines these days, which has taken away much of the personal touch from the timeless pieces.

As the sun was about to set, the crowd grew larger on the streets. Although the place is known for colourful celebrations during Durga Puja, the area gets even more vibrant due to the crowd, the lights, and the decorations. Despite the modernisation, Shankhari Bazar has a certain charm and it takes visitors on a trip down memory lane.

By Jawwad Sami Neogi

Photo: Shahrear Kabir Heemel



A growing number of Bangladeshi fashionistas now take interest in Western wear. To cater to this growing demand, fashion house B2 has evolved into a one-stop shopping experience. The brand's growth to serve the masses has been very successful with six outlets now operating successfully around the country.

Celebrating of 6 years fashion with B2



But, if you thought that a fashion brand like B2 would only sell Western wear, think again! Not only does B2 provide a variety of collections that are of export quality but also sell a range of speciality bags and footwear for women.

In addition to globally branded products such as jeans, shorts, T-shirts, polo shirts, formal and casual shirts, and dresses, B2 offers a treasure trove of things for customers to pick from at affordable prices. These items include children's wear, ladies' undergarments, purses, wallets, and perfumes.

This October, B2 will celebrate their sixth anniversary. In celebration of this milestone, they are delighted to announce the

Anniversary Sale, taking place from 3 October to 13 October 2024. During this 10-day sale, customers may save 30 per cent on all items at any of their stores in Dhaka, Chattogram, Barishal, Ishwardi, Mymensingh, and Feni.

As a company, B2 is devoted to the idea of giving back to the community where they have found success and because of this, 1 per cent of their sale during this campaign will be donated to help rebuild the communities that were damaged by recent floods in the country.

So, come celebrate the occasion with B2 and make a meaningful contribution to a worthy cause. You may save a great deal of money while helping people in need when you shop with them. After all, everyone has the potential to make a difference when they work together!

Essentials —

For more information on B2, visit: www.b2trendbd.com
[www.fb.com/b2trendbd](https://www.facebook.com/b2trendbd)

By **Samayla Mahjabin Koishy**
Photo: Courtesy

75

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From 3rd To 13th October 2024

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UNVEILING THE GODDESS WITHIN

In every woman lies the spirit of Durga. She is the divine protector who imparts strength, resilience, and grace to her children. This week, we unveil that goddess within, celebrating the strength and beauty inherent in all of us.

A Durga in every woman

She is the protector; the mortal personification of the divine. Powerful and the source of all sacred energy, she exudes an aura of strength and grace. Behind the softness of her gaze, she nurtures an indomitable soul, the empowerment and the resilience that the Goddess represents.

Let us pause for a while and contemplate that all of Durga's children carry her quiet strength that only shines through kindness. In honouring that inner strength in every woman, we channel the inner power and remind ourselves that our momentary weakness does not equate to powerlessness. It is only through our strengths and vulnerabilities that we embody the true essence of Ma Durga.

Photo: Adnan Rahman
Model: Simmi
Styling: Sonia Yeasmin Isha
Mua: Sumon Rahat & Team
Jewellery: Shoilee
Wardrobe: Tangail Saree Kutir
Set: Eskay Décor by Saimul Karim



Secrets of the LOTUS

Her devotion to the Goddess surpasses all adversities and worldly trials. Like the flower Padma, she rises above troubled waters and reveals her flawless self.

Flowers hold a sacred position in Hindu iconography and it is widely believed that the essence of the lotus resides in every soul, and when properly harnessed, it can be a liberating experience. Even in our daily lives, we are enchanted with the splendour of the red lotus. For us, it is a symbol of eternal beauty, prosperity, and fertility.

In nurturing these life forces within us,

we cultivate the potential to blossom fully, headstrong above the water and growing! Like the very lotus blooms offered in worship, we admire and revere her for the enchanting beauty that she is.

Photo: Adnan Rahman
Model: Simmi
Styling: Sonia Yeasmin Isha
Mua: Sumon Rahat & Team
Jewellery: Shoilee
Wardrobe: Tangail Saree Kutir
Set: Eskay Décor by Saimul Karim

A FREE Spirit

Pandal hopping is an exercise she has mastered! It's more than just an outing; it is an expression of the deep devotion to the Mother Goddess.

Her inner child awakens as she dances to the rhythmic beats of the dhakis, reflecting the vibrant energy and fierce spirit of Durga herself. It is also a culture that she embraces with open arms, enjoying the annual festival to her heart's content.

For her, visiting multiple pandals for a "critique" has been a fun exercise since childhood. Moving from one puja mandap to another, battling the city traffic is not an easy exercise, but one done with love and enthusiasm. For she embodies the goddess's strength and bask in the joy of being a fervent devotee in her every step.

