(Client: Basar Confluence Festival, Arunachal Pradesh)

BOMBAYS CYKLANDE MATLEVERANTÖRER

ETT VÄLOLJAT SYSTEM

TEXT: FANNY WESTIN FOTO: SANJIV VALSAN

Bombays cykelbud har levererat hemlagade luncher till stadens invånare i över hundra år. Otaliga storföretag har försökt kopiera deras system – men ingen har lyckats. Vad är egentligen hemligheten bakom deras nästintill felfria och på minuten pricksäkra leveranser?

Client: Cykling Magazine, Sweden

Konceptet är till synes enkelt. En lunchlåda med nylagad varm mat ska fraktas från punkt A (oftast hemmet) till punkt B (mottagarens arbetsplats) lagom till lunchdags. Som huvudsakligt transportmedel har du en cykel. Det kanske inte låter så avancerat. Men lägg till att det rör sig om sisådär 100 000 lunchlådor varje dag uppdelat på 5 000 cykelbud och att platsen det rör sig om är en av världens största städer med en befolkning på närmare 20 miljoner. Utöver det ska lunchlådorna vara framme på utsatt klockslag – inte en minut senare – trots en konstant igenkorkad trafik. Inte lika enkelt? Välkommen till verkligheten för Bombays cyklande matleverantörer.

Dabbawalas, som de kallas, har levererat hemlagade luncher till stadens invånare i över hundra år. Systemet utvecklades när de brittiska kolonialherrarna ville ha brittisk mat levererad till sina kontor. I dag ser kundbasen annorlunda ut, den största delen utgörs av indiska medelklasstjänstemän och kostnaden för att anlita en dabbawala ligger på motsvarande 50–60 kronor i månaden.

Malin Mendel är SVT:s Indienkorrespondent och har bott i Bombay sedan 2005. Under hösten kunde vi se henne i SVT då hon försökte lotsa den något motsträviga komikern David Batra, vars pappa är indier, in i det indiska samhället. (Världens sämsta indier hette tv-programmet.) Hon beskriver maten som en ingång till samhället och kulturen. Och kanske är det just matens särställning i Indien som gör att detta system upprätthålls och lever vidare. Att man, i alla fall traditionellt sett, har varit så noga med vad man stoppar i sig och vill ha vällagad och hemlagad mat. Men Malin pekar också på andra faktorer.

– Många är vegetarianer eller utesluter nötkött eller fläsk av religiösa skäl och då vill de inte råka få i sig det vilket man kan göra om man äter lunch ute på stan. En annan faktor är att Bombay är så kosmopolitiskt och att befolkningen till stor del består av inflyttade från övriga landet och att de saknar och vill ha den typ av mat som lagas i hemregionen.

Bombayborna ser dem på gatorna varje dag, iklädda sina vita huvudbonader och med styren och pakethållare fullastade med matlådor. Även om företag som Foodora, Uber Eats och otaliga snabbmatsrestauranger har etablerat sig och borde utgöra en stor konkurrensfaktor verkar systemet än så länge vara ohotat. Kanske på grund av att det är en högt skattad tradition och ett välkommet inslag i stadsbilden – vilket nu turistindustrin har slagit mynt av. Under senare år har stadens dabbawalas blivit något av en turistattraktion vilket innebär att de numera ofta måste utföra sina arbetssysslor inför turisternas, och deras mobilkamerors, åsyn.

Men hur går det då till, hur funkar systemet i praktiken? Maten lagas i hemmet som i regel ligger i förorten, av frun eller hemhjälpen. På förmiddagen cyklar dabbawalan sedan runt och samlar in matlådorna i sitt distrikt och fraktar dem till tågstationen där de sorteras utifrån vilken adress de ska till i stan. Här kommer ett snillrikt kodsystem in i bilden. Adressen är markerad genom olika koder på locket till lunchlådan och trots att många dabbawalas är analfabeter gör detta kodsystem av färger, symboler, bokstäver och siffror att lunchlådorna så gott som alltid hittar rätt. På eftermiddagen fraktas lådan sedan tillbaka till hemmet. Detta pågår sex dagar i veckan året runt.

Systemet har gäckat forskare och storföretag. Här finns varken styrelse eller företagsledning. Inte heller tar de hjälp av datorer och knappt ens av mobiltelefoner. Trots det, eller kanske snarare tack vare, är endast 1 av 100 000 leveranser fel. Många aktörer inom transport och logistik har försökt kopiera detta skolboksexempel på organisationseffektivitet vilket verkar vara en omöjlig uppgift då det, i stället för att bygga på komplex teknologi och komplicerad administration, bygger på erfarenhet och tillit. Ett analogt supersystem helt enkelt.

Stefan Thomke, forskare vid Harvard Business School, har gjort case studies på Bombays dabbawalas och pekar ut en rad faktorer som gör deras organisation så effektiv. Lite förenklat kan det kokas ner till några huvudsakliga principer: en platt organisation, att de känner till varandras leveranser och hoppar in för varandra om någon är sjuk – det är därför leveranserna aldrig blir inställda – samt att de ofta jobbar ihop under hela sina yrkesverksamma liv, vanligtvis mellan 18 och 65 års ålder. Dessutom kommer de flesta från samma del av regionen och många är också släkt, vilket troligtvis förstärker lojaliteten och samhörighetskänslan. De är organiserade i ett slags kooperativ och har tillgång till försäkring som bland annat ersätter den som har fått sin cykel stulen.

Dabbawalas är en aktad yrkeskår med stor yrkesstolthet och även om de inte har någon fet lön får den ändå sägas vara dräglig. Omkring 100 000 rupier (cirka 14 000 svenska kronor) per år ligger den på – att jämföra med medelinkomsten som ligger på 50 000 rupier, men viktigt att ha i åtanke är att även de som lever på existensminimum är inräknade här.

Vi har nämnt dabbawalas utifrån ett historiskt perspektiv. Men hur ser då framtiden för dem ut, enligt Malin Mendel?

– Rent historiskt är det ett yrke som har gått i arv men nu är det kanske inte längre lika självklart att ta över efter sina föräldrar, eller snarare efter sin pappa. Jag vet att det finns en viss oro inför framtiden och att det pratas om ”vad som händer om alla blir dataingenjörer?”. Så absolut, på ett sätt är systemet kanske hotat men samtidigt är det så omtyckt och man månar därför om att de ska finnas kvar. ■

UTBLICK BOMBAY

”Konceptet är till synes enkelt. En lunchlåda ska fraktas från punkt A till punkt B lagom till lunchdags.”

DABBAWALAS

Omkring 200 000 luncher levereras dagligen av 5 000 cykelbud. Många är analfabeter men ett snillrikt kodsystem av färger, symboler, bokstäver och siffror gör att lunchlådorna så gott som alltid hittar rätt.

Dabba = den lunchlåda, som utgörs av flera lådor i metall, som travas på varandra.

Luncherna som levereras utgörs ofta av flera olika rätter som tillagas i hemmet på förmiddagen för att sedan hämtas upp och levereras till kontoren i city lagom till lunchdags.

”Många tycker att jag är galen som cyklar till jobbet, kan det här citatet vara lite längre?”

I takt med att bilens status ökar – dalar cykelns, i alla fall som transportmedel. Indiska cykelentusiasten Nikita Lalwani berättar om synen på cykling och attityden gentemot cyklister.

Medvetenheten om att man kan ta cykeln i stället för bil eller moped till jobbet saknas. Det behövs både infrastruktursatsningar och attitydförändringar.

Det menar Nikita Lalwani, som 2017 utsågs till Indiens första Bicycle Mayor av den nederländska cykelorganisationen BYCS, som driver ett världsomspännande nätverk för personer som på olika sätt jobbar för en ökad cykling.

Vilken är den rådande inställningen till cykeln som transportmedel i Indien?

– Sedan millennieskiftet har antalet motordrivna fordon ökat lavinartat och bilen har blivit än mer av en statussymbol medan cykeln betraktas som ett ”fattigmansfordon”. Cykeln uppfattas också som något som hör barndomen till och rådande uppfattning är att det normala är man slutar cykla när man växer upp och går över till någon typ av motorfordon.

Hur används cykeln?

– Det finns väldigt bra cyklar ute på marknaden men de används framför allt i träningssyfte av personer som är ute tidigt på morgonen eller sent på kvällen när trafiken är lugnare – sällan för att ta sig till och från jobbet. Därför är det är så viktigt att visa att cykeln faktiskt är ett pendlingsfordon som också, om fler använde den, skulle förändra våra igenkorkade städer.

