VOLUME 24, ISSUE 35, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4,
MAGH 21, 1

Star LIFE

E-mail: lifestyleds@yahoo.com
64-65 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-121

Happily ever AFTER!

SCALING THE MOUNTAINS P3
WOMEN MOUNTAINEERS
CAPTURING EMOTIONS P4
POST WALIMA PHOTOSHOOT
EVOLUTION OF A CLASSIC P8-9
THE SAREE

PHOTO: ADNAN RAHMAN
MODEL: ABDULLAH AL MAHFUZ, JESSIA
STYLING: SONIA YEASMIN ISHA
WARDROBE: ATTIRE IDYLL, RULMAKER
JEWELRY: ZEVER BY AROHYE
MAKEUP: SUMON RAHAT & TEAM
SET: ESKAY DÉCOR BY SAIMUL KARIM

CHECK IT OUT

Rethink your food habits for affordable and healthy options

Food habits are one of those things that directly affect your lifestyle. These effects are both physical, mental, and last but not least, financial. It's a matter of daily discussion, and regardless of whatever anyone tells you, remember — it's never too late to rethink your food habits.

Let's explore a few substitutes to our daily food habits that are healthy and cheaper:

ALTERNATIVE INGREDIENTS

Changing the basic ingredients is one of the most cost-friendly ways to rethink the dishes and the options are more than you imagine. All it takes is the willingness to try new things.

For instance, if you love eating bread, you can rethink the very basic ingredients of bread. Did you know that corn flour is a cheaper and healthier alternative to wheat? One can also mix wheat flour with corn flour and make bread that tastes just as good.

Similarly, you can rethink your salad options. Many complain that cucumber is too expensive. You can replace cucumber with green papaya to make salad. On top of that, green papaya is a great curry option that is good for digestion. Cauliflower can be used as a broccoli substitute.

Similarly, there are alternatives for juices. Orange juice is quite easy on the tastebuds, but they are also expensive. A good substitute has to be something that is tasty and healthy at the same time, and easy on your wallet. This is where papaya can come in once again. Ripe papaya juice is great for hydrating yourself and is easy on the stomach. And they are arguably the cheapest alternative in the market.

Another alternative food is guava which tastes amazing both in its green form and ripe form. Guava can be your apple proxy in fruit salads.

A CHANGE IN COLOURS

For some food items, there is more than one colour option available to choose from, and often, their prices vary. Sure, sometimes the tastes also differ with the colour but more often than not, one may compromise with the colours for an affordable option.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 11

#WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

TRAILBLAZING BANGLADESHI WOMEN reach new heights in mountaineering

In a world where women are still fighting for equal recognition in various spheres, five Bangladeshi mountaineers have shown that the spirit of resilience and determination knows no bounds. With the theme "Sultana's Dream Unbound," inspired by Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain's ground-breaking feminist utopia, these women recently returned from a historic expedition in Nepal.

Led by Nishat Mazumder, the first Bangladeshi woman to conquer Mount Everest, the team proved that the dreams of trailblazing women like Begum Rokeya are as relevant today as they were over a century ago. She was joined by Arpita Devnath, Mousumi Akter, Tahura Sultana Rekha, and Yasmin Lisa, each bringing unique strengths and stories to the table.

The challenges

Mountaineering is not just a sport but a way of life for Nishat Mazumder, who sees it as a metaphor for overcoming life's struggles.

She explained, "I feel a spiritual connection with mountains and nature. Life itself is a challenge, and mountaineering is one of the most challenging pursuits. Traversing the rugged paths of a mountain often makes navigating the rough paths of life feel a little easier. It is an extreme sport, filled with risks to life. It demands persistent dedication over a long period. This makes it particularly challenging for women. Yet, it is vital to remain steadfast and patient in the face of these difficulties."

Even in Nepal, the team faced societal misconceptions.

Yasmin Lisa, one of the team members, recounted an incident: "When we went to Nepal, there was a woman who asked me how we would get married. She assumed that if we didn't marry young, we'd have to 'settle' for less. I replied, 'So what if I don't get married? I would climb mountains all my life.'"

