

The First Online News Magazine From North Bengal (Plains)

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'Delhi is Still Far Away'

Special Candid Interview with
Tollygunj Lyricist

GOUTAM SUSHMIT



HIGHLIGHTS:

Health: Benefits of Aloe Vera

Face to Face: Interview With Tollygunj Lyricist

Film: First North Bengal Film Award

Food: Poila Boishak Special

Entrepreneurship: Sajal's Chicken Pokora Street Food Stall

**VOICE FOR
NORTH BENGAL**

COMPLEMENTARY PROMOTIONS





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North Bengal's First Online News Magazine

timesofnorth.IN is the first online news magazine from North Bengal plains which is dedicated for news and reviews. timesofnorth.IN was created with an objective to highlight North Bengal, North East India, Sikkim, North Bihar and many more. Updated news reviews with an analytical perspective are going to be the main feature of TIMES OF NORTH. It is not only going to depict news of North Bengal but also is going to feature news analysis from around the country and the globe with National and International importance.

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GRAPHICS DESIGN

Mr. R. Subrata (TNI)

EDITORIAL OFFICE TIMES OF NORTH

Guru Saday Dutta Road, Bharat Nagar (N)
P.O. Rabindra Sarani, Siliguri 734006
Mail: webdesk@timesofnorth.in
www.timesofnorth.in

Aloe Vera, the Magical Herb

Arunangshu Maitra



Aloe Vera is a green cactus looking plant that happens now a day to be in the garden not because of its unusual looks but for various other positive reasons as such. Its importance is now a million dollar industry that extends from beauty creams to healthy juices and diet supplements. Today Aloe Vera is being inducted into everything we use. What's the secret within Aloe Vera?

It's a plant having a height of one or two feet tall with prickly and bitter leaves. This is the defence mechanism of it to keep away animals and insects from it. The leaves hold a sticky semi-transparent gel, also extremely bitter, and known all over the world for its unbelievable healing properties. This semi-transparent gel is made up of approximately 96% water with some organic and inorganic compounds, a type of protein which contains 18 of the 20 amino acids found in the body and lastly, Vitamin A, B, C and E. Another part of the Aloe Vera plant which is used is the 'sap', a yellow-colored liquid stuck to the skin of the plant from the inside. When dried and purified, the minced Aloe is often used as a laxative. One of the most vital elements found in Aloe Vera gel is a complex carbohydrate known as acemannan. It allows nutrients to reach the cells, nourish them and at the same time relieve them of toxins. Ayurveda, Chinese herbal

medicine and British herbal medicine have all supported Aloe Vera as a healer when applied or consumed orally. If we see through the herb we move past the slimy texture of natural Aloe Vera gel and apply it to our skin, we can notice how soothing and cool it is. And it's for these exact reasons that Ayurveda refers to Aloe Vera as the miracle herb that can be used to treat wounds, minor cuts, dry skin and severe burns. One of the specialities is that Aloe Vera can be used irrespective of seasons and skin types. Aloe Vera treats the cells on the epithelial level of the skin can be treated by Aloe Vera. Thus is prescribed by dermatologists for removing tan, sunburn and stretch marks etc. There are two ways to use Aloe Vera. One is by applying the gel directly and the other way is by using it as an Aloe Vera pack by putting it with other natural ingredients.

1. **Aloe Vera for Dry Skin** – Aloe Vera can be mixed with a pinch of turmeric, a teaspoon of honey, a teaspoon of milk and a few drops of rose water. It can be blended to a paste and applied to the dry skin for 20 minutes. This can be continued to 7 days to get the desired results.
2. **Aloe Vera Scrub** – Aloe Vera gel can be mixed with a cup of sugar and two tablespoons of lemon juice. The sugar helps in exfoliating and scrubs off dead skin. Alongside, the Aloe Vera will deep clean the skin. Parallely the lemon will help fade out scars and tan. All the ingredients should be scrubbed and applied in both face and body.
3. **Aloe Vera for Acne** – Take some Aloe Vera gel, blended walnuts with flour like consistency and honey. Aloe Vera's healing properties coupled with the antioxidants from honey will leave you with smooth and clear skin.
4. **Aloe Vera for Sensitive Skin** – Grab some Aloe Vera gel, cucumber juice, yoghurt and rose oil and blend them to a paste. Apply and leave for around 20 minutes, then rinse it off.
5. **Aloe Vera for liver** – Aloe Vera is beneficial for Liver if its gel can be consumed 2-4 teaspoons daily.

