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Star
Life

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Shubho Bijoya!

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A FLORAL CONNECTION

PHOTO: SHAHREAR KABIR HEEMEL ◆ FOOD & STYLING: RBR

Mahalaya to Vijaya Dashami: What this year's Durga Puja predicts

Durga Puja, the annual Hindu festival also known as Sharadiya (autumnal) Durgotsav, is the worship of "Shakti", the divine force, embodied in Goddess Durga.

The fight between Goddess Durga and Mahishasura lasted for 10 days. The Goddess slayed the demon king on the 10th day, and the occasion is celebrated as Vijaya Dashami, symbolising the victory of good over evil.

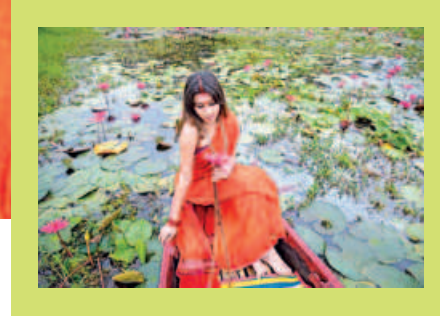
Hindus believe that Durga descended to earth following prayers by King Kangsa. Marking the occasion, the first Durga worship was held at Taherpur of Rajshahi by Raja Kangshanarayan in the month of Aswin around 1606.

Rama, the elder son of King Dasharatha,

had earlier offered the puja in autumn to seek the deity's blessings to save people from the repression and misrule of Lanka Raj Ravana. With her blessings, Rama destroyed the Ravana's kingdom.

This year Mahalaya, an invitation of sorts to goddess Durga to begin her journey from Kailash to her paternal home, earth, along with her children, was observed on 2 October.

Mahalaya marks the beginning of Devi Paksha and the end of Pitru Paksha. On this day, the Hindu community pays homage to their ancestors by performing Tarpan or Shradha rituals, intended to bring solace to their departed souls.



The day on which Goddess Durga arrives and departs is considered an omen.

If Durga comes or departs on Monday or Sunday, the Goddess arrives and goes back on an elephant. If she comes or departs on a Saturday or Tuesday, she arrives and goes back on a horse. If Durga comes and departs on Thursday or Friday, her vehicle would be a palanquin and if she comes and departs on Wednesday, she arrives and goes back by boat.

This year, Devi Paksha, and hence, Navratri, began on 3 October. Goddess

Durga arrived on Thursday on a palanquin and she will return on 12 October (Saturday). So, she will go back by horse.

According to astrologers, the arrival of Goddess Durga in a palanquin is considered inauspicious. This signifies potential economic downturn, trade stagnation, increased violence, global pandemic spread and unnatural disasters. And as she will return by horse, it signifies social unrest, political incidents and natural calamities.

By Partha Pratim Bhattacharjee
The author is a special correspondent at *The Daily Star*.

Photo: LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed

নতুনআনে, নতুনরূপে

বিউটিনা

ফেস ওয়াশ

Healthy Glowing Skin - এ আত্মবিশ্বাসী আমি

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GLOWING SKIN
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এএম. পিএম.
হারবাল

বিউটিনা ফেস ওয়াশ ১০০মি.লি. সাথে
৪৫ গ্রাম
এএম. পিএম. হারবাল টুথপেস্ট
মাত্র ১৯০/= **ফ্রী**

KOHINOOR CHEMICAL

Unveiling fall's vibrant and textured menswear trends

While the air cools in other regions, Bangladesh continues to bask in its warm climate. The concept of a chilly autumn may be foreign, but revamping one's wardrobe for the fall season transcends global boundaries. In celebration of the changing season, TAAGA MAN invites you on a sartorial journey with its latest collection, themed around the spirit of exploration.

Starting with the basics, the smart casual shirt remains a cornerstone of men's fashion. Without heavy layering, a well-fitted shirt can serve multiple occasions, from office hours to casual evenings out. These shirts can be layered under a more neutral-toned blazer or worn alone to make a bold statement. Pair them with dark jeans or tailored trousers to balance their vivid hues.



Polos provide a fantastic way to blend casual with chic. A well-fitted polo in a dark or muted colour like green or olive can transition smoothly from a casual daytime outing to an evening get-together.

Or, think of knitted and textured monochromatic polos, which provide a fresh perspective on the traditional polo by enhancing its visual interest and tactile feel while maintaining its inherent comfort and versatility.

Accessorising with scarves can also introduce an element of layering.

A thin, cotton scarf draped loosely around the neck can add a splash of

colour and texture to a simple outfit, making it livelier and more aligned with the fall aesthetic.