Vilka satsningar görs från politiskt håll?

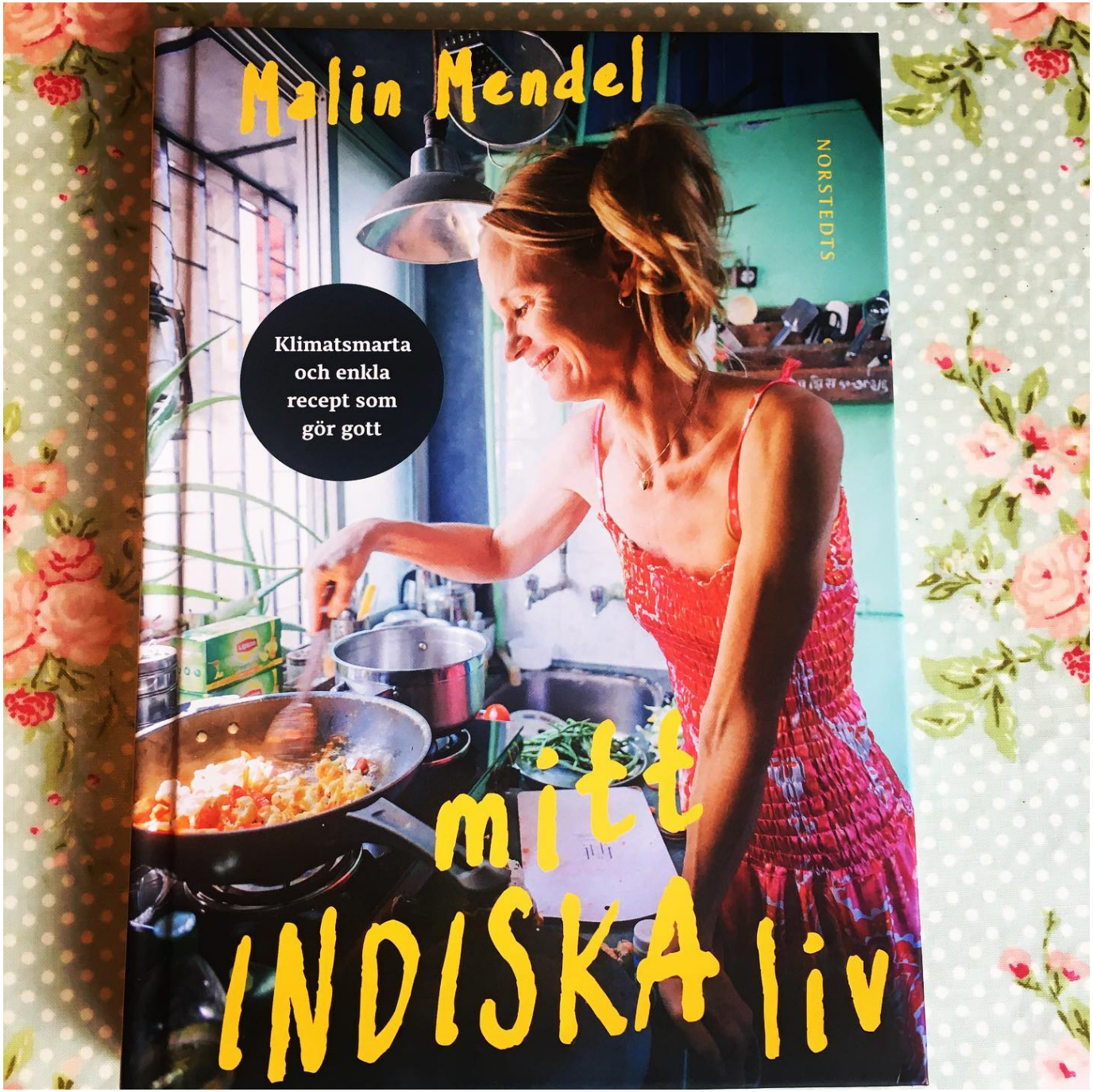
– I en del städer har man de senaste åren börjat med cykelpooler och cykeldelningssystem och fler städer är på väg. För tillfället är visionen om att öka cyklingen ganska begränsad till dessa initiativ och det är få städer som har cykelbanor. Vi väntar på att politikerna ska börja investera i bättre infrastruktur och jobba för attitydförändringar.

Du är Indiens första Bicycle Mayor. Vad har det inneburit för dig?

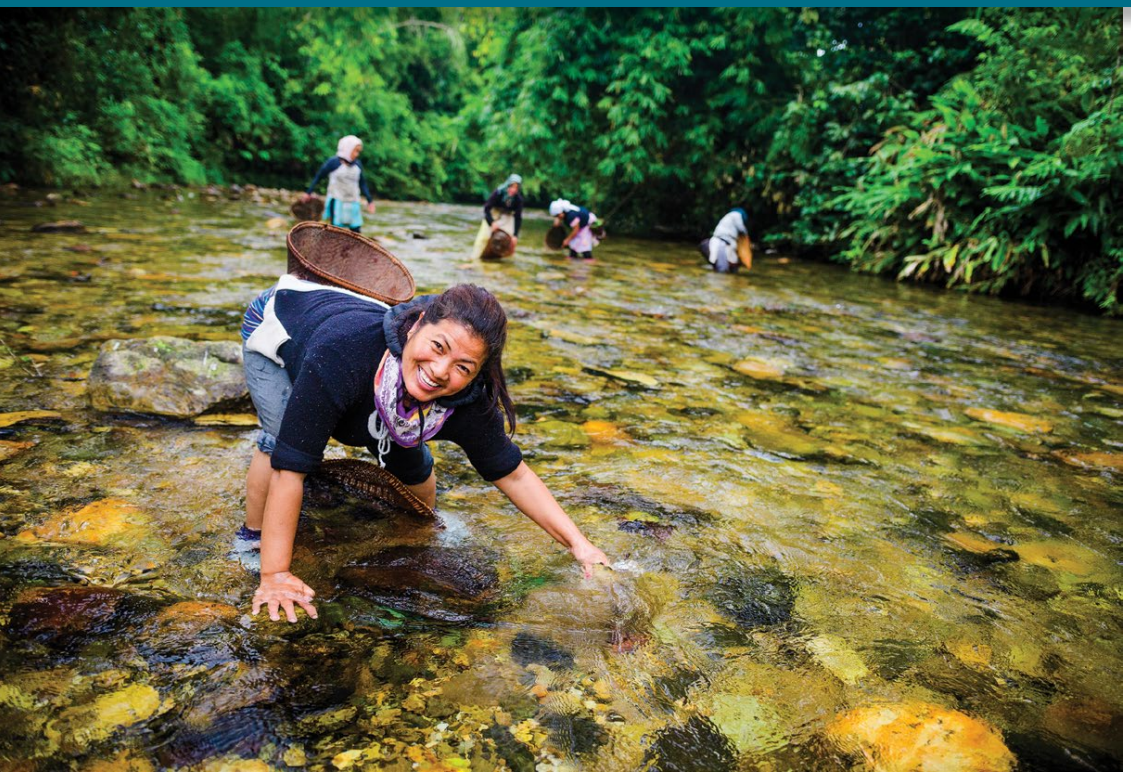
– När jag började cykla till jobbet tyckte många att jag var galen men snart började några kollegor hänga på och fler var sugna men behövde en knuff i rätt riktning. 2015 lanserade jag därför Cycling Cities, som är en rörelse som har som mål att en tredjedel av Indiens storstadsbefolkning ska börja cykla till 2020. ■

BOMBAY ELLER MUMBAI?

Inte helt enkelt! Staden bytte officiellt namn från Bombay till Mumbai på 1990-talet då det styrande hindunationalistiska partiet Shiv Sena valde att återta den största befolkningsgruppens, marathernas, namn på staden. Namnbytet uppfattades av andra folkgrupper som marathernas försök att göra staden till sin och ingen annans medan ”Bombay” är den anglosaxiska benämningen och kan sägas representera alla religioner och folkgrupper.



Client: Norstedsts, Sweden (coffee table book)



This image: Women of the Tai Khamti indigenous tribe offering food (dry fish) as gifts for a traditional wedding ritual. Carrying food or wine as presents on foot in this manner is a custom in many tribes of this region.

Image on the left: A group of women from the Galo tribe catch fish employing Tahum Kunam, a traditional fishing technique. They use a conical basket to collect small fish, crabs or prawns. At the end of the day, they share their collective catch.