Photo: Adnan Rahman
Model: Simmi
Styling: Sonia Yeasmin Isha
Mua: Sumon Rahat & Team
Jewellery: Shoilee
Wardrobe: Tangail Saree Kutir
Set: Eskay Décor by Saimul Karim

CONTINUED TO PAGE 12



#HEALTH & FITNESS

FROM DANCE FLOORS TO FITNESS

Dhaka's Zumba movement takes centre stage

Imagine entering a room where vibrant Latin beats, Bollywood tunes, and Arabic rhythms create an electrifying atmosphere. As the music plays, the space transforms into a dynamic dance floor. This is not just any dance party, it's a Zumba class! An exercise increasingly gaining popularity across Bangladesh.

Created in the 1990s by Colombian dancer, Alberto Beto Perez, Zumba was relatively unknown in Bangladesh until the mid-2010s when pioneering instructors introduced it to Dhaka's fitness enthusiasts.

One of them, Saiyedur Rahman Ayan, an internationally licensed Zumba Fitness Instructor with a robust background in dance and choreography, shares his journey: "I've always been passionate about dance. After realising a stable career solely through dance was challenging in Bangladesh, I turned to Zumba."

He adds, "Inspired by Zumba Fitness videos and with encouragement from my father, I trained abroad and became a licensed Zumba instructor, launching my classes initially for expats at local clubs."

Why Zumba?

Zumba's effectiveness lies in its unique blend of physical exertion and dance party atmosphere. Unlike traditional gym routines, a Zumba class is a dynamic social event. Instructors lead participants through dance moves set to a pulsating mix of Latin beats like salsa, merengue, and reggaeton, with a sprinkle of Bollywood and Arabic tunes to cater to local tastes.

Ayan explains, "It's an all-encompassing

workout – cardio, muscle conditioning, balance, and flexibility. Zumba is based on dance and Bangladeshis love to dance. It's more than just exercise! I would call it a lifestyle, a joyous escape from the daily grind."

His classes are designed to be engaging and inclusive, allowing participants to enjoy themselves while getting a rigorous workout, perfect for all fitness levels.

The health benefits of Zumba

Zumba offers numerous health benefits, making it particularly appealing in a country where urban lifestyles can lead to physical and mental stress.

"A one-hour Zumba class can noticeably improve physical health by burning calories, toning the body, and boosting cardiovascular health," Ayan highlights. Moreover, it's an excellent stress reliever, improving mental well-being and encouraging a more active lifestyle among participants.

The dynamic and intensive nature of Zumba makes it an effective tool for burning calories. A typical hour-long session can burn between 500 to 800 calories, depending on the intensity of the moves and the individual's body weight and fitness level. This makes Zumba an appealing option for weight management and fat loss.

Boosting self-esteem and confidence

The energetic and fun nature of Zumba helps participants feel more positive about themselves and their bodies, empowering all to take on other challenges in their lives

with increased confidence.

Most importantly, Zumba offers a safe and welcoming space. Here, participants, especially women, can express themselves freely, enhancing both their physical health and social freedom.

"Zumba has been transformative for many of my female students, boosting their confidence and sense of well-being. The psychological uplift that comes from Zumba is remarkable. It's not just about burning calories; it's about elevating mood and combating stress," Ayan notes.

All in all, Zumba is designed to be inclusive, accommodating people of all ages, backgrounds, and fitness levels. This inclusivity ensures that everyone can participate and benefit from the empowering effects of Zumba, regardless of their physical ability or previous exercise experience.

Looking ahead

Despite its growing popularity, Ayan faces challenges, particularly in expanding Zumba's reach beyond Dhaka. "While Zumba is growing, accessibility is limited outside the capital. I plan to change this by offering local instructor training after completing my Zumba Education Specialist course," Ayan discusses his plans.

This initiative aims to make Zumba accessible nationwide, fostering a healthier, more active population. Ayan also addresses the issues with unauthorised Zumba classes, emphasising the importance of proper training for instructors."

"I see a future where Zumba is a mainstream fitness activity supported by trained instructors in every district of our country," he concludes.

Essentials –

To get more information on Saiyedur Rahman Ayan's Zumba classes, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/ZumbaZinAayan?mibextid=LQQJ4d>

Website: https://www.zumba.com/en-US/p/Syadur_Rahman-Aayan/1533830

By Ayman Anika
Photo: Courtesy



35 AND PREGNANT

Navigating the myths and realities

The expression may sound alarming but “geriatric pregnancy” is simply a medical term for pregnancies in women aged 35 and above. Over time, this has evoked fear and concern due to increased health risks. However, it’s important to understand that these risks do not define every pregnancy; many women in this age group go on to have perfectly healthy pregnancies and babies. Today, with growing awareness, healthcare providers are advocating for less stigmatising language. Rather than focusing on age-related risks alone, the emphasis is shifting to individual care.

Medical advances and improved outcomes

Advancements in maternal healthcare have been life-changing for women over 35. Regular screenings, genetic testing, and prenatal care have improved outcomes, making it safer for women in their late 30s and beyond to conceive. According to an expert at the Cleveland Clinic, chances of having a healthy baby are still much higher than the chance of a miscarriage, between ages 35 to 40.