With the upcoming wedding season in mind, you can also shop for



panjabis as well. Consider switching from the heavy embellishments suited for festive events to simpler, block-coloured panjabis for a more casual look.

Footwear should combine comfort with style.

Loafers, in suede or leather, in dark browns or classic blacks, can pair well with both Western and traditional attire. For a more local flavour, handcrafted leather sandals offer both comfort and a style statement, keeping the feet cool and the look hot.

Accessories are the subtle threads that tie an outfit together, and choosing the right ones can elevate a look from simple to stand out. Leather belts, minimalist watches, and simple yet elegant bracelets can elevate any look. Choosing accessories in warm metallic tones such as copper and gold can subtly bring in the fall vibes without overpowering the true essence of your personal style.

That said, the art of dressing well revolves around embracing global trends while adapting them to local tastes and climate. Each item, from shirts to shoes, should not only complement the outfit but also uphold comfort and practicality, ensuring that style does not come at the cost of usability.

And remember: let your wardrobe be as adventurous as you are. This season's trends encourage you to explore and embrace a look that's uniquely yours.

By Ayman Anika
Photos: TAAGA
MAN





#PERSPECTIVE

Drums, beats, and dhakis: A fading tradition

“Dhak, dhol, jhajor baaje,” we recite as children and there is no denying that the beats of the drums that we call ‘dhak’ has something robustly unique about it. Dhak is a familiar musical instrument that is native to the Indian subcontinent.

Aside from their uniquely loud palpitating beats, there are stories behind the sound. Stories that have always been there. Stories of the dhakis.

The dhak

The signature beat of a dhak is impossible to miss or confuse with anything else. We find many references to this in our literature and it’s easy to understand why. Durga Puja does not sound so festive without the frenzied beats of dhak.

The instrument itself is of medieval origin but it is said that dhak was already in play during the Vedic period. The large instrument is made out of a wooden frame with a leather membrane stretched over the opening. The cylindrical or barrel-shaped membranophone is usually around three feet in size. Beating on the membrane creates a loud noise that has a different aura with the power to excite people. Perhaps this is why we often see dhak beats are accompanied by people dancing around them almost in a frenzy.

Ideally, a dhak is made out of mango wood. One can buy a dhak for around Tk



12,000. However, most dhakis prefer to make their own.

“Everything about dhak, whether it’s creating a new one from scratch or repairing the current one, I do it myself. Sure, you can buy one at a shop and it won’t be bad, but I would say that making one is so much better. You can make it just how you want it,” said Ashit Das, a middle-aged dhaki from Pabna.

Sangkar Das from Munshiganj, a seasoned dhaki who has played at all

sorts of festivals, had the same sentiment. “Doing everything myself is not only cheaper, it’s just better. I can tweak the instrument how I want.”

Our dhaki

Playing dhak is no easy task and takes years of practice. Most dhakis start with other instruments and later learn the workings and beats of dhak as they find their talent.

“You start with kashi and continue to practice. It brings fluidity to your hand

movement. Later, you pick up the dhak,” explained Ashit using terms like “haat khulte hobe”.

Sangkar Das has been playing dhak at Mangal Shobhajatra, pujas, and many other festivals for more than two decades. This experienced artiste started his journey by playing kashi. Later, he picked up dhol and finally, in his maturity, took on the mantle of a dhaki. Now, he has a legacy to pass on, one that is quite common for dhakis. Passing the torch, or in this case — the stick.

“I learned from my father. And likewise, my elder son has also learned to play the dhak. This year, he will play by himself,” he said proudly, as all fathers would be watching his legacy continue.

Tapan Chandra Das plays dhak at Dhakeshwari Temple. He learned to play by watching his father, who was also a dhaki at Dhakeshwari Temple. “My father used to try to set me to study. But I didn’t like to study that much, instead I would flee and come here and watch my father play the dhak.”

Goda Das is another dhaki who is part of a band. “I learned from my ustad, Monmohon, who is long gone. Some people start early, I learned this when I was 28 years old. I used to play tabla at that time, and later picked up on dhak, dhol, and other membranophone instruments,” said the veteran artiste.

The striving profession

Nothing is ever easy, but perhaps being a professional dhaki is a bit too difficult. It is far from stable. Dhakis who manage to get a booking for smaller festivals and programmes may earn around Tk 1,000-1,500 for a day's work. And it's rare these days to get bookings regularly. As a result, most dhakis need to resort to an alternative source of income to support themselves.

During the days of Durga puja,



for quite some time, its future looks rather bleak. Most dhakis are still carrying on the tradition that was bestowed upon them by their ancestors but this family profession will not last long.