Women from the Monpa tribe preparing chutney for lunch, as well as selling traditional ingredients at the Bomdilla market.

Sanjiv Valsan
He closely works with the indigenous people of Arunachal Pradesh and Aarey forest in Mumbai. His documentary Rewilding Aarey recently won the Megacities Short Doc award. You can find his work on Instagram (@sanjiv.valsan).

A Taste of the Wild East

Sanjiv Valsan paints a captivatingly intimate portrait of Arunachal Pradesh's indigenous tribes through their food and culture.

Six years ago, while I was working on a feature for a travel magazine on Arunachal Pradesh, I met some of the most warm and welcoming indigenous people. Their culture, uncomplicated ways and joyful coexistence with nature impressed me. At some point, I found myself naturally shifting course, and getting more involved with the community—an attachment that led me to work on a photography-centered book that would highlight the indigenous way of life, told through food and the various traditions around it. Food is perhaps the most accessible and easiest to relate to, since eating is universal to all beings, and our approach to food shapes us. After all, we are what we eat. And so, I chose tribal food as a way in. The hearth, fire and kitchen are also the physical and cultural centre, in some ways, a 'living room' of the traditional tribal home. It's a place where not just cooking, but also social life and rituals take place.

As part of Mumbai's Save Aarey Forest movement, Sanjiv is working with the local forest tribes to conserve the forest. He, along with other environmentalists, have also been working on rewilding this threatened forest and conducting tribal food and culture awareness workshops here.

There are 26 officially recognised indigenous tribes in Arunachal with their own identity and cuisine. What a community traditionally eats is defined by what's available around them, which again depends on the landscape. Factors such as forest foods, or the kind of livestock or cultivation that a terrain allows, and where each tribe has historically migrated from also strongly influences their choice of food. For instance, the Tai Khamtis and Tangsas, who migrated from modern day Myanmar and beyond, prepare food that is quite similar to Thai-Burmese cuisine. In other

Women from Galo tribe harvesting rice in Basar. Most households here organically grow their own rice.

This image: Women sorting ahona leaves for Reh, a ritual of the Idu Mishmi tribe.

Image on top right: Laipatta greens are the staple food of many tribes.

Image on top left: A man from the Galo tribe stuffs fish into a bamboo hollow for roasting.

places like Tawang, which is influenced more by Tibetan Tantric Buddhism, the local Monpa community consume yak cheese and butter in their stews as a dominant flavour.

The more I familiarised myself with the food and the rituals, local socio-cultural structures, economics, and their way of life surrounding eating, the more natural it felt to use food as a pretext to immerse myself into other diverse aspects of animist and Buddhist cultures here.

This is where my bond with the locals became very helpful. Since they were aware of the kind of photographs I wanted to make, they invited me to various festivities and gatherings. I also learned how their society works—the gender roles, sustainable food practices, sources of income, and

Women from the Adi tribe prepare a feast together for a wedding.

This image: Banana flowers are an important food source in Arunachal Pradesh.

Image on the left: Small prawns caught by Galo women in Basar.

This image: Fish roasting on wood fire.

Image on the top: Chicken cooked with wild ferns, served on ekkampatta leaf, Galo style.

even their aspirations. I was also made aware of contemporary threats to their delicate balance.

Due to deforestation and sudden, haphazard urbanisation, some communities are losing their vital contact with both wild foods and forest resources that their traditionally sustainable way of life depends on. Their aspirations of finding better job opportunities in the cities are taking

This image: Small fish and prawns are served as a snack with poca, a homemade rice wine.

Image on the top: During forest expeditions, fish are roasted using wild bamboo skewers fashioned with machetes.

This image: This dish, where small fish and prawns are mixed together, is prepared by the Adi tribe at Jenging, in upper Siang.

Images on the right, clockwise: Siteka pickle, made using local bitter brinjal and mustard oil, was prepared by my Idu Mishmi host Poonam Mihu; Pork bits roasted on wood fire at Dambuk, Lower Dibang Valley; Apuwee, a spicy blood sausage of the Idu Mishmi tribe of the Dibang Valley, is cooked in bamboo hollows; Free range pork cooked with chilli and fermented bamboo shoot by the Idu Mishmi tribe.

This image:
The Nyishi tribe celebrating Nyokum, their local festival.

Image at the bottom:
A woman from Nyishi tribe offers sweet millet wine to everyone during the Nyokum festival.

(On the right)
Image on the top:
The Nyishi tribe, donning their traditional attire, offer their rituals and millet wine to the forest spirits during Nyokum.

Image in the middle: Galo women smear rice paste on a man's face during Mopin, a harvest festival.

Image at the bottom right: A Nyibu (shaman) of the Nyishi tribe, along with his assistants, prepare sacrificial meat on a separate hearth during the period of the Nyokum ritual chanting.

them away from their roots and towards unhealthy food and volatile values. The fact that folks from urban 'mainstream' areas neither know or value the positive aspects of tribal communities doesn't help either. As a result, many youngsters are turning towards consumerism, easy money, and 'development' aspirations of urban origin, thus losing their traditional knowledge. They are also unaware that it is in fact the city dwellers who are the 'underprivileged' ones. Unlike tribals, we have to pay extra to procure toxin-free food, and are expected to leave our cities to be around nature.

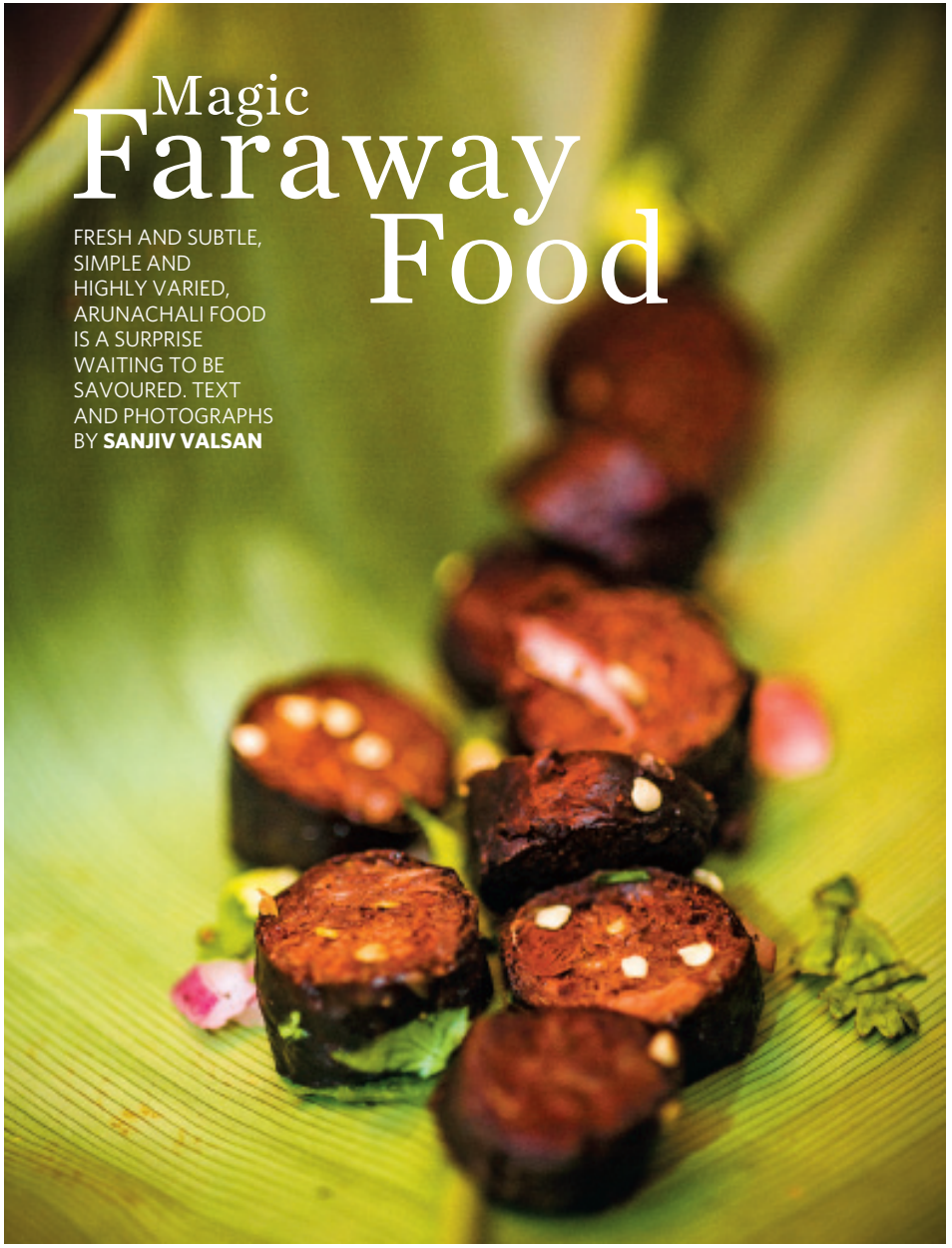
Through this ongoing work, in addition to documenting food, I am trying to weave together a holistic, intimate portrait of the indigenous tribes. I aim to raise empathy for these delicately balanced indigenous cultures, their traditional ecological knowledge and bond with nature, while also gifting the local tribes a community mirror.