Lisa's journey to the Himalayas was deeply personal.

"In 2018, I first visited the Himalayas and completed a basic mountaineering course in India. That's when I fell in love with mountains," she said.

However, financial constraints often made it difficult to pursue her passion.

"Thanks to the mountaineering association, Abhijatri, five of us were able to take on this expedition. It was truly a life-altering experience. Everyone should get to experience this once in a lifetime."

Addressing gender gaps in outdoor sports

One of the key challenges the team encountered was the lack of female representation in mountaineering, even in countries like Nepal.

"For this expedition in the Nepal Himalayas, we needed female guides to lead the way. However, even there, the number of female mountaineers is alarmingly low," Mazumder pointed out.

This gap highlighted the importance of initiatives like Team Sultana's Dream, which aims to empower women in outdoor sports.

Mazumder emphasised the need for systemic change: "Over the next five years, Team Sultana's Dream will continue its efforts. Every year, we will train more women in mountaineering and organise winter expeditions."

The team's collaboration with UNESCO and MasterCard demonstrated the power of collective efforts in breaking barriers.

A symbol of hope and empowerment

Beyond the physical challenges, the expedition carried immense symbolic value. It showed that women could not only excel in a male-dominated field but also inspire broader societal change.

"Begum Rokeya's masterpiece, Sultana's Dream envisioned a world where women could thrive without societal constraints. This expedition was our way of making that vision a reality," said Mazumder.

The expedition was more than a singular achievement; it was the start of a larger movement. Mazumder and her team are committed to creating opportunities for the next generation of female climbers. Through training programmes, mentorship, and expeditions they aim to foster a culture where women feel empowered to explore their potential.

In the words of Yasmin Lisa, "Mountains teach us resilience, patience, and strength. This experience has been transformative, not just for us but for everyone who believes in the power of dreams."

The success of Team Sultana's Dream opens new doors for Bangladeshi women in outdoor sports and advocacy. These five women have sent a powerful message: the dreams of Begum Rokeya are alive, unbound, and reaching new heights.

By Ayman Anika
Photo: Courtesy

#PERSPECTIVE

RETHINKING TRADITIONS: The double standard of marriages

Marriage is an institution steeped in cultural traditions, religious doctrines, and societal expectations. Among its many archaic customs prevalent in our society, the hypocritical practice of a bride leaving her home to join her husband has fuelled gender debates for years, especially since a groom moving to his wife's home is often colloquially dismissed as being "henpecked."

Patriarchal values have traditionally dominated our societal structure. Most families follow a system, where lineage and inheritance are traced through the male line, placing the responsibility of continuing the family name and legacy squarely on the son while daughters are considered "someone else's wealth" ever since they are born.

A daughter's departure to her husband's home is often seen as her fulfilling a societal role. Economics also plays a role in propagating such customs.

In ancient rural societies, land and property were the main sources of livelihood, with sons taking responsibility for their upkeep. Daughters, upon marriage, would be required to contribute

to the household, necessitating the need to join the groom's family.

Certain religious texts and traditions across the Indian subcontinent have reinforced these practices.

In Hinduism, a bride is often seen as "Lakshmi", or a goddess of wealth, entering her husband's home to bring prosperity. Wedding rituals, such as the "Kanyadaan" (Giving away of the daughter), symbolically transfer the bride's ownership from her parental family to her husband's family.

In Islam, marriage is a sacred contract that emphasises mutual consent and partnership. It recognises the rights of women within marriage, including their right to separate living arrangements, free from undue influence or interference from the extended family. A woman is entitled to her own home after marriage, ensuring her privacy and autonomy within the marital relationship.

Despite these clear guidelines, Muslim communities within the subcontinent have often normalised joint family systems, prioritising cultural interpretation.

Traditional society in the subcontinent also associates masculinity with independence, and authority, while femininity is linked to adaptability and sacrifice. When a man relocates to his wife's home, it is generally seen as a reversal of roles. Conversely, a woman's departure from their parental home is framed as a sacrifice and a marker of their maturity. Any deviation from this norm often invites scrutiny and judgment on either party.