"I have been playing here for about 30-35 years, I guess.

Before me, my father used to play and before that my grandfather. We have been performing here for seven generations," said Tapan Chandra Das, stating that he has been trying to teach his sons to play dhak so that they may carry on the legacy, but he's not so sure whether they are interested.

Sangkar Das has two sons and only one of them has learned to play the dhak. And with the current state of the profession, he has no complaints about his other son not being a part of the family legacy.

Ashit learned the beats from his father. He has two daughters, and he thinks this will be the end of the family heritage. "My father still plays and he goes across districts. I drum locally. But I don't think this profession will last in my family after I am gone," he said thoughtfully.

Some people are still in love with the beats and just can't stay away. There will always be people like that but the number is very limited. Goda Das from Natore belongs to this group of people.

"I started hanging out with the band when I was little because I have always loved festivals. There was a time when you could support your

dhakis stay at the mandap the whole time. Sometimes, they are alone, but mostly, they are accompanied by a band or a few other artistes. Even though most of them are Hindu, they have to stay away from their family during the puja days because of their job, and they have been doing it every year.

While everyone dances to the beat of their drums, which indeed invokes the aura of Durga puja, the dhakis make a silent sacrifice, one that is overwritten by the beats of their drums.

"Puja is the season for us. We can earn a decent amount during these five days. But the rest of the year is not so easy," said Ashit, who drives an auto-rickshaw to support himself and his family.

"There has been a massive decline in bookings since COVID," said Sangkar, who has to resort to farming and agriculture to maintain his family. "Obviously, puja is the time when business blooms but otherwise, business is practically non-existent. There was a time when I used to get bookings for four or five days of the week. Now that's a dream," he added.

A fading legacy

While dhak has been around



family in this trade but now, it's no longer possible. Even as part of a band, I can't make ends meet," he said, adding that neither his son nor his daughter is following his footsteps and he doesn't blame them either.

Everyone dances to the divine beat of the drums, but rarely does someone stop to think about the dhaki. Some of these artistes are immensely talented, but there is no one to nurture them. Most of the dhakis are neglected and spend their days as nothing more than another figure behind the instrument. With this declining trend, dhakis will become extinct soon, and an important part of our cultural element will be lost to time unless we do something about it.

By Ashif Ahmed Rudro & Shahrear Kabir Heemel

Photo: Shahrear Kabir Heemel; Sazzad Ibne Sayed/LS Archive





GREENS WITH A TWIST

Wholesome recipes for a vibrant puja feast

Leafy vegetables, also known as leafy greens, are packed with nutrients and play a vital role in a balanced diet. They are versatile, easy to prepare, and essential for a nutrient-rich, healthy diet. These are typically rich in vitamins, minerals, and fibre while low in calories. When it comes to cooking with leafy vegetables, there are countless ways to enjoy their flavours and retain their nutritional benefits. Here are some recipes to help you prepare leafy greens in delicious and creative ways during this Durga Puja.

#FOOD & RECIPES



Star **LIFE** Style

CRISPY RED SPINACH FRITTERS (LAL SHAKER KURMURI)

Ingredients
1 bunch whole red spinach leaves (washed and dried)

½ cup gram flour (besan)
¼ cup rice flour (for crispiness)
½ tsp carom seeds (ajwain)
1 tsp red chilli powder
½ tsp turmeric powder
Salt to taste

Water as required
Oil (for frying)

Method
Mix gram flour, rice flour, carom seeds, red chilli powder, turmeric powder and salt in a bowl. Add enough water to make a smooth, thick batter. Heat oil in a deep pan. Dip the whole red spinach leaves into the batter, making sure they are coated evenly. Deep fry the spinach leaves in hot oil until they turn golden and crispy. Remove and drain on paper towels. Serve hot with chutney or as a snack with tea.

NEEM PATA BHAJA (FRIED NEEM LEAVES)

Ingredients
1 bunch neem leaves (young and tender)
½ tsp red chilli powder
Oil (mustard oil preferred)
Salt to taste

Method
Wash the neem leaves thoroughly and

let them dry. Heat oil in a pan, and fry the neem leaves until crispy but not burnt. Drain the fried leaves on a paper towel and sprinkle with a little salt and red chilli powder. Serve with hot steamed rice and ghee as a traditional pre-meal dish.