—As told to Nilofer Khan

This page: Khao-puk, fried sticky rice-cakes are crisp outside and melt-in-the-mouth within. These are a favourite snack of the Khamti tribe, whose cuisine shares much with Thai and Burmese food. Unlike most other Arunachali tribes, the Khamtis use oil in their cooking
Facing: Puhee, spicy blood sausages of the Idu Mishmi tribe, fire-cooked in bamboo hollows. Organ sausage variants are made all across the Northeast

Magic Faraway Food

FRESH AND SUBTLE, SIMPLE AND HIGHLY VARIED, ARUNACHALI FOOD IS A SURPRISE WAITING TO BE SAVOURED. TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY **SANJIV VALSAN**



Where else in India can you order a plate of porcupine?" It was that time of the night again. In our food stall, *apong*, the Arunachali grain wine, was flowing in scandalous quantities. A serving of boiled porcupine had just arrived at our table. All around us, people were losing the plot.

At the table next to ours, the dude in a puffy blue Doraemon suit with an oversized head was getting leapt upon by diners under the happy influence. In a spontaneous free-for-all, some girls dived right into his mouth hole, to find his 'real' face and reason with it.

"Don't take it personally—we're kissing Doraemon, not you, so what's the problem?" they cackled, presumably living out some dark childhood fantasies. They kept dragging him back by his white belly each time he tried to escape, so that he ended up moonwalking on the smooth bamboo flooring with padded paws, intensifying the already outrageous cartoon-world surrealism of the scene. This was too hilarious to be happening.

Doraemon's job description at the Panyor River Festival at Yazali was absurd, and enviable: he was to appear randomly on stage during concerts and fashion shows, and break into free-style dance, hidden under the anonymity of his blue Manga cat suit. Then he'd play with kids, hang out at the bar, and generally socialise and circulate. And now he was getting smooched by pretty Arunachali Doraemon fans. He could very well be high through all this, and nobody would be able to tell.

At that moment, I knew what I wanted: I wanted to be Doraemon.

Soon we were all taking turns manhandling the hapless Doraemon, bouncing him about from corner to corner for cheap thrills, force-feeding him our boiled porcupine with bamboo shoot, erupting into near-transcendental hysterical glee, gagging on our own laughter and eventually blacking out, only to dissolve back into consciousness the following morning in a tent, still giggling uncontrollably.

Unable to keep a straight face, I thought I should share my Doraemon fantasies with my host, Mamma, a native of Yazali, and the subtle ringmaster behind the night. When he isn't teaching at a college in Itanagar, Mamma organises this festival to promote tourism in this charming-but-swiftly-urbanising Nyishi tribal village in Arunachal Pradesh. Like many of my Arunachali friends, I had first met him at another such festival in Mechuka, near the Tibetan border, and we eventually became travel buddies.

"You know, I was Doraemon last year!" Mamma twinkled, triggering the next session of senseless laughter, and we launched into yet another round of gastronomic exploration with our newly forming epicurean-cum-alcoholic gang. Roasted meats, spicy chutneys, wild leafy greens, a trip to an orange orchard, late-night drunken volleyball scenes on a sandy riverbank after extended wine-tasting sessions, drives into the countryside...

I had found my tribe!

And so it went, on this Arunachal trip, which I still can't get enough of... Wholesome organic food, endless humour, friendly uncomplicated people and happy villages set amid a backdrop of spectacular Himalayan landscapes, serendipity unfolding every day... What's not to lerve?

Before I hit my stride as a solo traveller in these parts—and it did take a while—I must confess to having immersed myself in a festival-hopping phase. These 'festivals' are, by and large, organised events meant to bring in tourists from afar. But, apart from the odd traditional song or dance, they all mostly offer largely the same fare, the usual suspects being rafting, paragliding, zip-lining, weird Bollywood-style performances, VIP seating for politicians and, at times, cute-to-notorious levels of drunkenness by night-end.

Also, typically, they end up attracting mainly locals, who approach them as they would any other tribal festival—an occasion to dress up in traditional attire, eat, drink, socialise and make merry. Food is served to local taste, and so is the *apong*, a tradition here with every tribe, household and event. It's perfectly normal to make conversation with just about anybody (there is no concept of 'strangers' in villages and small towns), and the *apong* certainly helps. As a result, these festivals are, at least for the time being, the immersive solo traveller's dream come true, simply because they are so local and have failed to attract the number of 'tourists' they were meant to. Real travellers want to meet locals, not tourists—truly, a happy accident!

On my first trip, the food stalls at these festivals started out as a regular epicurean prowl, in a state that has very few 'local' restaurants, but soon became my chance backdoor entry into the social milieu.

At the Adventure Festival in Mechuka, a quaint little town nestled in a valley surrounded by a spectacular backdrop of snow-peaked mountains near the Indo-Tibetan border, the real adventure is to be found at the food stalls, a melting pot of tribal people, cultures and cuisines from the region. Forget about the 'activities'.

To understand Arunachali food, it helps to know that, in a very broad sense, this sprawling state comprises three distinct cultures. The first set could include Galos, Apatanis, Nyishis and a diverse set of 'sub-tribes,' generically known as the 'Adis'. All of these tribes are nature worshippers and have more similarities than differences. They believe in forest spirits, practise shamanic rituals and

Facing: The little-known Tagin chilli is a relative of the Ghost chilli, or Bhoot Jholakia, notorious for being the hottest chilli in the world. The Tagins claim it is stronger than even the famed Naga chilli; unusually, it is also used as a digestive remedy
Above: Sinkhyo—*Mithun meat, boiled, skewered and then roasted—is a dish common to the Adis, Tagins, Galos and Idu Mishmi*

ARUNACHALI FOOD DEPENDS ON FRESH INGREDIENTS, THE AVAILABILITY OF FOREST PRODUCE AND THE FLAVOUR OF WOOD FIRES

Above, left: Churpee, dehydrated, unsalted yak's milk cheese, comes in several variants—from rock-hard to creamy and Roquefort-like Above, right: Siteka pickle, bitter brinjal preserved in mustard oil, is a masterpiece from the kitchen of my Idu Mishmi host, Poonam Mihu in Anini

THESE FESTIVALS USUALLY ATTRACT LOCALS AND ARE OCCASIONS TO DRESS UP, EAT, DRINK, SOCIALISE AND MAKE MERRY

animal sacrifice, and believe in a common ancestry with Abo Tani, a mystical being they believe to be the father of all mankind.

These Tani tribes, as they are also sometimes called, generally use a lot of fermented bamboo shoot in their cooking. This is something of an acquired taste, though I instantly loved the flavour. Tani food is either stewed, steamed in wild leaves or fire-roasted, and uses a lot of local chilli. Like most tribal food, this kind of cooking depends heavily on the freshness of ingredients, the availability of forest produce and the flavour of wood fire. Luckily, Arunachal is still 80 per cent forest, so all is well in paradise so far.

A second distinct group includes Indo-Tibetan Buddhist tribes such as the Monpas, Membas and Sherdukpen from near the Bhutanese and Tibetan border areas. These communities have characteristics of the Trans-Himalayan Tantric Buddhist culture, extending all the way from Tibet through northwestern Arunachal, Bhutan, Sikkim, Ladakh, and Lahaul and Spiti in Himachal Pradesh.