Shifting trends

A marked change in attitudes has been noticed in recent years, however,

with urbanisation, education, and changing attitudes toward gender equality challenging these norms. Couples increasingly prioritise individual preferences and practical considerations over traditional expectations. Nuclear families and egalitarian partnerships are becoming more common, with some couples opting to establish their own households or even living with the wife's family when it makes logistical or emotional sense.

Media representations and feminist movements have played an active role in questioning stereotypes and promoting the idea of equality in marriage. However, progress remains bumpy, and traditional expectations continue to take precedence in many parts of the subcontinent.

Religious teachings also provide avenues for reform. The emphasis on mutual respect and fairness in marital relationships offers principles that couples can draw upon, to negotiate living arrangements that honour the rights and the dignity of both partners and lead to healthier, more balanced marital relationships.

By Munira Fidai
Photo: Collected

#FASHION & BEAUTY

Preloved fashion

Changing the way we dress and think

In a time when fast fashion dominates the global market, preloved clothing is emerging as a sustainable and practical alternative. People, especially the youth, are increasingly embracing this eco-conscious trend. From affordability to sustainability, preloved clothing has much to offer and with a growing number of thrift shops and marketplaces, the movement is gaining ground.

What makes preloved clothing appealing?

Preloved clothing – also known as thrift or second-hand fashion – refers to garments that have been previously owned and then resold or donated. The appeal lies in its affordability, uniqueness, and most importantly, its contribution to sustainability by extending the life cycle of clothing and reducing textile waste.

"I recently bought a beautiful blazer from a thrift shop that I could not find in retail stores," says Nafisa Rahman, a recent graduate. "It cost me half the price of a new one and I feel good knowing I'm reducing waste."

For Rahman and many others, preloved fashion is an affordable way to access quality clothing, including branded and imported items.

Sujana Kasfia, owner of the online thrift shop Mulberry Clothing, highlights the environmental impact of her business. "We source preloved clothes not only from Bangladesh but also from other countries, including Japan and Thailand," she shares.

"When we started two or three years ago, there were only a handful of thrift shops, but now the number has grown significantly. People are slowly accepting the idea of preloved clothing, though some still hesitate."

Kasfia, who actively participates in events like Arka Fashion Week and Dhaka Makers, says the positive feedback fuels her passion. "The response I've received at these events has been overwhelming. It's not just about selling clothes – it's about introducing people to a sustainable lifestyle. Every piece of clothing we sell has a story and a new chapter waiting to be written."

While thrifted fashion has become a popular choice for women, men's options remain limited. Sadman Jayeb Farhan, founder of 500 Street Thrift, started his business to bridge this gap. "There are so many options for females, but males often have to settle for a few selected choices," he says.

Farhan also underscores the environmental significance of thrift shops. "Many of the clothes we get come from leftover garments – sometimes in quantities as large as one to two tonnes. We carefully sort through these to find the best pieces, ensuring nothing goes to waste. It's an excellent way to repurpose clothes and reduce the environmental burden of the fashion industry."

Farhan's philosophy on thrifted fashion is simple: "Whether new or second-hand, as long as it looks good and feels comfortable, it's fine to wear preloved clothes. The stigma around it is fading, and I think that's a step in the right direction."

With rising awareness of the environmental impact of fast fashion, both clothing store owners and consumers are gravitating toward preloved options. Every thrifted purchase reduces the demand for new clothing production, conserving resources like water, energy, and raw materials.

One of the challenges thrifted fashion faces in Bangladesh is the lingering stigma around second-hand clothing. Many consumers worry about hygiene or associate preloved clothing with financial hardship.

However, sellers like Kasfia and Farhan are working hard to change perceptions. "All our clothes are thoroughly cleaned and sanitised before resale," assures Kasfia. "We prioritise quality so that buyers feel confident wearing preloved pieces."

A sustainable future in fashion

As thrifted fashion continues to grow, it's clear that preloved clothing is more than just a trend–it's a movement towards sustainability. By choosing preloved clothes, Bangladeshi consumers can play a part in reducing the massive waste generated by the global fashion industry.