SHUKTO WITH PALONG SHAK (BITTER MIXED-VEGETABLE CURRY WITH SPINACH)

Ingredients
1 bunch spinach (palong shak)
1 bitter gourd, sliced
1 green banana, sliced
1 sweet potatoes, sliced
1 radish, sliced

3 drumsticks (optional), 3-inch sticks
5-6 bori (sun-dried lentil dumplings)
1 tsp mustard seeds paste
1 tsp poppy seed paste (optional)
½ tsp panch phoron
1 tsp ginger paste
1 tsp ghee

1 tsp mustard oil
4 green chillies
Salt and sugar to taste

Method
Fry the "boris" in mustard oil until crispy and set aside. Fry the bitter gourd slices and keep them aside. Heat mustard oil, add panch phoron, then add all the vegetables and sauté. Add mustard paste, ginger paste, salt, sugar, and water, and let everything simmer. Add the spinach at the

end along with the fried boris, bitter gourd and green chilli. Finish with a drizzle of ghee, and serve hot with steamed rice.

STEAMED HILSHA WITH BOTTLE GOURD LEAVES (LAU PATAE BHAPA ILISH)

Ingredients
6 pcs bottle gourd leaves (whole)
6 pcs fish fillets (hilsha)
1 tsp mustard seeds
5 green chillies
¼ cup mustard oil
½ tsp turmeric powder
2 tbsp coconut paste (optional)
Salt to taste

Method
Grind mustard seeds and green chillies into a paste. Marinate the fish fillets with mustard paste, salt, turmeric powder, coconut paste, and a dash of mustard oil. Place the marinated fish on a bottle gourd leaf and wrap it securely. Steam the wrapped fish in a steamer or pressure cooker for 10-15 minutes. Serve the fish in the leaf parcel with steamed rice.

PUI DAL (LENTILS WITH MALABAR SPINACH)

Ingredients
2 cups Malabar spinach (chopped)
1 cup arhar dal (pigeon pea)
1 tomato, chopped
1 onion, chopped
3-4 slit green chillies

3 cloves garlic, crushed
½ tsp turmeric powder
1 tsp red chilli powder
½ tsp mustard seeds
½ tsp cumin seeds
1 tsp curry leaves
1 tsp tamarind pulp
Salt to taste
2 tbsp ghee or oil

Method
Pressure cook arhar dal with turmeric powder and water until soft. Heat ghee or oil in a pan, add mustard seeds, cumin seeds, garlic, and curry leaves. Add chopped onions, tomatoes, and green chillies. Cook until the onions are soft and the tomatoes break down. Add the chopped Malabar spinach and stir well. Cook until the Malabar spinach wilts. Add the cooked dal, tamarind pulp, red chilli powder, and salt. Simmer for a few minutes to let the flavours combine. Serve with rice for a comforting and nutritious meal.

PALAK CHICKEN (SPINACH CHICKEN CURRY)

Ingredients
For the chicken marinade —
500g chicken (bone-in or boneless)
2 tbsp yoghurt
1 tsp ginger-garlic paste
½ tsp turmeric powder
1 tsp chilli powder
1 tsp coriander powder
Salt to taste

For the spinach puree —
300g fresh spinach leaves (palak)
1 green chilli
1 tsp oil (or butter)
1 tsp cumin seeds
1 clove garlic, minced
1 small onion, finely chopped

For the gravy —
1 large onion, finely chopped
2 tomatoes, pureed or finely chopped
2 tsp ginger-garlic paste
1 tsp cumin seeds
1 tsp garam masala
1 tsp coriander powder
½ tsp chilli powder
½ tsp turmeric powder
1 tsp cream (optional)
Salt to taste
2 tbsp oil or ghee

Method

Marinate the chicken —
In a bowl, mix chicken with yoghurt, ginger-garlic paste, turmeric, chilli powder, coriander powder, and salt. Let it marinate for 30 minutes.

Prepare spinach puree —
Boil water and blanch spinach for 2-3 minutes until soft. Drain and immediately transfer to cold water to preserve the colour. Blend the spinach with the green chilli into a smooth puree. Set aside.

Cook the chicken —
Heat oil in a pan, and add cumin seeds until they crackle. Add the marinated chicken and sauté until browned on all sides. Cook for about 10-12 minutes or until nearly done. Set aside.



Prepare the gravy

In the same pan, heat more oil/ghee if needed and add cumin seeds. Add onions and sauté until golden brown. Add ginger-garlic paste and cook until the raw smell disappears. Add pureed or chopped tomatoes and cook until the oil separates. Stir in the turmeric, chilli powder, coriander powder, and salt. Cook for a minute.