Their cuisine too has a lot of Tibetan influence. They eat varieties of pasta (like thenthuk, thukpa and momos), drink salty butter tea, use ghee and a strongly aromatic fermented cheese called 'churpee' in their stews. Because

Above: At Nyishi weddings, a mithun (a semi-domesticated bison-like beast) is sacrificed as part of the 'bride price', and the meat served to guests. Any extra meat is smoke-dried, using bamboo skewers, and distributed to faraway relatives
Left: Chutney-making and merry-making at the friendly market in Bomdila, a great place to pick up Monpa ingredients such as yak's milk butter, yak's milk cheese, corn, pickles and dry wild foods

Clockwise from top: Green chilli chutney with churpee, from the Buddhist Sherdukpen tribe, is pungent with a delicious blue-cheesey aftertaste; river fish, cooked with salt, chilli flakes and ginger and wrapped in subtly aromatic wild leaves, is a commonly available snack at Roing's local market (featured here is the Idu Mishmi version); and corn thukpa, considered a delicacy among the Monpas and Membas, is a slow-cooked (eight hours!) stew of dry cornmeal, beans and flavoursome dry yak bone-meat

KHAMTI STICKY RICE IS SO ASTONISHINGLY DELICIOUS, IT'S A DISH ALL BY ITSELF. MY FAVOURITE IS *KHAOLAM*

Mechuka has a large Memba population, it's a bit like a Hindi-speaking version of Tibet, both in terms of culture and landscape.

A third broad branch of tribes from Eastern Arunachal, like the Tai Khamtis and Tangsas, is more related culturally and gastronomically to Nagaland, Burma and Thailand. This is a cuisine I am yet to explore fully, but it is considered by many to be the best of all. Khamti sticky rice is so astonishingly delicious, it's a dish all by itself. My favourite is *khaolam*—sticky rice filled in a bamboo hollow, slowly char-cooked on a fire and then pulled out to form a gooey rice tube, encased in a crisp skin by the bamboo's inner membrane, and finally sliced into coin-shaped biscuits. Yum!

Apong is, fortunately, common to

An Adi woman prepares apong*, the ubiquitous Arunachali grain wine, from fermented rice, in Karko village in Upper Siang*

all the tribes.

Many smaller tribes, of course, do not fit into these general categories, such as the Idu Mishmis of Dibang Valley, easily one of the densest high-altitude jungles in the world. My introduction to home-made tribal food was the Idu *asumbi*—a starchy, cornmeal-based stew made either with meat or wild leaves, bamboo shoot, schezwan pepper and local chilli, at my friend Poonam Mihu's place in Anini. This was simple comfort food, and just thinking about it makes me nostalgic.

I can't recall the exact moment that I came up with the idea of a book documenting tribal cuisine in Arunachal Pradesh, but it so happened that one morning, I found myself chewing on crunchy beetles that a stranger had just handed me, trying to determine whether they tasted nutty. But it's possible that this was when I concluded that I was already in the deep end of things, and so decided to go all the way.

For the record, the verdict did eventually swing to an odd kind of nutty. Gandipuk beetles, a delicacy in these parts, are found under rocks by the riverside, and their fans just can't get enough of them—raw or toasted and crushed into a chutney with ginger, garlic, chillies and salt.

And, oh yes, on rare occasions they can also be psychotropic (probably the reason why their fans are so crazy about them), in a scary sort of way; something I was told about *after* having eaten them. There are plenty of stories going around about Gandipuk trippers who start believing that they've turned into beetles themselves, and then try and crawl under rocks for safety.

There was also something in the local papers about a bunch of Gandipuk freaks mobbing a bamboo hanging bridge, after having spotted a swarm flying over it, dropping the bridge with their collective weight and falling into the river together. Typical with Gandipuk tripper stories, the impression is split between funny and disastrous. Fortunately, none of the above happened in my case.

Lately, I've begun to look beyond the weird, freaky or exotic. In my travels, I score as many invitations as I can to lunches, dinners, parties, weddings, shamanic rituals and animist festivals. I don't just eat; I also try to understand what's going on. Food for the book has now become an excuse to keep returning to my favourite part of the country.

And yes, I get to be Doraemon next year!

Left to right: a spread of wild foods laid out for tasting at a forest food festival at Hideout; a Warli lady from Aarey presents a harvest of wild mushrooms; and the fruits and seeds of mahua*—one of the most important wild trees in peninsular India's tribal heartlands*

FEAST IN THE FOREST

INDIAN JUNGLES ARE TEEMING WITH LIFE, AND NOT JUST THE KIND WITH FUR OR FEATHERS. THERE ARE ALL KINDS OF FRUITS, VEGETABLES AND SEEDS THAT MAKE FOR SOME OF THE BEST MEALS. TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY **SANJIV VALSAN**

A few summers ago, I visited Vanvadi forest for the first time. I had just met the environmentalist Bharat Mansata, who asked me to help him photo-document the wild edible plants that grow there. A wise and endearing Thakur Adivasi tribal from these parts, Bua, accompanied us; he seemed to know every inch of the place. The vibe resonated on a barefoot walk through the jungle, and we soon began chalking out public awareness events on these 'forest foods' for the coming monsoon—we would take people on trails facilitated by Bua and his family, and have them experience the flavours of the forest .

At that time, I had not thought of it like that, but there was a quiet revolution in the air.

Vanvadi is something of a 'forest collective' on a 64-acre stretch of undulating land at the foothills of the Western Ghats in Maharashtra. The only human settlement there is a village-style community house with just two walls, where workshops and environment-related activities are often conducted. Life there is not just rustic, basic and off the grid—there is no electricity, mobile reception or piped water.

Over 20 years ago, Bharat and about two dozen like-minded people pooled their resources and purchased this land with a plan to create an ecologically sustainable community space and let nature regenerate the forest, which had been overexploited.

To many city slickers, Vanvadi might seem like a new-age digital detox, but to me it is more real. Its large-scale rainwater harvesting efforts, combined with the forest's dense roots that act as an underground sponge, have ensured efficient groundwater recharge. Even in peak summer, when wells in the nearby deforested villages go dry, Vanvadi's remain full and act as an important source for villagers. It is a similar story with firewood and wild foods—for the many villagers who have lost their forests, the jungle is becoming the only source to obtain the highly nutritious and delicious foods central to their tribal identity.

On our visit, though, the landscape looked too stark to produce anything edible. In these parts, the oppressively warm and dry spring-summer transition period hardly displays nature's abundance, unlike the monsoon, when the region metamorphoses into a vivid green paradise with lush vegetation almost magically appearing from nowhere.

Most trees had been reduced to bare skeletons of

Clockwise from facing page: a forest food buffet at BAIF's wild food festival; kantholi *(spine gourd), which grows in Vanvadi in the monsoon, is easy to cook and high in protein, phenols and antioxidants; Ambibai spots some forest foods during one of Vanvadi's Forest Food Walks; and the sweet fruit of* tembrun/tendu

Flowers of the shevli/ shevla *(dragon stalk yam) wild tuber are a monsoon delicacy among tribes like the Katkaris, Thakur Adivasis and Warlis. In order to be edible, it has to be mixed with* bondara *leaves (right), which grow in close proximity to the* shevli *plant*

their usual selves, having let go of their foliage, which now carpeted the land. We were here, though, for the exceptions.

The *mahua* (or Indian butter tree), for instance, was fruiting at that time. While its sweet flowers are used to make jaggery and porridge, and fermented to make liquor, its fruit is highly nutritious. The seeds yield high-quality edible oil, and the residue after its extraction can be either used as manure or burnt as a mosquito repellent. *Mahua* trees are considered sacred by many tribes and never cut, but when one dies, its high-grade timber is used. Unfortunately for the tribals, the British began to tax and restrict the use of these trees during colonial times in a market where factory-made liquor resulted in huge tax revenues and *mahua* brew, a free beverage, posed too much competition. Indian governments continued with the same tradition, leading to many sacred *mahua* trees being cut all over the country.

At the heart of the community-bonding dances of the Warli tribe, is the tarpa*, a wind instrument typically made from multipurpose forest food-producing plants; and (right) Bua identifies a* loth *plant at Vanvadi forest*

With the agility of a primate, Bua raced up and down a *tembrun* (*tendu*) tree to return with a bunch of fruits. *Tembrun* leaves are traditionally used to hand-roll *beedis* or Indian cigarillos, but the fruit was a delightful surprise—orange and fleshy, and tasting like apricot and mango ice cream.

Nearly every other bush on our trail was a fruit-bearing *karvanda* plant, and we snacked on these sweet, juicy berries throughout our walk. Hidden in the soil underneath many of those criss-crossing vines was an underground storehouse of edible tubers, several times healthier and tastier than market potatoes, and Bua dug some out with a pickaxe to show us how much free food existed here.