Whether it's a vintage sari, a branded jacket, or a classic pair of jeans, every preloved piece carries a story. As the movement grows, it's reshaping how we view fashion, blending affordability with eco-consciousness to create a more sustainable future.

By Ayman Anika
Photo: Sujana Kasfia

POST-WEDDING PHOTOSHOOTS

The magic doesn't end after 'I do'

It is not just a way to preserve moments but an opportunity to unwind from the rush of the wedding day and fully immerse in the joy of being newlyweds. In the whirlwind of events, a post-wedding shoot is a way of slowing down and reliving the treasured occasion, even after the big day fades.

A large portrait of my father and mother dressed in their bridal attires now hangs on the walls of our living room. The black-and-white photograph, taken in a studio a few days after their marriage, captures the emotions of a loving occasion "frozen" in time. The simplicity of the photograph reflects a deeper connection, an intimate continuation of the journey embarked upon by them.

That was also the tradition back then — to visit a studio to freeze time. Professional wedding photography was almost unheard of, and one had to rely on a photography enthusiast relative to capture the images of the day. The trend was to hire a seasoned professional later and participate in a session while donning the best.

Today, weddings are bigger than ever. The family, the friends, the celebrations — it all comes together to create memories that one will treasure forever, and people do everything possible to preserve them. But, given the hectic schedule of a modern Bangladeshi marriage, it is easy to miss some of the key details. Perhaps, a shared glance, a soft touch, or a smile.

An easy, affordable solution has been to take photos of the couple at the venue. While they are often beautiful, these tend to focus on "created" moments, leaving little room for natural spontaneity that really captures the essence of the occasion.

In addition, emotional and physical fatigue can affect the energy levels of the bride and the groom (also the photographer!) impacting the quality of the photographs. Time constraints may compromise quality; the pressure to please family and guests can also detract from the moment.

In contrast, a post-wedding photoshoot allows couples to slow down and focus on what truly matters: each other! It allows them to cherish the experience without the pressures of a packed schedule.

The shift from the busy wedding day to the peace of a post-wedding shoot can offer a deeper level of connection — both physically and emotionally. One may find themselves able to capture and share intimate moments that might have otherwise been lost in the wedding hullabaloo.

They also give opportunity for the couple to do things differently. Wear the wedding attire differently, opt for a casual look, or try a completely different location than the wedding venue like a nearby park or a scenic nature reserve. Whether one is looking for soft, intimate portraits or a playful, fun vibe, a wide range of creative possibilities can open up.

The "wedding photo" of my parents is not just about the attire or the occasion; it is about the feeling of connecting without any distractions. Some 54 years later, the image is a strong reminder that while a wedding day is filled with beautiful, fleeting instances, a post-wedding photoshoot offers the chance to preserve and celebrate moments in a purer, more personal form.

It is always important to remember that the magic of a wedding does not have to end with the reception. There's always more love to capture, more moments to treasure, and more ways to preserve them for posterity.

By Mannan Mashhur Zarif
Photo: Adnan Rahman
Model: Abdullah Al Mahfuz, Jessia
Styling: Sonia Yeasmin Isha
Wardrobe: ATTIRE IDYLL, Rulmaker
Jewelry: ZEVER by Arohye
Makeup: Sumon Rahat & Team
Set: Eskay Décor by Saimul Karim

#FASHION & BEAUTY

SAREE EVOLUTION
From ancient threads to modern trends

The saree, a symbol of cultural richness and versatility, has evolved through centuries, adapting to various styles, materials, and cultural influences. From its origins in the Indus Valley to modern interpretations seen on global runways, this six-yard garment has undergone significant transformation.

It can be worn in more than a hundred ways. The rectangular piece of unstitched cloth is commonly wrapped around the waist, pleated, and tucked over a petticoat with the other loose end of the fabric called 'anchal' drawn across the torso and draped over the left shoulder. A fitted blouse is also an essential part of this ensemble.

Considered quintessentially Indian, the saree has been influenced and inspired by many cultures and traditions. The first saree-like garment can be traced back to the Indus Valley Civilisation, which flourished in the northern parts of India around 2800-1800 BCE.