Combine chicken and spinach —
Add the browned chicken to the gravy and mix well. Pour in the spinach puree and simmer for 10-12 minutes, allowing the flavours to meld. If the gravy is too thick, add water to adjust the consistency. Stir in garam masala and cream (optional) for a rich finish. Simmer for 2-3 minutes more,

then turn off the heat. Serve the palak chicken hot with naan, ruti, or rice. Enjoy your delicious and healthy palak chicken!

KOCHU SHAK ER GHONTO (TARO LEAVES CURRY)

Ingredients
1 kochu shak (taro leaves)
½ cup coconut (grated)
6-8 bori (sun-dried lentil dumplings)
2 tbsp mustard oil
½ tsp panch phoron
½ tsp turmeric powder
1 tsp red chilli powder
Salt to taste

Method
Boil the kochu shak in water; this prevents allergic reactions to the kochu shak. Drain

then turn off the heat. Serve the palak chicken hot with naan, ruti, or rice. Enjoy your delicious and healthy palak chicken!

Salt to taste
Method
Wash the jute leaves and chop them roughly. Mix the mustard paste, green chillies, salt, and a little mustard oil. Coat the jute leaves in this mixture. Steam the mixture until the leaves are soft and flavourful. Serve with rice for a traditional Bengali meal.

THANKUNI PATA BATA (PENNYWORT LEAF PASTE)

Ingredients
1 small bunch thankuni pata (pennywort leaves)
2 green chillies
1 tsp mustard oil
4 garlic cloves
Salt to taste
2 tsp grated coconut

Method
Wash the thankuni pata thoroughly in running water to remove dirt or impurities. Blanch the leaves, if you want to reduce the raw flavour, you can blanch the leaves by dipping them in hot water for 1-2 minutes and then quickly transferring them to cold water. In a mortar and pestle or grinder, add the washed or blanched thankuni leaves, green chilli, garlic and a pinch of salt. Grind them into a fine paste and set aside. Once ground, add grated coconut and mustard oil. Mix properly and adjust the salt to taste. Serve the thankuni pata bata as a side dish with rice.

KALMI SHAK ER PATURI (WATER SPINACH WRAPS)

Ingredients
1 bunch kalmi shak (water spinach)
1 tsp mustard paste
2 tsp chopped garlic
4 green chillies (slit)
2 tsp mustard oil
Banana leaves (for wrapping)
Salt to taste

Method
Mix the kalmi shak with mustard paste, chopped garlic, green chillies, and salt. Wrap the mixture in banana leaves and grill the wraps. Drizzle with mustard oil before serving. This unique preparation adds a delightful, smoky flavour to the greens. Photo: Shahrear Kabir Heemel

Food & Styling : RBR
Recipe by Salina Parvin



FOR THE LOVE OF FOOD
KANISHKA CHAKRABORTYExecutive Sous Chef,
Radisson Blu Chittagong Bay View**NO SONGS
THIS YEAR
When Kolkata's
spirit pauses
for Durga Pujo**

This time around it seems to be easier to write about things we will not do for Pujo.

A bit of background. First, my favourite city, my favourite country went through an incredible upheaval through July and a large part of August. While that dust has mostly settled, it is not all back to normal, if I understand correctly. And I am trying to understand from a distance, through social and traditional media and first-hand accounts of friends.

Then, my city, Kolkata, witnessed a heinous crime in what is supposed to be a safe zone, a hospital. The whole city went into a shock. And then the city exploded with anger, frustration and sorrow. And this continues to the day, casting a pall on Pujo preparations and the festive feeling.

Quite a few things have changed. We will do quite a few things differently this year. Usually, by now, the streets should have been bedecked with banners and decorations which is not the case yet. The streets still look a little bare. And people still wear an empty look, for we are waiting for justice. Justice for the deceased. And hoping for safe workplaces.

There are a few things we will not do this time around. The complex we live in usually has a lot of fun and festivities for Pujo. The whole community comes together to have small events during the day. Small ones, like antakshari, like quizzes, like children doing sit and draw. The evenings are filled with songs and dance. Mornings and evenings are punctuated with community lunch. Fish one day. Vegetarian the next. Biryani another day. And the crowd favourite, mangsho bhaat, on Dashami.

This year we have decided to do without the fun and frolic. And the community lunch. Pujo will be a solemn affair this time around. All we will do is hope feverishly for justice. Hope for this nightmare to end. Hope for better days, safer days. For this is the true spirit of Pujo. Pomp and grandeur can wait for another year.

By Kanishka Chakraborty

SACRED BLOOMS, ETERNAL LOVE
**Flowers in worship
and puja fashion**

In Hinduism, flowers are essential not only in worship but also in every other aspect of life. Garlands, single flowers, and even petals are used to form a connection between worshippers and the deity being venerated. In the simplicity of floral blooms, devotees find a pure form, expressing their homage to the gods and goddesses; their beauty and scent create an ambience that elevates the entire spiritual experience.