Meanwhile, from an ordinarily indistinguishable mesh of creepers, Bua's wife, Ambibai, harvested some shoots of *gidhod* creepers, which we later cooked for dinner on a wood-fired oven and ate along with *kadu kandh*. An otherwise unacceptably bitter tuber, *kadu kandh* needs to be stripped of all its bitterness by boiling in wood ash—something that Bua and Ambibai taught us. Many wild tubers and leaves are not really edible till they are treated using special techniques or combined with other wild leaves or fruits that remedy the undesirable or toxic properties, after which they transform into highly nourishing superfoods. There is a lot of science surrounding the food here.

You do not even have to leave city limits to discover that our forest food biodiversity is not just alive, but also disappearing because of centralised control of forests that were once managed by tribal communities. Mumbai, for example, has one such natural forest within its expanse. A big part of this jungle is in Aarey, a green island that is not officially part of a reserved forest, but still home to some 10,000 Warlis—indigenous tribals who share their habitat with wild leopards (and worship them as gods), cook using firewood, and consume along with their farmed produce forest foods such as the soft-shell river crab *chimbori* (which I had tasted here last monsoon), leaves of the *loth* plant (the wild mother plant of the elephant foot yam or *suran*), all sorts of seasonal mushrooms, and products of the *mahua* tree.

When you step into Aarey from one of the main roads, it is a surreal shock how you transition from maximum city to parallel universe of tribal hamlets in a matter of minutes. But even here, illegal constructions and 'developmental' projects threaten to cut thousands of trees and ruin this unique urban

Left to right: wild Himalayan tubers come in great diversity; wild cardamom flowers, a flavourful spring delicacy in the Northeast, is generally stewed with meat and vegetables; and a stock of fermented dry bamboo shoot can be found in nearly every tribal household in the Northeastern Himalayan states

jungle, and with it, the availability of forestland and wild foods for the Warli tribe.

Unsurprisingly, Bua's tribal wisdom has been a hit at the hugely popular Forest Food Foraging Walk events at Vanvadi. The format is simple, fun and effective: a bunch of city people foraging for food on a happy nature trail with Bua and his family. Our tribal friends identified and explained the use of each plant along the way. Then everyone cooked together and enjoyed a delicious meal with the wild veggies.

"It all begins with sensitisation to nature," Bharat explained. "City people are deprived of such experiences. Transitioning from city life to a forest soothes their senses. Having that sensory experience is the important first step towards wanting to protect nature. Once you build an emotional relationship, the intellectual parts automatically follow."

It also helps the cause that taste-wise, processed food simply cannot match wild foods, so tribal food festivals have been a natural outcome of the forest foods revival movement. A series of low-key festivals have been taking place in Maharashtra over the last four to five years at remote tribal areas such as Bhimashankar Wildlife Sanctuary, while another smaller event happened last year at a Warli tribal village in Palghar district, attracting a number of day-tourists from Mumbai.

Then there are the bigger, more publicised food festivals. Living Farms' forest foods festival in Delhi and Wild Foods Festival at Kotagiri in Tamil Nadu's Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, for instance, attracted many visitors. Odisha, with its rich tribal heritage, is also becoming an epicentre of a tribal foods revival movement, with a series of wild food festivals at the Niyamgiri foothills, some of which have had on display 900 wild ingredients and 400 ready-to-eat dishes!

Last year, I attended a relatively low-key festival that BAIF Development Research Foundation, a Pune-based NGO, had organised at Hideout, a quaint little homestay and wellness centre at Vikramgad, a Warli tribal area. While it was both pleasurable and confusing to have tasted close to 40 recipes made with diverse wild ingredients in a single lunch, what made the trip all the more worthwhile was the opportunity to meet people like Sanjay Patil of BAIF and get a sense of the scale of the forest foods movement. He spoke about Konganpada, a tribal village that through consistent lobbying won back forest resource management rights from the government, which had been taken from them over a century ago. They have now planted some 30,000 *mahua* saplings themselves and started processing a variety of its products—an effort to end malnutrition and generate income.

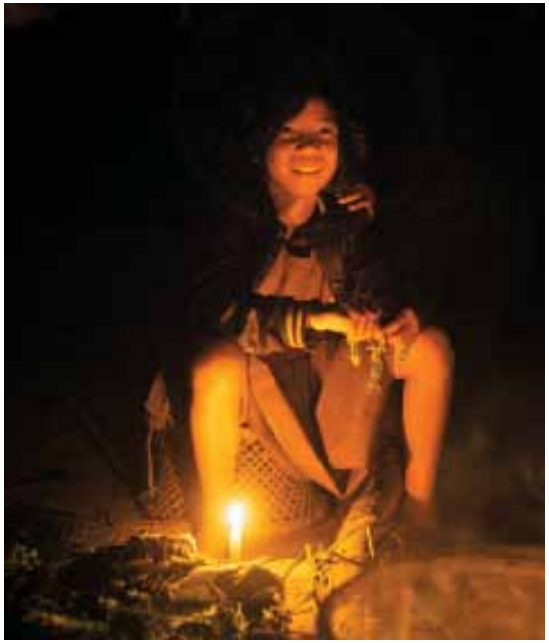
In Himalayan states like Arunachal Pradesh, where I have been involved in indigenous food documentation, forest cover is close to 80 per cent. Here, people feel the need for a wild foods movement because forest foods are a part of their lives and identity.

The Idu Mishmi, for example, an animist tribe from the Dibang Valley, have strict eco-spiritual taboos regarding biodiversity management that ensure constant and sustainable use of wild foods, including wild meat. Hunted meat, for example, can never be sold, and the spoils of every hunt must be shared with all in the village. Following a kill, the hunter goes through a kind of penance period, during which he is not allowed to eat certain foods or sleep with his wife. All this ensures that hunting happens only when required.

During Reh, their most important ritual-festival, a deliciously aromatic wild leaf called *ahona* is slow-cooked with rough cornmeal and served at the ritual, which, as a rule, cannot be performed without serving *ahona*. This is meant to be an expression of respect for habitats where such wild foods grow. It comes as no surprise that the Idu Mishmis are well nourished, have strong family bonds, and laugh easily. Famines are unheard of in these parts.

Wild food is obviously about more than just cuisine; it is an entire ecosystem of intermeshed areas that are diverse yet connected. It is about nutrition, but also other concepts such as sustainable development, herbal medicine, forest conservation, famine control, climate change, water resource management, tribal art, culture and music, nature worship, cultural identity, and a sense of community.

The forest foods movement is not about fighting the system. On the contrary, it's about opening our eyes to the existence of a larger 'system', of which we are already a part; it's about learning from both ancient knowledge and the underlying wisdom of the forest people—something that cannot be recorded in writing, but only experienced as a way of life.



A Galo tribal girl sorts the day's wild fern harvest at Kombo village, West Siang, Arunachal Pradesh

THE INFORMATION

GETTING THERE

The nearest airports are **Mumbai** (approx. 70km) and **Pune** (approx. 115 km). The nearest major railway station is **Karjat** (27km/45min); for those taking the Mumbai local, **Neral** (approx. 12km/15mins) is the nearest railhead.

VANVADI

As a non-profit collective, all its collections go towards maintaining Vanvadi's conservation projects. The place is open to the public for **workshops**, **forest food walks** and their **Van Utsav** (Forest Festival) held every year in October during Dusshera. Accommodation and vegetarian food in a quaint **community house** are available during these events (at a modest fee), and participants are encouraged to spend a night in the forest. Visitors may also bring their own tents and **camp** underneath the stars. To know more, join their Facebook group, **facebook.com/groups/vanvadi**.

To register for their next forest foods **Foraging Walk** to be held on February 11, 2018, write to **zuimansata@gmail.com** or call +91-22-23542420.

FOOD FESTIVALS

WILD FOODS FESTIVALS IN MAHARASHTRA

BAIF Development Research Foundation regularly organises forest food festivals in Palghar, Ahmednagar, Pune, Gadchiroli and Nandurbar districts with local tribal communities between August and October. They have also been preparing a database of wild foods from these districts. Visit **baif.org.in** or email **baif@baif.org.in**.

HIDEOUT FARM AT VIKRAMGAD, MAHARASHTRA

A homestay and wellness centre where festivals are organised. Palghar (approx. 50km/1.25hrs) is the closest major railhead. Mumbai (approx. 105km/2hrs) is the nearest airport. Visit **hideout.co.in**.