Aloe Vera for Itching – The Aloe Vera is also beneficial to provide relief in itching and eczema.

ICOD Uluberia, A True ‘World of Joy’ Near Kolkata

Swarnali Goswami



“The World of Joy”- as defined by them, the member of ICOD family happily has been staying under one roof since 12 years. Inter-religious Centre of Development situated on the bank of the river Damodar at around 70 km south-west of Kolkata, 20 km on the left of Uluberia town, and 3 km from Athanno (58) Gate Bus stop, in a large 32 bigha eco-biological land expressing environmental respect, communion and harmony with the whole nature, plants, animals, earth, water and air. ICOD is an Inter Religious Community of Abandoned and Downtrodden committed to established their ‘Right to Home, Right to Education, Right to Good Health, Right to Happy Living, Right to Self Reliance.’ Near about 250-260 inmate staying here at different houses named- Mother Teresa Bhavan (mentally sick unit), Malala Bhavan (orphan girls unit), Tagore Hall(abandoned women unit), Dr. Sen Boys Home. Luis Education Centre is a classroom coaching for school going children of ICOD and nearby villages, Maya Academy is the music school for the girls and boys at ICOD, Vocational Training like- needle-stitching works, tailoring, zori and shiphon embroidery is also being imparted here. ICOD provide simple but healthy meals of the regular crops, vegetables, and spices come from the ICOD farmland to all the inmates from one common kitchen for all the homes. Primary Healthcare Unit- Healing

Touch, Physiotherapy Unit, Healthcare on the Wheel (Ambulance under MPLAD Scheme) and Hospitalization completed the healthcare of inmate. Celebrating various occasion, outing, sports, and entertainment has become a part of the inmates for their happy living. Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Fishery, Handicrafts are the source of self-reliance for the inmates. “Under the guidance of socio-spiritual advisor Brother Gaston Dayanand, ICOD has established itself as a unique place filled with Love, Warmth and Harmony by men and women from different castes, creed, religion, with or without the disability, often rejected by their family and society. All of our 200 and more inmates are orphan or destitute and abandoned from their own family. ICOD is their family and a ‘World of Joy’- said one of the Governing Body Member and Spokesperson Mr. Nirmalyo Ghosh. They will celebrate their Annual Day on 24th Jan 2016.