The connection becomes even more evident while performing puja, where culture and religious rites come together. The use of flowers in all aspects of their lives, be it lavish weddings or joyous celebrations like Durga Puja, sets the mood for the occasion.

Hibiscus (jaba) holds a place of distinction during Durga Puja as does the lotus (Padma). Marigolds in their orange and yellow hues are a staple, as are jasmines with their white petals and enchanting fragrance. These contrasts of hues and varied fragrances set an aura befitting the presence of Maa Durga and her celestial children.

While we are more familiar with the selection of flowers



for the puja, many are unaware of the significance numbers (of flowers) play in the rites. The worship of Durga, for instance, can be done through flowers numbering between one and nine. In contrast, the worship of Lord Shiva is done through ten floral blossoms. Devotees offer blossoms at the altar of the gods and goddesses

creating a moment of pure devotion, while chanting mantras and expressing their undivided faith as a gesture of thankfulness.

Flowers take centre stage in fashion, especially during the ten days of Durga puja, as women decked in their best sarees don the freshest blooms to accessorise,

CONTINUED TO PAGE 11



realme 12

POWERING THE SPONTANEOUS YOUTH WITH UNRIVALED SPEED

realme 12 is a megastar for its speed dominator approach, stylish design, robust performance, and impressive features. It is a smartphone that integrates into the everyday lifestyle of the youth.

Today's youngsters have a fast-paced lifestyle. They crave the power of and other features on their smartphones. For young To cope with the demands of the youth, a smartp- the Qualcomm Snapdragon processor, realme 12 is

Most youngsters crave a bright, colourful, and ro- line with this demand, realme 12 offers a 120Hz that outperforms all its competitors. This ensur- ovable viewing experience, whether users bro- videos.

In their busy schedule, youngsters barely get ones. They also require a large enough batt- ies for ample time. This is why the smartph- battery and an 80W SUPERVOOC charge fast charging. The smartphone promises a a single charge under typical usage con- busy days filled with classes, work, or ad-

multitasking, heavy gaming, smooth streaming, professionals, the requirements only add up. hone must function at speed. Thanks to a speed dominator.

bust display alongside speed. In Ultra-Smooth AMOLED Display es smooth scrolling and an enj- wise social media or stream

idle time to charge their smartph- ery to support their digital activit- one comes with a robust 5,000mAh adapter. The device supports 67W whopping 19 hours of battery life on ditions, making it reliable for those ventures.

The youth is mostly active and loves car- sies with the 50MP SONY LYT-600 Cam- is capable of stabilizing images and vi- ngsters. It allows users to explore the SuperOIS features. The camera also vibrant and detailed images that are front-facing selfie camera ensures making it a great companion for so-

pturing memories. This is now even ea- era with OIS on realme 12. The camera deos even in the rushing lifestyle of you- Pro Portrait mode, NightEye Engine, and excels in daylight conditions, producing perfect for sharing on social media. The "me moments" are beautifully captured, cial media enthusiasts.

To keep the users even more worry-free, realme 12 delivers an outstanding performance. A perfectly designed storage helps the device ensures seamless multitasking, making it ideal for students and young professionals who juggle multiple applications simultaneously.

The smartphone runs on realme UI based on Android. Features like customizable themes, stereo speakers, and intuitive navigation are also present to enhance the overall user experience.



Considering all sides, it can be said that realme 12 is more than just a smartphone in the mid-range budget segment. It's a lifestyle companion that fits perfectly into the world of today's youth. realme 12 is available at the price of BDT 29,999. Please visit realme BD online official page for more information

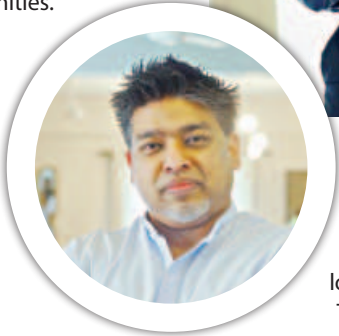
GRAMEENPHONE

releases latest episode of Lumière featuring Jaago Foundation founder Korvi Rakshand

Grameenphone has launched the latest episode of its Lumière series, focusing on Korvi Rakshand, the founder of Jaago Foundation. The episode, hosted by Nabila Khalid, offers an in-depth look into Rakshand's early life, his professional journey, and the experiences that influenced his decision to establish Jaago, an organisation dedicated to providing education to underprivileged children in Bangladesh.