ARUNACHAL PRADESH

Tribal animist festivals are an easy entry point into the state and a good opportunity to taste the local cuisine. There are quite a few tourist-friendly festivals lined up for February:

>**Unying Giidi at Boleng**, the hunting festival of the Adi Tribe (February 27 to February 28, 2018). **Facebook.com/events/141203609869958**; +91-9615432244

>**Reh Festival of the Idu Mishmi tribe at Roing** (February 1 to February 3, 2018). **Facebook.com/GJCRC2018**; +91-8414097336

>**Nyokum festival of the Nyishi tribe at Yazali** (February 23 to February 27, 2018). **Facebook.com/yazali.nyokum**; **mchukhu@gmail.com**; +91-9862830513

>**Nyokum festival at Seppa** (February 23 to February 26, 2018). **Facebook.com/Nyokum-Yullo-Festival-Seppa2018-1687838128161092/**, **dashey.sang@yahoo.com**; +91-8132908618

■ SANJIV VALSAN








THE ANIMIST TRIBES

Apart from the Buddhist communities of Arunachal Pradesh, most tribes here are traditionally animists, and do not belong to organised religions. Animists have no concept of temples, holy books, idol worship or worship of humanoid images or forms. *Animism* can include all sorts of nature-centered rituals dedicated to the elements and cycles of nature, or spirits of the forest.

Ancestors are also spiritually significant in nearly every tribe. 'The Tani Tribes,' (Adis, Galos, Nyishis, Apatanis, Tagins, Misings) believe that they have desended from 'Abo Tani,' the father of all mankind. Many of their myths, legends, deities and rituals relate to the colourful stories of their revered ancestor and his fascinating exploits. These tribes all speak different languages, but have more similarities than differences overall.

Treks to the Yapom forests

Animists believe in an assortment of spirits related to observable phenomena like wind, water, trees and wildlife, as well as multiple formless deities governing the cycles of nature, agricultural productivity, success in hunting and fishing. These spirits, known by different words in different languages - Yapom in Galo, Epoms in Adi, Khinus in Idu Mishmi, can either be neutral,

Client: Arunachal Tourism (Travel guide book)








TRIBAL WEDDINGS

Tribal weddings are very different from the big fat weddings of mainland India, and far less formal. In many tribes, the couple getting married may have already been formally engaged or living together for years before the actual 'wedding,' an event where the clans of both the bride and groom bond and exchange gifts, livestock and valuables, to formalize their bond.

The main purpose of the formal wedding in most tribes is the payment of a 'bride price,' which is the opposite of the dowry system followed in mainland India. In most tribal societies, which until recently followed a cashless economy, the family of the groom needs to give something in kind to the bride's family to formalize the wedding. In many tribes, part of this can be mithuns and livestock, with some mithuns being sacrificed at the wedding itself to feed the gathering.

Tribal weddings can be gory; the animal sacrifice, gutting and meat chopping happens visibly, with male clansmen pooling in their efforts and doing most of the work, while the women cook and prepare enormous quantities of delicious grain wine (*apong*) in massive funnel-shaped filters. There is no attempt to hide where the meat you eat comes from. The good news is that the best *apong* is generally made at large events like weddings and festivals, Apong is a great social lubricant, and weddings are largely a happy affair.

Client: Arunachal Tourism (Travel guide book)







TIRAP AND LONGDING

HL: AROUND TIRAP

Arunachal's unexplored wild East is as rich in culture and spirituality as it is in landscapes. Culturally and spiritually distinct from both the Buddhist and animist tribes of central and Western Arunachal, the Noctes of Tirap are more like a diverse collection of Indo-Burmese or Naga tribes than a homogenous single tribe

The Nocte kings

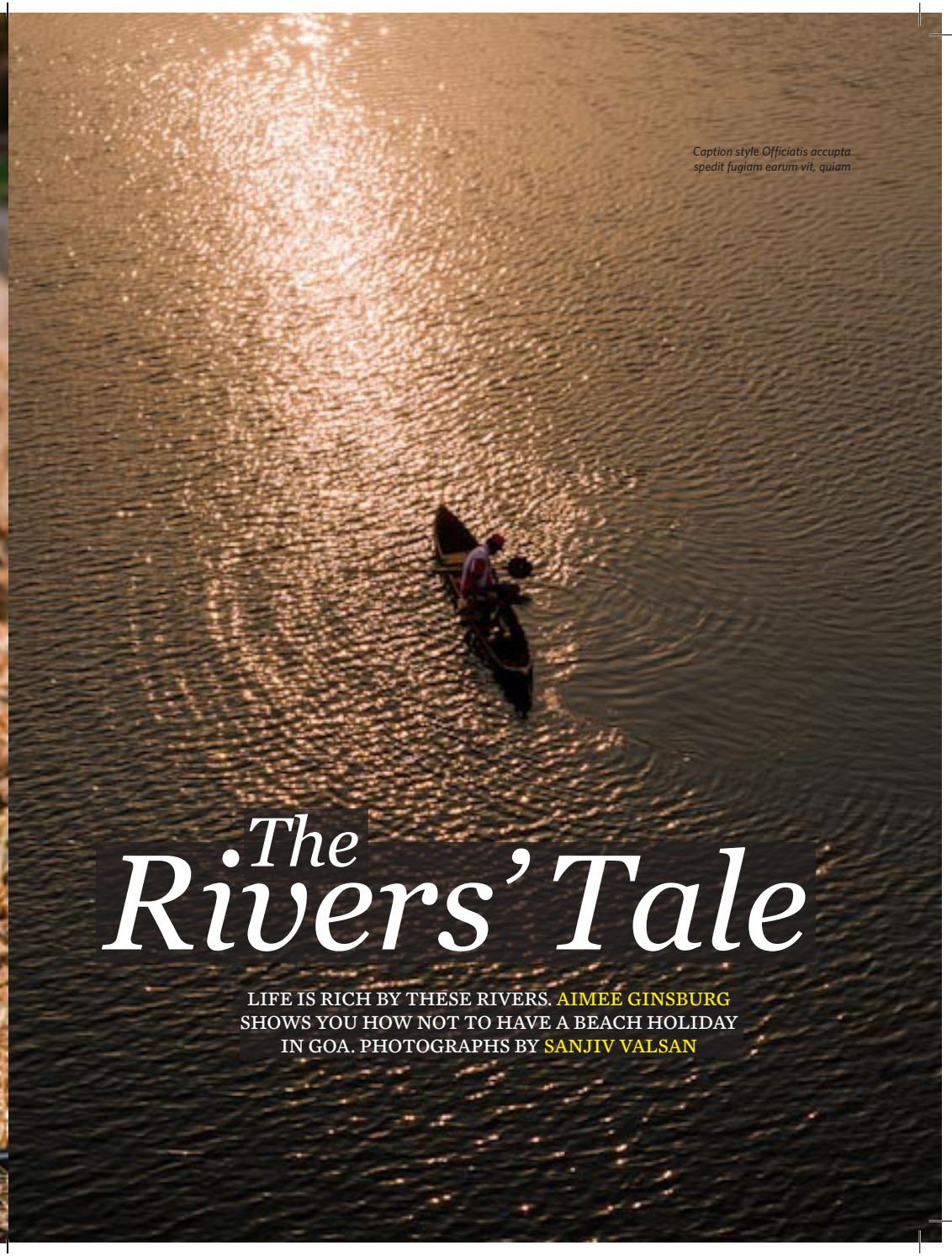
Every village in the Tirap and Longding distrit has a king, who is still an important figure here. Unlike royalty in mainstream societies, the king is typically a very accessible person, and lives in a bamboo hut, though his house is bigger and designed differently.

Though Indian government and administrative systems now rule the state, the king is still respected by his people. Along with the local chief council members, he forms the heart of the local judicial system used to settle disputes, and all important public meetings are held at his house. It is customary to first go meet the king whenever you enter any Nocte or Wancho village, and you will invariably be received with hospitality. The king will generally also be able to arrange homestays for travellers.