Initially, they were made of cotton and soon, weavers learned to use natural dyes like indigo, turmeric, red madder, and flowers to bring variety. Silk came into play around 2400 BCE. At that time, the saree was called 'sati,' meaning 'strip of cloth.' According to some costume historians, sati turned into 'dhoti,' which until the 14th century, was worn by both men and women. The idea is based on ancient sculptures that show women covering only the nether regions of their bodies. Both men and women were equally comfortable in leaving the upper half bare!

In some places, women would just wrap the fabric around their bodies like a sheath, the main purpose being to cover up. The length of the garb varied at different times as did the style of draping the cloth.

Many of the Buddhist scriptures recorded that women wore breast bands and lengths of a third piece of cloth covering the head and shoulders like the modern-day 'orna.' They called the ensemble 'posak' or the attire. There was, however, no blouse or petticoat to accompany the saree.

Even in late 19th century Bengal, the saree was worn without a blouse or petticoat by the rich and the poor alike. Women draped the garment, which was shorter than today's standard six yards, in large box pleats to cover their lower limbs and wrapped the rest around their upper bodies leaving only the arms and hands visible.

The person who brought about a revolutionary change to this style was Jnanadanandini Devi, wife of Satyendranath Tagore, the elder brother of Rabindranath Tagore. As the wife of India's first Indian Civil Service officer, she had to travel widely to accompany her husband to various parts of home and abroad. Jnanadanandini Devi also had to adapt and invent styles to accommodate herself in the drawing rooms with European ladies. A saree without any kind of undergarment would have been considered scandalous in that community.

So, Devi took inspiration from the fashionable Parsi ladies who had introduced the "Bombay dastur." The style shows draping their "Chinese embroidered crepe Gara sarees in a quasi-Gujarati style," with the anchal coming in front over the right shoulder, held in place on their long-sleeved blouses with a brooch.

The Tagore family had already devised a tunic-like chemise in the style of Victorian ladies of England.

Soon, however, the cumbersome chemise was divided into a blouse and a petticoat; the blouse got a lot of attention, being decorated with lace, patchwork, and applique.

Jnanadanandini reversed the Parsi straight style and drew the anchal across the bosom, to loop over the left shoulder and then bring it back under the right.

The front pleats of the modern-day saree were introduced by the Maharani Suniti Devi of Cooch Behar, who was quite a fashion icon in her time. According to some historians, the idea came from Ancient Greek sculptures, where goddesses are shown in flowing and pleated skirts. This addition allowed women to stride more freely than before.

In the 1920s, chiffon and silk saree with gold jewellery became popular. Indira Devi, another Maharani of Cooch Behar, set quite a trend with white chiffon.

Sarees became fashionable and more adaptable for middle-class women of Bengal when Suchitra-Uttam movies became popular.

Suchitra Sen was undoubtedly the most glamorous actress of her time. Women copied not only her high-neck blouse and the Nivi style of draping saree, but also the way she spoke and carried herself. Apart from Suchitra, Supriya Choudhury also drew attention with her chiffon saree and sleeveless blouse with dramatic kohl eyes. She became the iconic fashionable Bengali woman.

There is much to say about the saree and its accompanying accessories, but if we talk only about the different draping styles, and the people who invented and adapted the styles, the story would remain incomplete.

Along with the fantastic progression of the saree, there is also the sad tale of the weavers of Bengal.

During the Sultanate and Mughal periods, Bengal was renowned for its textile — the most famous being the 'muslin' and 'jamdani.' But that rich culture was destroyed when the British took over. The industrial revolution of Europe introduced mass factory production and the hand-operated looms in the Indian sub-continent failed to compete. Even after its independence, Bangladesh continued to face a crisis in the textile industry.

Sometime in the late 1980s and early 1990s, a renewed interest from various quarters started to revive the weaving industry. Even though the attention was sporadic, there have been a few dedicated fashion designers and houses that have been able to take Bangladeshi handloom and materials to international platforms.