Rakshand's work with Jaago Foundation has been recognised for its contributions to improving educational opportunities for disadvantaged communities.

In the episode, Rakshand reflects on how his upbringing, particularly the values instilled in him during childhood, played a significant role in shaping his decision to focus on education as a means of social change. He outlines the challenges he faced in starting Jaago,



including securing resources and support, and how he overcame them by staying focused on the foundation's long-term goals. Throughout the episode,

Rakshand discusses his vision for the foundation, which focuses not only on providing access to education but also on ensuring that it is sustainable and impactful. His remarks highlight the importance of creating opportunities

for long-term development rather than temporary solutions. He also shares his views on leadership, emphasising the need for persistence and strategic thinking in driving social change.

The episode, hosted by Nabila Khalid, maintains the series' format of combining personal reflections with broader discussions about societal issues. Rakshand's contributions to the episode provide a comprehensive overview of the work done by Jaago Foundation and its goals for the future, including expanding access to quality education for children in rural and underserved areas.

The Lumière series, initiated by Grameenphone, continues its goal of highlighting influential figures in Bangladesh who have made notable contributions to society. Now in its second season, the series aims to inspire audiences by presenting detailed interviews with individuals who have had a significant impact in their respective fields.

Photo: Courtesy

#FYI

A LAZY PERSON'S GUIDE TO SUCCESS

5 micro habits for a transformed life

We have all experienced it—the period when we hold out for the perfect moment to make changes in our lives. The reality is, there's no such thing as the "right time" to start. The important thing is to take action now, even if it's just a small step, and allow those small actions to build momentum over time.

So, here are some micro habits that can positively transform your life.

Reading one page of a book every day

Reading at least one page of a book helps you focus and improves your concentration. Reading regularly contributes to personal growth, in terms of knowledge, creativity and so on. Moreover, it's a great way to reduce stress as it offers a break from your hectic life.

Cleaning your desk

Your workspace is a reflection of who you are. Whether it's your study desk at home or your office, a clean workstation enhances your mood and mental clarity. A well-organised desk reduces stress and anxiety as there

are no distractions in front of you. Get into the habit of cleaning your desk at least for a few minutes every day. This will boost your productivity and create a more focused and effective environment in your work or study.

Listening to a podcast for ten minutes

A ten-minute podcast session does not seem like a lot but you can grasp a new idea or concept within these few minutes. A podcast helps you to absorb new perspectives. Paying attention to a podcast helps you become an active listener, which can also improve your communication skills.

Exercising for a few minutes

Although it's just a few minutes each day, it can have a big impact on your body and mind. A new study finds that only 20 minutes of low-intensity exercise increases energy levels by 20 per cent and reduces fatigue symptoms by 65 per cent!

Exercising releases endorphins or "feel-good" hormones that can improve your mood and reduce stress

or anxiety throughout the day.

Drinking a glass of water to start your day

Drinking at least one glass of water right after you wake up might help your body recover from nightly dehydration. Proper hydration in the morning can improve your physical and mental health, from boosting energy to reducing fatigue. This habit also stimulates the digestive system and prepares the body for efficient daily nutrient absorption.

By Jawwad Sami Neogi
Photo: Collected





SACRED BLOOMS, ETERNAL LOVE FLOWERS IN WORSHIP AND PUJA FASHION

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from their neat hairdo to wearing floral bracelets and waistbands.

Some go for a solitary bloom tucked behind the ear. While roses are a clear favourite, orchids are a new addition to this classic look. Then some prefer to go for the more refined “sleek look” — parting their hair at the top and having floral garlands adorning the parted lines and encircling the bun. For those who prefer to wear a braid, garlands are often intertwined with the plaits enhancing the overall look.

While hopping between puja mandaps, women often embrace a more carefree style — clad in sarees, adorned with glass bangles, a teep on the forehead, and a floral crown. The beauty of this boho-chic look lies in its versatility. She truly “walks in beauty” as she effortlessly carries the look all day, from one pandal to another, while navigating Dhaka’s notorious traffic.

Flowers are not mere decorations, they have a deeper connection with the human soul and the higher powers. Each bloom offered during the festival carries the essence of

spiritual meaning, whether it be the power of the hibiscus, the purity of the lotus, or the joyful celebration embodied by the marigold.

Wearing flowers as fashion accessories is just an extension of that expression. Embracing flowers in our entire existence is just another way of connecting to that one power that nurtures and governs the entire universe.