Sajal's Chicken Pokora Changed Siliguri's Street Food Taste

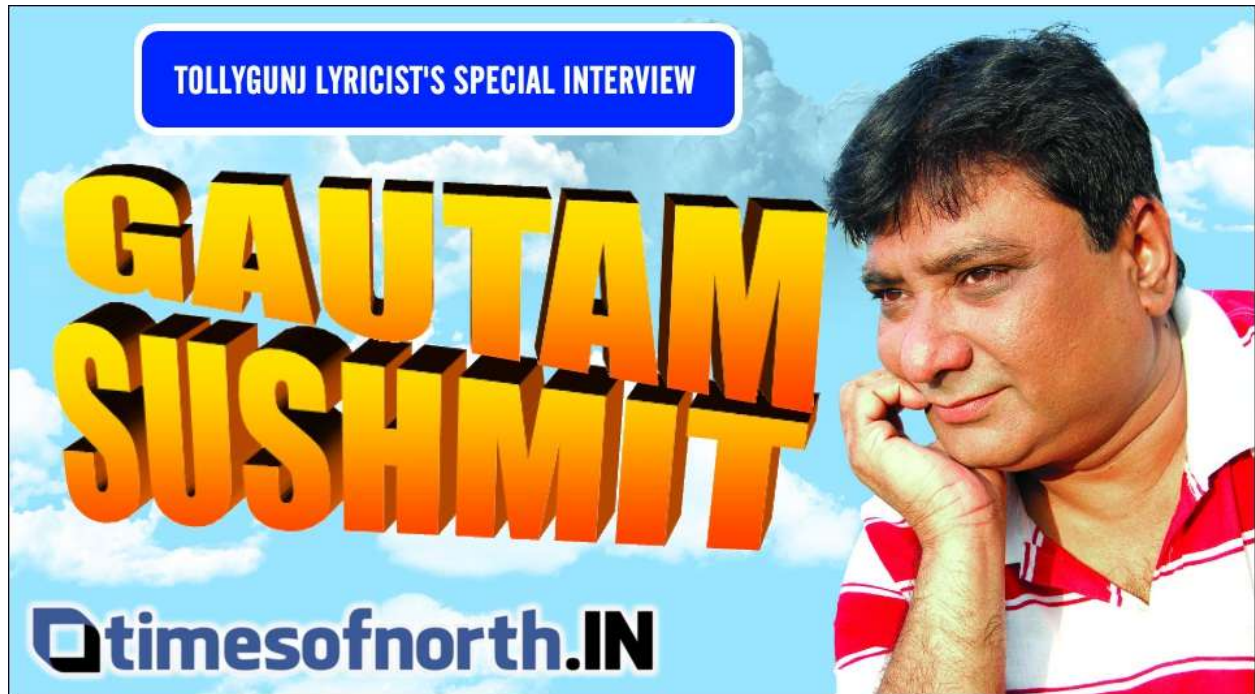
R. Subrata



The chilling winter of Siliguri, the fog in the evening and hey, looks through the mist What's blinking!! Oh yeah! That's what we were looking for. The LED's of Sajal's Chicken Pokora counter. The Gorom Gorom Chicken Pakora and additional thick grayish chicken soup are here. Wow, the restaurant flavor or may be more than that straight in the street. Yes, if anyone from Siliguri reaches the hotspot of Siliguri i.e. Baghajatin Park they will surely know Sajal's Chicken Pokora kiosk. Regulars call it Sajal Dar Chicken Pokora. According to the main protagonist i.e. the owner Sajal Das, this is the first street kiosk which dared to start with chicken items especially chicken pokora, chicken soup, chicken lollypop etc. with the quarter the price charged by even the smallest of the restaurants of the city. Initially, it was just Rs. 5/- for each big sized chicken pokora. It was just unthinkable for the restaurant owners during that time i.e. around 2009 neither anyone one dared to venture in this item. Time passed by and it became popular throughout. Then came the competitors after 3 years of standalone monopoly with a smile. One of the best thing what Mr. Sajal Das have been the smiling hospitality which attracts customers every day even now. Now the kiosk not only serves the famous chicken pokora, but also, there are egg rolls, noodles, mutton soup, take away soups and others. Mr. Sajal has tried with a restaurant last year but it failed instead the kiosk served more customers than the restaurant. Now Mr. Sajal has two kiosks in Siliguri i.e. Baghajatin Park and Sevoke Road, and

two in Bagdogra, which are running packed houses. Initially, customer halted at the counter for an instant evening supper way back home from work. Now, people date here. That's our achievement, Mr. Sajal boastfully declares. We have brought in a new age of street kiosk delicacies in Siliguri market. The customers are not from nearby areas of the kiosk but from various nook and corner of Siliguri city. So next time when you come to Siliguri and think of mouth watering Pokoras think of Sajal's pokora counter and experience the taste. Hopefully, you won't be disappointed.

A Special Candid Interview with the Tollygunj Lyricist



*Today we will indulge in a candid talk with a personality who is better known to us through his work. New generation commercial Bengali film industry owe to him as a lyricist. When we enjoy a beautiful song, we recognise the singer, we recognise the actor-actress associated with picturization. However, we put little notice to the lyricist. He has written songs like 'O bondhu tumi shunte ki pao', 'Se chilo boroi anmona', 'Batase gungun', 'Paran jay jolia re' and many more. He is none other than **Goutam Susmit**. **Swarnali Goswami** from **timesofnorth.IN** talks to this great lyricist.*

TNI: Goutam Da, thanks a lot for your precious time. The first question we would like to ask is among so many other creative medium what intrigued you to choose your career as a lyricist.