One such name is Bibi Russel, the 'Dream Weaver.' Under the label of "Bibi Productions," she brought out her line of clothing. The rural 'gamcha' gained international fame when she organised her first international fashion show in 1996. Since then, the gamcha saree has been quite trendy.

Rina Latif is another acclaimed fashion designer who has taken Bangladesh to new heights. A conceiver of high-end clotheslines, she has made a name for herself through the khadi, muslin, and jamdani. Her work has been displayed in prestigious shows in Europe, India, and Pakistan and her brand is an internationally coveted one to have emerged out of Bangladesh.

In recent years, the saree has garnered much attention in the Western world as well. Many fashion shows have introduced saree-gowns, saree-pants, T-shirt sarees, and other styles. Blouses have evolved as well with daring cuts, with various kinds of sleeves, fronts, and backs. The attire seems far from being called outdated. On the contrary, it is gaining new looks, audience, and popularity, while also being able to find more people interested in donning it.

By Sohana Manzoor
Photo: Shahrear Kabir Heemel
Model: Shanila Mehjabin
Wardrobe: NOBO Dhaka
Styling: Saki Kazi and Shezami Khalil
Collection: Bangladeshi Heshel, both hand-painted and digitally printed 100 count Egyptian cotton kota

This article originally appeared in the Anniversary Supplement of The Daily Star. It has been revised and updated in this version for clarity and context.

#HOBBIES

From Catan to connections: Inside Bangladesh's thriving board game community

It began with a few people coming along and bonding over a shared love for boardgames. While looking for an escape from the grind of everyday life, a handful of acquaintances started meeting up and spending time playing board games. It was not just about passing time. Rather, it was about finding a meaningful way to connect with like-minded people. From homes to cafés, the games brought them together, and before long, what started as a casual meetup grew into a thriving group, the Bangladesh Board Game Community.

Reflecting on the early days, Arifin Rahman, one of the founding members of this community shared, "At first we created a Facebook group with some board game enthusiasts. We started hanging out together, playing board games, and used

to post about it on the group so that others could join us."

Thus, the community started growing slowly, and Panaderia, Gulshan café became their weekly meeting ground. Giving this casual meetup a new dimension and taking it a step further, they started arranging tournaments. During the pandemic, they arranged a few online competitions but the first offline tournament was based on Catan, a multi-player board game designed by Klaus Teuber.

Although the community boasts an impressive collection of imported games, ranging in different tastes and preferences, one board game seems to unite most of them — Catan. The event, Catan Cup 2024 drew many, even some travelling from outside Dhaka, among which around 50 people participated.

Over two weekends the participants battled out one another in a series of knockouts. By the end of the first round, only 16 participants advanced to the semi-finals, which were held on the last day of the competition. The semi-finals were no less intense. Four games were played simultaneously, four tables, four players each, under the supervision of a moderator for each game.

From these four fiercely contested games, one winner from each table claimed

a seat at the final round, a stage where everything hinged on their wits and a touch of luck. The final four faced off on the same day and after an intensive play, Pearuddin, a player from Chittagong, became the champion. As a token of appreciation, all finalists were given a copy of Rosh Kosh, a game designed by one of the members of the community.

In recent years, this group has become more than just a company of gamers. Some members have turned their passion into entrepreneurial ventures, importing and selling games or even publishing and creating their own.

Another organiser of the event, Mafiul Robin, shared, "People here are now publishing their own board games". Playground Inc., an initiative born from this group, has already released several titles, including Polashi, which is inspired by the historic Battle of Plassey. The game has since gained significant popularity.

"We don't have many board games rooted in our cultural narratives. So, we are blending interesting elements from existing games with our history and traditions, creating something we can truly connect with," explained Robin.

For many, the Bangladesh Board Game Communityhas been a lifeline; a place to find like-minded individuals in a city that does not always make space for connections. If you have a knack for board gaming, looking for a new hobby, or simply want to be a part of this wholesome group, you can slide into the café Panaderia in Gulshan on a random Saturday evening and be part of the community.

