

#FASHION & BEAUTY

Tresses of Bangaliana — From Playful Braids to Regal Buns

For every Bengali woman, her hair is the crowning glory. She loves to adorn it with fresh blooms and precious jewels, wear it in many different styles, and flaunt it for the world to admire. And why shouldn't she? Her thick, black tresses, long and luscious, reminiscent of the sky at midnight inspire poetry. Oceans of ink have been spilt attempting to capture its beauty through words.

And when she wears it up in a khopa, her graceful neck and poised turn of the head show off her beauty spectacularly. The khopa is as versatile as the many hats she wears. When she's busy and rushing from one thing to another her hair is hastily put up in a messy bun, keeping her cool and free from managing her long hair. And then when she has a party to attend, she chooses a beautiful saree and matching glass bangles to go with it, her hairdo is different.

With great care she brushes off tangles, parts her hair from the side, and coils her hair into a lovely khopa that she will lovingly adorn with a flower or two, maybe with a string of beli even, spreading its fragrance. With a simple hairdo, she will embody the very essence of a Bengali woman, her grace and beauty known all around.

Braids or beni is one of our best friends. Our love affair with it began as little girls when our mothers neatly

plaited our long hair in two lovely braids for school, complete with bows so our hair would stay nicely in place. And oh what fun we had, running around playing tag, throwing caution in the wind as our lovely long braids swayed away in childish mischief!

With the passage of time, when we left days of our girlhood behind, this humble beni stayed with us through thick and thin. In our downtime, after a good hot oil massage, the good old beni keeps our hair in place as we run errands. When on a beachy vacation a braid keeps the fly-away at bay while channelling island girl swank!

These age-old hairstyles are here to stay and they have been reimagined and reinvented time and again. Wearing a traditional Katan to your friend's wedding? A lovely khopa is the way to go, with a side-swept parting. Wear your favourite Kundan neckpiece on the bun and add some flowers by the side to elevate your hair game.

A chic structural gown will look fantastic with a sleek bun, kept simple but stunning. If you are wearing a fusion-style drape skirt with a sheer jacket that is all the rage right now, go for high khopa and deck it up with streaks of glitter that have been artfully painted around the bun to take things up a notch!

Braids are as versatile as they come.

Fishtail braids are lovely, feminine and very flattering. From ethnic outfits to Western dresses, it complements them all. For a holid or mehendi, go for a long plait, wrap a zari ribbon on it and finish off with some lovely parandi at the end to add a fun, traditional twist to your look.

Fresh flower strings are always stunning so coil it around your braid. Baby's breath and daisies look lovely when worn on braids and are perfect for those countless pre-wedding events you will attend this year!

By Sabrina N Bhuiyan
**Photo: LS Archive/
Sazzad Ibne Sayed**



White panjabi — A fashion statement that stands the test of time

They have an air of timeless elegance and versatile sophistication that Bengali men love. From an understated air of a clean style to a culturally relevant look, panjabis/kurtas can make you have it all. With the arrival of spring and anticipation of the holy month of Ramadan and Eid, there is nothing better than embracing the pristine beauty of a beautiful white panjabi!

The combination of the pure white fabric and the charm of exquisite craftsmanship makes them the ideal choice for spring. You could find hand-embroidered designs or fine thread work that are usually available in many styles. They are worth choosing because they represent cultural symbols, making the clothing more special.

Bengali men can don a white kurta for every occasion, from casual outdoor strolls to formal social events. If you want to look relaxed, wear the white panjabi with khaki pants. If you want to look more traditional, wear it with white or crème pyjamas.

Moreover, as the month of Ramadan approaches, iftar gatherings are a must.



When celebrated with loved ones, iftar takes on a beautiful note. Needless to say, your white panjabi would be a nod at simplicity when friends or family arrive to break their fasts. You could choose a white kurta with pastel accents and pair it with a soft white scarf. It will undoubtedly be in line with the evening's aura.

It is also a beloved practice for Bengali men to celebrate Eid with a befitting panjabi, as it seems to embody the spirit of that joyous celebration. With its intricate stitching and delicate embroidery at the collar and cuffs, a well-tailored kurta for Eid can add to the festivities. To make your outfit regal, you can choose a kurta or jacket with shiny work done on it and some high-quality shoes or sandals.

However, you should not keep your options limited to just these events. In fact, when paired with denim or chinos, the panjabi can create a contemporary aesthetic that is perfect for informal events. You could also wear it with a churidar or a dhoti at weddings.

You and your friends could coordinate with

white panjabis in these festivities. Maybe you choose gold on shades of off-white accents with differing patterns on each kurta or blue embroidery on the collars. These slight alterations can make sure everybody shines in the elegance of the clothing and yet stands out.

Proper accessories are essential for elevating your attire to a higher level. Regardless of a metal or leather strap, a stunning watch will be the perfect addition to complement the understated white ensemble. You could also choose to finish it off with a pair of stylish sunglasses that can add a fashionable touch while preserving the stylishness of the panjabi.

It is a cultural and fashion icon of Bengali men that does not change with the times or trends. So, keep in mind that the key to showcasing the pristine beauty of the white panjabi is to keep things simple yet outstanding!

By Samayla Mahjabin Koishy
Photo Courtesy: House of Ahmed