Goutam Susmit: Actually, I went to Mumbai to work in a *advertisement* agency. At that time, one of my old neighbour Mr. Tridib Roychoudhury went to Mumbai to become *music* director. In *case* of music direction, to express a music, sometimes few words are needed. These are known as dummy tune. He asked me to do that dummy tune or rather say dummy song. There is different grammar to write that dummy song. He taught me that. The first song I wrote was in

Hindi. It was recorded in a homely environment. However, when I heard that song, I was thrilled. I felt attracted to the media as I could hear my words. Previously, I had seen my name in print; I had seen my face in television. But nothing has ever appealed to me like this. This thrill arose an addiction and *as a result* I become a lyricist.

TNI: *You have worked in Bollywood and Tollywood both the places. Which one have you liked most? And another supplementary question, combining Bollywood, Tollywood and other regional film industry, approximately in how many films and with how many music directors have you worked?*

Goutam Susmit: Actually, initially I have worked in many Bollywood films. At that time, I was Mumbai based. Those films carry my name in the credit title and beside my name within a bracket the word Mumbai is written too. And now I have also worked in so many Bengali films. It is really very tough for me to rate either of these to be better. Though I have worked in regional films, but the workplace itself is Bollywood. Altogether I have worked with around 125 singers and music directors from Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, Dhaka, Bhubaneswar, Los Angles etc. Few of them are established, few are newcomers, few are just about to establish themselves. However, all are different in there style and all are talented. Tollywood is my birthplace, it is a part of my own city whereas, Bollywood is my workplace which gave me new life, fame and establishment. So, both are equally important. But if I compare them, Bollywood is much more professional. They know what is profession and what it stands for and Tollywood is much more homely and emotional. There in Bollywood, work culture is very strong. May it be strike or natural calamity anyhow the work has to be done. And the associated people will do that spontaneously. But Tollywood has lots of excuses. May be it is the basic characteristic of Bengali people. They like to live the life in their way. To answer the other part of the question, I don't have any concrete figure right now. Still, I have approximately done 350 films, out of which, 215-220 got released so far. One thing I would like to mention here, the system of doing work is more or less similar everywhere. Like in case of Chennai, if I put aside the language barrier, it's a wonderful place to work. I have not found so many talented singers even if in Mumbai. I bow them in respect. I have done many films in Chennai and those experiences are never to be kept aside.

TNI: *You have worked in so many films and you have worked with a wide range of people. In this context, if we ask you to mention few songs which you have liked as a lyricist then what will be the top 5 list?*

Goutam Susmit: All the songs I have written are like my own baby. So, it's very tough for me to prepare the list as such. *Yes* few songs gave me another level of satisfaction. However, there is no scope for 100% satisfaction. Once it is 100% then you are finished. You have nothing more to add. In *case* of few songs later I felt it could have been written in a better manner. Again few

songs are there, which I have liked *much* but those are not hit songs. For the sake of example the superhit song from film ‘Sathi’, ‘O bondhu tumi shunte ki pao’ has given me establishment but may be that is not the one which gave me highest level of satisfaction. Still, ‘Se chilo boro anmona’(music by Jeet Ganguly), ‘Batase gungun’ again music by Jeet and from ‘Chirodini Tumi Je Amar’ film are those which I feel as wonderful composition. In the film ‘Sokal Sondhya’, there was a song namely ‘Akashe surjo othe, pakhira jage’ which was sung by Udit Narayan and music done by Ashok Bhadra. In the same film another song was there which I liked very much was ‘Kichu kotha kichu porichoy’. ‘Tumi amar sathi’ is another song which I like because of few jugglery. In the film ‘Dujone’, I had written a song ‘Kar chokhe chokh rekhe ke kake cheye dekheche’. I liked it very much. But it is not at all a hit song like other songs of that film. I like the song lyrically. The pattern is like the popular Hindi song ‘Tu payaar hain kisi aur ka’ but, lyrics is altogether different. Sometime, we may stare at someone but actually see someone else. On the basis of this philosophy, I have written that song. I still feel myself blessed to write that song.