By Rehnuma Shahreen
Photo: Courtesy

#FOOD & RECIPES

The secret to making chocolate chip cookies: A step-by-step guide

They have gained popularity across the globe for their rich chocolatey flavour, chewy centre, and buttery aftertaste. The contrast between the warm, melted chocolate and the slightly crispy edges of the chocolate chip cookie creates a satisfying experience. American chef, Ruth Graves Wakefield came up with the recipe in 1938, around the time when she owned the Toll House Inn, in Whitman, Massachusetts. In that era, the Toll House Inn was a popular restaurant that featured home cooking.

Due to its rich history, 4 August is celebrated as 'National Chocolate Chip Cookie Day'. The following recipe can meet your cravings for Chocolate Chip Cookies, from the comforts of your home. Here's how it's done —

CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

Ingredients

½ cup unsalted butter (softened)
½ cup brown sugar
½ cup white sugar
1 large egg
1 tsp vanilla extract
1½ cups all-purpose flour
½ tsp baking soda
200g milk chocolate bar, chopped into bits
100g white chocolate bar, chopped into bits
A pinch of salt

Method

Preheat the oven to 160°C (320°F).

In a mixing bowl, combine the softened butter, brown sugar, white sugar, 1 large egg (room temperature) and vanilla extract. Mix thoroughly with your hand or stand mixer until smooth and creamy.

Gradually add the flour, baking soda, and a pinch of salt to the wet ingredients. Mix until combined. Fold in the chopped milk and white chocolate bits.

Scoop spoonsful of the dough and place them on a baking tray lined with parchment paper, leaving enough space between each to allow for spreading.

Bake for 10-15 minutes, or until the edges are golden and crispy.

Remove from the oven and let the cookies cool on the tray for a few minutes. Transfer them to a cooling rack and let them cool completely for at least 10 minutes before serving.

Recipes & Photo: Farzana Hossain

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Green capsicum is a lot cheaper than red or yellow capsicum. Similarly, you can find cheaper options in another colour for beans, aubergine, and potatoes. When buying beans, you can opt for ones with seeds or just plain beans depending on your needs and the prices will be different based on your choice.

Bitter gourd comes in two forms. One is bigger in size and has a slightly lighter colour while the other looks a shade greener. Pick the one that suits better in your budget.

Think fish

Protein is a crucial nutrient that keeps us going by repairing and forming new cells. But getting the right protein can be tricky. Beef can be an amazing source of protein, but eating beef regularly can be expensive not to mention detrimental to health.

Considering this, one can switch to a more affordable source of protein in the form of fish. They are comparatively cheaper than beef and are an excellent source of protein. Besides, with all the variety of fish available in the market, one can easily try something different every other day so it does not get tedious for their tastebuds.

The path to new and tasty food must be passed through experiments. Trial and error are the only way to determine which dish works for you and which does not. So, this very weekend, why not try something different?

By Ashif Ahmed Rudro
Photo: Collected

HOROSCOPE

ARIES
(MAR. 21-APR. 20)

Be careful when dealing with family members. Control your emotions. Put effort into household duties or redecorating plans. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.

CANCER
(JUN. 22-JUL. 22)

Focus on building financial security. Don't let in-laws upset you. Real estate ventures may prove profitable. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.

LIBRA
(SEP. 24-OCT. 23)

You may overlook flaws in loved ones. Romantic partners may appear on trips. Stay ahead in your endeavours. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.

CAPRICORN
(DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

Attend seminars to enhance business skills. Avoid overreacting to advances. Educational short trips will be beneficial. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.

TAURUS
(APR. 21-MAY 21)

Opportunities to advance are evident. Make notes about changes to improve. Consider turning your entertainment room into a family space. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.

LEO
(JUL. 23-AUG. 22)

Drastic changes in attitude are likely. Organise responsibilities clearly. Use this time to get back on track. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.

SCORPIO
(OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Events involving children may be hectic. Avoid signing contracts hastily. Expand your social circle with unique activities. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.

AQUARIUS
(JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

Consider starting a small business. Explore affordable vacation destinations. Mix business with pleasure when travelling. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.

GEMINI
(MAY 22-JUN. 21)

Work diligently to achieve your goals. Avoid donating if finances are tight. Call a good friend for support. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.