“I conceived at 38 years of age,” shares entrepreneur and mother of three, Nurjahan Ajanee. “Except for one very discouraging doctor, everyone cheered me along throughout my pregnancy. Besides having to take some additional tests to make sure my child was not at risk of Down syndrome, it was a routine, full-term pregnancy.”

While the likelihood of complications such as gestational diabetes, pre-eclampsia, and chromosomal abnormalities increases with age, the ability to manage these risks has also improved.

Moreover, fertility treatments, including IVF, have allowed many women to achieve pregnancy even when natural conception is challenging. The use of assisted reproductive technology has expanded options for aspiring mothers beyond a certain age.

Healthy habits matter

A way one can have a successful pregnancy after 35 is by maintaining healthy lifestyle practices before and during pregnancy. Regular exercise, a balanced diet, and avoiding harmful substances like tobacco and alcohol can significantly reduce the risk of complications at any age. Staying informed through regular check-ups can help even further.

Managing stress and having a strong support system are equally important during this period. Many women who experience successful late pregnancies thank their mental well-being and emotional resilience as key factors in their journey.





Changing attitudes and positive narratives

Societal perceptions of “older” motherhood are shifting. Women are increasingly empowered to make informed decisions about their reproductive health and there is growing recognition that age does not dictate a woman’s ability to be a loving and capable parent.

Mustahena Nawar, another entrepreneur, had her third child at 40. “My first two children are smart, but I think my third one is the smartest of them all. I believe that when the mother has achieved good things in life and harbours no inhibitions regarding getting pregnant, the child thrives.

It does not hurt that a mother is fully matured by then. I’m no doctor but I’m sure that maturity adds value to the child’s mental and physical health in the womb.”

While pregnancy after 35 may once have been viewed with trepidation and continues to be a road paved with unique challenges, it is also filled with hope. With access to modern healthcare, a supportive community, and a commitment to healthy living, the dream of motherhood can become a reality at any age.

By Munira Fidai
Photo: Adnan Rahman
Model: Sonia Yeasmin Isha, Adnan Rahman

◆ **HOROSCOPE** ◆



ARIES
(MAR. 21-APR. 20)

There could be opposition or temper tantrums on the home front. Travel will be most enticing. Consider helping with finances. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



TAURUS
(APR. 21-MAY 21)

Don't let your partner upset you this week. Update your personal investments. Make plans to do something special with loved ones. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



GEMINI
(MAY 22-JUN. 21)

Avoid any erratic behaviour. Get involved in worthwhile endeavours and meet new friends. Beware of individuals who are not that reliable. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



CANCER
(JUN. 22-JUL. 22)

Don't press your luck with your loved ones. Take part in stimulating debates. Take advantage of your attributes when approaching new partners. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



LEO
(JUL. 23-AUG. 22)

Unexpected bills may set you back. Make money through conservative investments. Re-evaluate your position and make decisions about your future goals. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



VIRGO
(AUG. 23-SEP. 23)

Don't be enticed by untrustworthy individuals. Break your stagnant pattern. You'll be prone to tears if your partner is harsh. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



LIBRA
(SEP. 24-OCT. 23)

Deception is evident. Socialising or travel will lead to partnerships. Visit a friend or relative who hasn't been feeling up to par. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



SCORPIO
(OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Delve deeper if you want to know the score. Make money through creative efforts. Enjoy some entertainment. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



SAGITTARIUS
(NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Don't let your emotions interfere with your efficiency. Direct your energy into physical exertion. Residential moves will be favourable. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



CAPRICORN
(DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

Take prompt action to reach your potential. Take care of financial dealings. Don't argue with family. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



AQUARIUS
(JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

Your compassionate nature will be noticed. Make plans for travel. Disputes may start due to a lack of honesty. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



PISCES
(FEB. 20-MAR. 20)

Don't make promises you can't keep. Real estate and joint financial ventures will be profitable. Be careful signing important contracts. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.

স্বপ্নের ছোয়ায়, তোমার উপমায়,
বদলে দিলে যে আমায়...

অ্যান্ডামিনা
সোপ

রূপচর্চায় আন্ডিজাত্য...

KOHINOOR CHEMICAL

Sandalina Sandal & Moisturiser

Sandalina

us on f /Sandalina



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 08

Poised with PERFECTION

With a warm smile and a hint of pride, she embodies the essence of Durga Puja. Dressed for the occasion, she is a vision of grace and devotion. She radiates her inner glow draped in six yards of fabric, the design and colour reflecting the festive spirit. Her hair, adorned with fresh flowers, adds panache to the timeless beauty that she is. Her jewellery—delicate earrings, a statement necklace, and bangles that jingle with every movement—adds a touch of tradition and sparkle.

By Mannan Mashhur Zarif
Photo: Adnan Rahman
Model: Simmi
Styling: Sonia Yeasmin Isha
Mua: Sumon Rahat & Team
Jewelry: Shoilee
Wardrobe: Tangail Saree Kutir
Set: Eskay by Saimul Karim

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