TNI: *Please share some experience from Bollywood or Hindi film industry.*

Goutam Susmit: As I have already mentioned, for me, my workplace is Bollywood but not directly Hindi film industry. My language was Bengali. I got so many offers. Few were starring super star like Akshay Kumar, Saif Ali Khan and so on. But I had to reject those as I am not proficient in Hindi language. To write a song in a particular language, it has to be in your blood. The first time I faced camera in my life was for a Hindi serial and I managed it well but when it is about writing lyrics for a song its altogether a different ball game. If I think anything, I will think only in Bengali. But recently the super hit song from the film ‘Gunday’, ‘Tune mari entriya’ and in Bengali, ‘Tui to nili entiry re’ is written by me. In this film, it was 5:1, means in every five Hindi words there was one Bengali word. So, I wrote the song. Sohel was the music director. I know him from his early childhood. Although, Bapida was the key controller of the whole project. He sang with Monali too. I wrote the song for Bengali version of the film and later it was decided that it will be in Hindi version also. Few of my Bengali lines are there in the Hindi version too. So, in that case ‘Gunday’ is my first work in a Hindi film. But yes, probably I am the only one who has written song for a Tamil movie. In the movie ‘Pokisum’, there is a Bengali song which is written by me.

TNI: *What is your perception regarding the newcomer singer or lyricist? Do you have any suggestion for them?*

Goutam Susmit: I don’t want to create any controversy. If you ask about *suggestion*, yes I have but only for them who cares about it. For else they should avoid *it*, as *now a days* no one is ready to accept any suggestion from others. I can advise newcomers to work from their soul, if you consider your work with *highest* priority, you will be able to give your maximum input. And it

reflects on the work. Because once it is recorded, it can't be rectified or modified. So, work with utmost sincerity and try to give your 100%, rest is destiny and we cannot do anything about that.

TNI: Really well said Goutam Da. Would you like to share any dream project of yours.

Gotam Susmit: Actually till now, No, I am just working on usual films. As a *lyricist* I am also working on some allied projects like reality show etc. That's it. Nothing else. However, to be *honest* yes dream project is there....so many things to do....but at this stage only thing I can say, 'Ekhono Delhi Onek Dur' (Ha ha ha)

TNI: Thanks a lot Goutam Da once again. timesofnorth.IN wishes you all the success in your life.

Goutam Susmit: It was really my pleasure and same to you too.

From Now On Vehicle Free Weekends at Kolkata's Laldighi

Puja Sahni



The recent proposition of the West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee regarding the vehicle free weekends at Laldighi, Kolkata has left many nearby residents fortunate as it would be easy for them to revel one of the crucial heritage of the city encircled by many heritage structures like Writer's Building, Fairlie place, Calcutta GPO etc. The locals are much stimulated with the new concept claiming that this will surely be an initiative towards the pollution control. It is also claimed at the inauguration of Biswa Bangla Lok Sanskriti Utsav, that the state government will provide a monthly honorarium Rs. 1000 to about 50,000 traditional artists across the state. This 10 days festival at Laldighi, Kolkata will be end on 1st January. Locals are glad about this new concept as people mostly come to Laldighi on weekends to have a good time with their families. The Biswa Bangla brand is drumming up the dying art forms by showcasing several handicraft stalls starting from hand bags to wooden show pieces at the programme. Through this festival the artists now are getting their fruitful dough following many more opportunities to work in other government festivals.

1st North Bengal Cine Award Held at Siliguri

D. Prasun



On 28th November, last month 1st North Bengal Cine Award was organized at Dinabandhu Mancha, Siliguri. The event was organized by North Bengal Film Television Artists and Technician Welfare Association (NBFTATWA). The main objective behind organizing this event was to felicitate film and television personalities of North Bengal and to encourage and appreciate the effort of the contemporary generation. Famous musician and recipient of Bangaratna, Mr. Dhaneswar Roy and senior film director of North Bengal, Mr. Pradip Kumar Das was honoured with Life Time Achievement Award. Honourable Mayor of Siliguri Municipal Corporation, Mr. Ashok Bhattacharya was one of the chief guests of the event. An eminent social worker of Cooch Behar, Mr. Rajib Narayan and Prof. Nikhilesh Roy of the University of North Bengal were also present to grace the occasion. From the thought provoking speeches delivered by the guests and award recipients, it was clearly revealed that, North Bengal require more attention from Government as well as common people to improve its infrastructure of Television and Film industry. Otherwise, North Bengal will be sidelined only as a beautiful low-cost location for other film industries.