VIRGO
(AUG. 23-SEP. 23)

You may face difficulties at home. Avoid staying stagnant; embrace change. Brunch or a long walk may strengthen relationships. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.

SAGITTARIUS
(NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Engage in competitive activities to boost stamina. Share innovative ideas with others. Pamper yourself to recharge. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.

PISCES
(FEB. 20-MAR. 20)

Engage in activities involving children. Use your creativity to solve issues. Stay calm and seek mutual understanding. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.

Star LIFE Style

VOLUME 24, ISSUE 35, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2025, MAGH 21, 1431 BS
A publication of The Daily Star
E-mail: lifestyleds@yahoo.com, 64-65 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215

EBL VISA Women Signature Credit Card

Imagine a working mother juggling her family, career, and financial obligations. She needs to cover household expenses, manage unexpected medical costs, and occasionally treat herself to a spa to recharge. On top of that, she dreams of growing her side business but struggles with accessing credit and balancing her responsibilities.

This is the reality for many women in Bangladesh, where societal challenges often constrain financial independence and ease of access to resources. Eastern Bank PLC. (EBL) VISA Women Signature Credit Card steps in as a solution, designed specifically to address such challenges and empower women to lead stress-free, fulfilling lives.

EBL VISA Women Signature Credit Card is a groundbreaking product aimed at addressing the unique challenges women face in their financial and personal lives. Designed to support women entrepreneurs, professionals, and homemakers, this card provides tailored solutions that empower women to manage their finances seamlessly while enhancing their lifestyles.

STREAMLINING EXPENSE MANAGEMENT FOR WORKING WOMEN

Balancing professional and personal expenses is a daily struggle for many women, especially those managing households, careers or businesses. EBL VISA Women Signature Credit Card eases this burden through exclusive discounts across shopping, dining, and travel. These benefits provide tangible savings, making routine expenses more manageable.

Features like premium lounge access add convenience, enabling women to optimise their time and energy while balancing their multiple roles effectively.

ENSURING FINANCIAL SECURITY DURING EMERGENCIES

Unforeseen circumstances, whether in personal life or business, can be particularly stressful for women. EBL VISA Women Signature Credit Card offers a comprehensive Risk Assurance Program, providing financial protection during emergencies. This safety net ensures that women can focus on their goals with confidence, knowing that unexpected events will not derail their progress.

For entrepreneurs, this feature is invaluable, providing the stability they need to navigate uncertain financial waters.

BRIDGING THE DIGITAL LITERACY GAP

Women face challenges in adapting to the rapidly evolving digital economy, which can limit their ability to manage finances effectively or grow businesses. EBL VISA Women Signature Credit Card aligns with EBL's broader initiatives to enhance financial literacy and digital empowerment.

Cardholders gain access to workshops, training sessions, and online resources designed to build their skills and confidence in leveraging technology for financial and professional growth.

EMPOWERING WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Women entrepreneurs often encounter high costs and limited resources for networking and scaling their ventures. EBL VISA Women Signature Credit Card directly supports these women by offering tailored benefits, including discounts on professional services and access to exclusive networking events. These features create opportunities for entrepreneurs to expand their businesses while maintaining financial efficiency, helping to build a thriving ecosystem for women-led enterprises.

ENHANCING LIFESTYLE AND WELL-BEING

In the hustle and bustle of modern life, women often find little time for self-care and leisure. EBL VISA Women Signature Credit Card encourages women to invest in themselves with benefits like spa and wellness discounts, fine dining privileges, and travel rewards. These lifestyle upgrades are designed to help women rejuvenate and maintain a fulfilling work-life balance, making life not only easier but also more enjoyable.

EBL VISA Women Signature Credit Card is not just a financial tool but a partner in empowering women to achieve their dreams. By addressing key challenges with innovative solutions, EBL has created a product that goes beyond banking to truly enhance the lives of women in Bangladesh.

For more details about the VISA Women Signature Credit Card, visit https://ebl.com.bd/retail/eblcard/visa-women-signature-credit-card