By Pothbhola
Photo: LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed

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ARIES
(MAR. 21-APR. 20)

Be careful not to divulge secret information this week. Your diplomatic approach will enhance your reputation. Overindulgence will mean poor health. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



TAURUS
(APR. 21-MAY 21)

Don't rely on others. You'll look guilty if you don't lay your cards on the table. Don't lend or borrow money. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



GEMINI
(MAY 22-JUN. 21)

You won't be pleased with those you live with. Changes in your home will be positive. Back away from commitment. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



CANCER
(JUN. 22-JUL. 22)

Older family members may take advantage of you. Discuss your problems if you wish to rectify them. Update any outdated investments. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



LEO
(JUL. 23-AUG. 22)

Unreliable people will be negative about your ideas. Try not to be too emotional with those around you. Travel for business or pleasure.



VIRGO
(AUG. 23-SEP. 23)

Your co-worker may have been two-faced. Look into some personal changes. Enhance your earning by picking up additional skills. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



LIBRA
(SEP. 24-OCT. 23)

You can come into money this week. Avoid confrontations with colleagues. Ask your friends to help you move. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



SCORPIO
(OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Get back to basics. Make gains by working with others. Listen to the advice given by others. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



SAGITTARIUS
(NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Make some changes to your life. Don't turn down invitations. Ideas may sound good, but be careful. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



CAPRICORN
(DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

Talk about your intentions and confirm mutual feelings. Entertainment can include physical activities. Try to visit an exciting country. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



AQUARIUS
(JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

Keep up your responsibilities. Secret affairs may be tempting but risky. Discuss problems if you wish to fix them. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



PISCES
(FEB. 20-MAR. 20)

Talk to loved ones about personal problems. A past romantic infatuation may surface. Sudden changes in your friend circle could be interesting. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.

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বদলে দিলে যে আমায়...

অ্যান্ডামিনা

সোপ

রূপচর্চায় আন্ডিজাত্য...

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#DECOR

DESIGN YOUR LIVING ROOM

Curate an exquisite home experience for your family and friends

Whether spending weekends with loved ones or unwinding after a long day, the living room is the go-to lounge for relaxation and recreation. A luxe living room can mirror your charming personality and offer an unforgettable impression to your visitors. Here are some design techniques that can add timeless sophistication to the heart of your house.

Curate a cohesive theme

Designing a modern living room requires a well-curated approach that harmonises comfort and exclusivity. Depending on the size and layout of your room, the design theme can be traditional, minimalist, contemporary, or art-deco.

For instance, an eclectic-dark theme would create a glamorous air for spacious



it adds life to a room. They are a great fit for curtain fabrics to ensure maximum daylight. Opt for adding indoor plants to splash an organic green vibe into your space.

The interplay of light and shadow

Layer your lights to create depth and dimension. Skilfully choreographed lighting is the secret to a lovely experience in a living room. If you want to use the source of light as an exciting element in the room, use chandeliers or chained pendant lights. Their gentle illumination creates a soulful ambience.

Use strip lighting to highlight the architectural features of your room. Spotlights are graceful additions to create engaging scenes by specifying various zones. Wall scones and warm table lamps are great additions for task-orientated lighting.

Create rhythm on the walls

Treat the walls as a canvas to compose your stories. You can go for lime wash, classic paints with one bold-coloured wall, or wood panelling to heighten the drama. Do not hesitate to drape an oversized painting to your wall. Opt for a mural or an exposed brick wall and mix and match various sizes of family photo frames.

Pair a black wall with metallic accents and add a small settee to create a VIP lounge vibe in your living room.

By Tasmiah Rahman
 Photo: Courtesy



furniture to avoid visual clutter. A classic modern living room would contain wood and velvet textures with neutral tones, which creates a warm and welcoming atmosphere.

Infuse function with flair

Create memorable living experiences by infusing function with beauty. Rich walnut bookshelves are functional pieces that can exhibit your book collection, souvenirs, and art pieces. Add a complementary couch or divan to create a reading cocoon feel.

Add a statement piece in the area as a testament to your style. A soft and supple leather sofa can be the key element in

captivating visitors. Wooden coffee tables, mirrors and artful sculptures can add a visual transition.

Storytelling with rich colours

From enigmatic charcoal to soothing soft grey or beige — a balanced colour palette is an expression of your art of living.

Tones like emerald green, deep ruby, and amber with crisp white highlights can add contrast and drama to your living room. Pick regal blue accented with gold for your gilded mirrors or side tables.

Desaturated hues like grey-silver combos work as excellent backdrops. Complemented with bright pops of colour,

rooms that can capture the grandeur of black stone, gold brass, and bold patterns. A compact space requires a contemporary minimalistic approach that accentuates clean lines, satin textures, and sleek



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