Poila Boishak SPECIAL

The Feast Day of the Year Called ‘Poila Boishak’

Dola Som Ray

Happy New Bengali Year. Our non Bengali friends always get surprised during this time of the year (i.e. in the mid of April when we Bengalis wish each other by saying ‘Shubho Poila Boishak’. Well of course, the solar Bong Hindu calendar termed as Bongabdo is actually a sidereal Hindu calendar that starts from the first day of Boishak or more specifically called Poila Boishak. It most of the time comes on 14th April and sometime on 15th.

Various popular sayings on Bengali calendar project that this calendar was introduced by one of the ministers of the Mughal emperor’s court during the 16th century with the intention of the tax collection from the then Big Bengal (Bangladesh and West Bengal Combined). On the otherhand it was said that the Bengali Calendar was initiated by the then tiger king Sashanko.

The Petuk Bengalis like us take the Poila Boishak very seriously of course for the variety of eatables present both in our kitchen and outside in the form of invitations (Haal Khata) or Special Offers of the restaurants. Yes, a lot of shopping and even more is eating. Please do try visiting at this time of the year in the shopping space of Siliguri and in Kolkata, you will be bombarded with the Season Sale offer or more popularly called ‘The Poila Boishak Sale’. For we Bengali’s shopping is irresistible during this time.

Wait a minute, is it only shopping Naaaaaaa its eating time bro! By the food corner, by the dhaba, by the road side stalls and everywhere. Now, if you say street food it’s our favourite Phuchka or Golgappa. Mind it we now get Kolkata styled Golgappa’s in Siliguri too. So no worry check in the Hill Cart Road stalls.

New Dresses is always a must for the Bengalis be it for a 5 year old or an old person of 70. The kids always waited for this day and obviously the Durga Puja. This is called the new Dress time for all. Now don't expect only from parents but also the relatives too.

If you ask me about Poila Boishak, it's a food day for me and my peers as well. This is the feasting day of the Bengali Calendar. It has been said that if you eat good food this day you are going to get them throughout the year. Do you believe that??? I don't, however, I believe whatever may be the thoughts, if food is offered by those belief then why not!!! The Authentic Bengali Thali is what matters for all the Bengalis in this day



The beginning of the day starts with Aloor Dom, Cholar Dal, Fulko Luchi, Begun Bhaja and some sweetmeat item as breakfast.

Now comes, the yummy Dupurer Khawar (Lunch Menu). Let's start with Shukto, the Bengali styled appetizer. More the bitter by the bitter gourd more will your taste buds become cleared for the delicacies to follow.

Then of course the Dal with bhajas (fries) may be one like Jhiri Aloo Bhaja or Potol Bhaja or Beguni, or even mach bhaja (fried fish). It is followed by some non spicy vegetable item like Ghonto, Aloo Potoler jhol etc.

Then is the time of the most awaited item i.e. ‘Mach’ or Fish. We Bengali’s are often termed as Mache Bhaate Baangali (The inseparable Fish and Bengalis). The fish item may be like Macher Kalia or Macher Jhol, Macher Jhaal, Maach Sorshe etc.



Mutton is the most preferred for the Bengalis during the festive season but gradually due to health matters, chicken has replaced the mutton now a days. It is being supported with a sweet rice item like fried rice or Bengali Pulao (sweeter than North Indian Pulao).

It’s the time for Chatni followed by Papad and the salivating Misti Doi & Rosogolla.

After reading all of these are you salivating. Oh Come on! It’s natural yaar.

Don’t forget my story while you prepare for your stuff this Poila Boishak

Bhalo theko and Bhalo Kheo.



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