Spirit animals

The tiger is said to be the 'animal spirit' (*mong*) of kings, shamans and healers, and the Noctes believe that

Client: Arunachal Tourism (Travel guide book)



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The Rivers' Tale

LIFE IS RICH BY THESE RIVERS. AIMEE GINSBURG SHOWS YOU HOW NOT TO HAVE A BEACH HOLIDAY IN GOA. PHOTOGRAPHS BY SANJIV VALSAN

SLUG TEXT

I've known rivers:
Ancient, dusky rivers.
My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

Langston Hughes

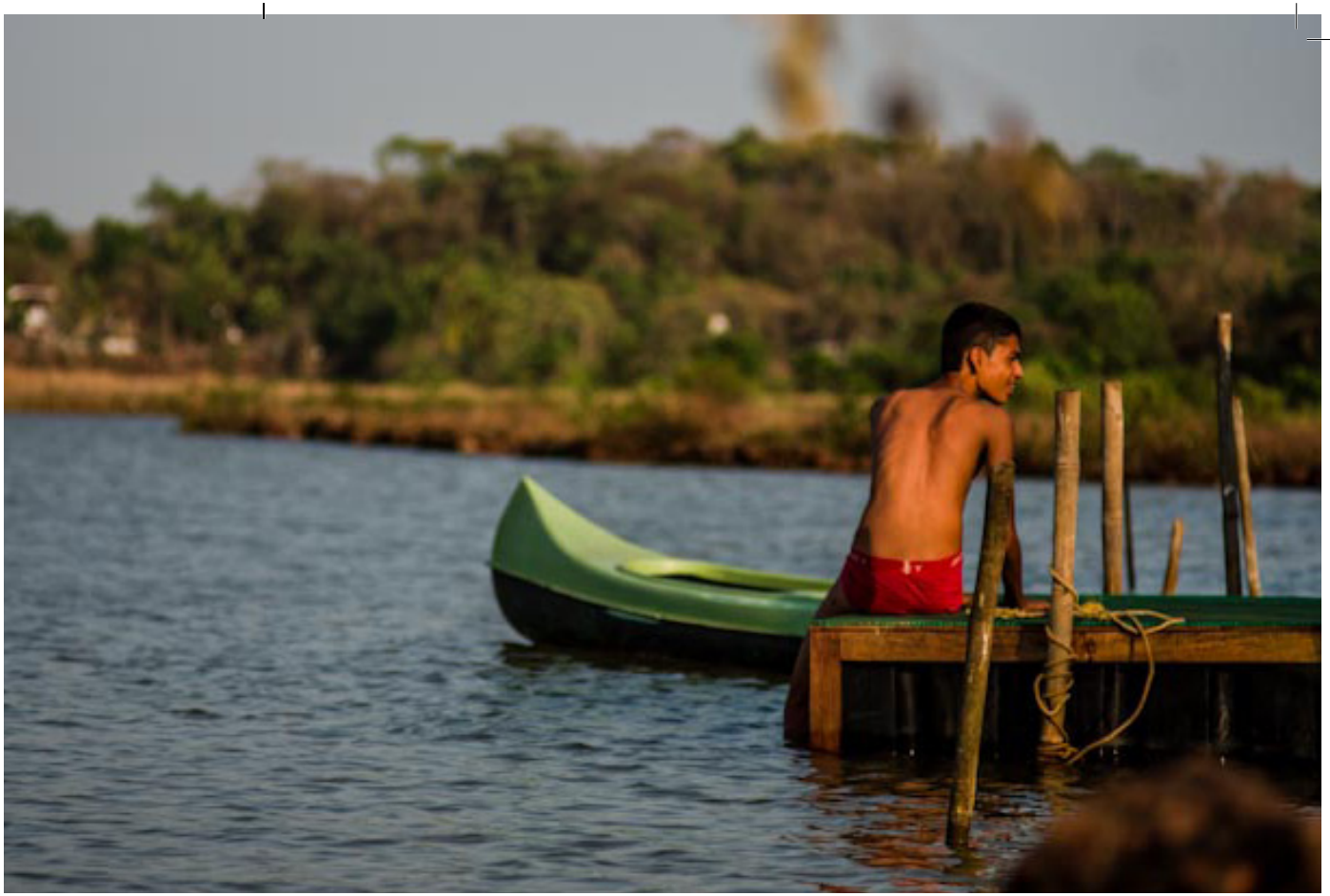
I am swimming far, far up river. Blue above me, blue below, lush green banks and rolling hills ahead. I am completely alone, except for the fish that sometimes nibble at my feet as I go. The sounds are hypnotic: calls of eagles, gentle little splashes where the water laps the shore.

Lap. Lap. Lap. With every stroke, I leave something behind, grow lighter. As I feel my body dissolve into this bliss, I wake up. What, river dreaming again? But before I can figure out what in the world is happening, I'm underwater, millions of tiny air bubbles floating up around me. It takes a moment to make sense of all of this and to realise I had fallen asleep while floating on my back in the Olaulim Creek, safely cocooned in the shade of the mangroves. Within a second my feet find the bed of slippery mud and I'm back out again, only to find the crows perched in the trees having a good laugh at me. Okay, my friends, laugh away. All you are getting for dinner is a beakful of earthworms. My dinner, a juicy fresh fish, caught in these waters and seasoned perfectly, is even now slowly roasting—carefully wrapped in a banana leaf—on the grill back at camp.

I hold my head up high during the long swim back and arrive elated, albeit with a stiff neck and mud-caked feet. My hosts, at the magical Olaulim Backyard, tell me I have dared swim where no one dared swim before. Yes! I am a champion, the Queen of Olaulim Creek. But next time, they suggest, take one of the easy-to-use boats if you are planning to nap out on the water.

Chapora, Zuari, Mahadayi, Sal. Galgibag, Terekhol, Talpona, Saleri. To truly immerse yourself into the rivers of Goa is a bewitching affair. The gentleness of their flow is deceptive—they will awake within you a fierce longing which, in turn, only they can quench. Start by saying their names out loud as you read them, softly. See how the ancient names roll off your tongue and leave you feeling slightly flushed. These are the waterways of Goparashtra, coursing from the source, pulsating and free. To follow a river downstream, all one has to do is let go and fall in love; to travel a river upstream is to enter through the holy gates.

And if all of this lyricism speaks to you not, let's come down to earth: everyone knows the classic Goa Beach Holiday is over. I mean, it can still be done, the way a coconut can be pressed a third time after the tasty, rich cream has been siphoned off. The tourists on the beaches these days resemble tomb diggers, trying to uncover treasures that are by now a distant rumour. Nothing here, inland and riverside, will remind you of the reality you have cleverly left behind by turning your back to the beaches to the west: the traffic and crowds, the empty bottles, that certain type of visitor with the vehicle too-wide-for-the-road looking for some exposed skin; the music blaring from clichéd shacks as you sit in your cookie-cutter sun-bed fighting off the endless salespeople with multi-coloured electronic doodads. So come on, vow to come to



Goa without laying eyes on the ocean.

The ride to the village of Olaulim is beautiful. We have been counting rivers, creeks and streams on the way, sparkling and gleaming in the sunshine. Several minutes after leaving the airport we had our first encounter: the Zuari, strong and broad, flowing from the Western Ghats down to the sea. When the road crossed over her, strong steel bridge suspended over sparkling blue body, we regretfully watch her disappear into the jungles and hills of the east. Twice, we stopped by the water's edge: once to buy and drink tender coconuts from an old woman who seemed to know we were coming before we even knew it ourselves. We stopped once more, to photograph an impossibly pretty scene of

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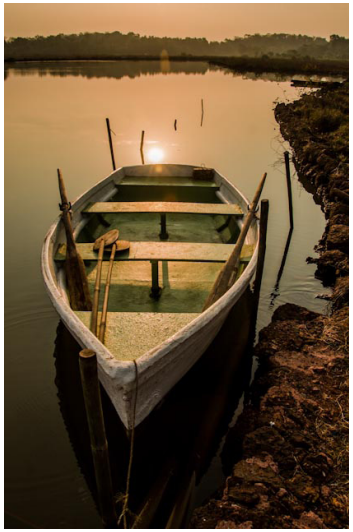
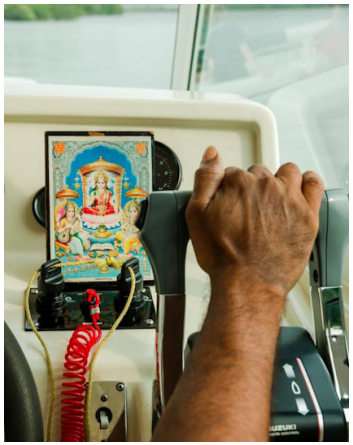
the paddleboats and kayaks and watching the clouds merging and converging in the pastel sky. At night, long after even the crickets have gone to bed, we sit on the little dock, nursing our port, our feet dipping naughtily in the creek.

TalePeribus cus. As aperit, quia con nonse conse quiam fugit rem. At etur, con con et qui berumque eaNulpa nimus ellore a sitio.

By now, you crave to make closer contact with the water, to travel the waterways more deeply inwards. Sea Eagle ---- offers several different trips, lasting anywhere from an hour to a full day. The road along the river to the (---name of the---) jetty goes through a Goa most tourists never bother to see: fisherfolk's homes, colourful tulsi shrines in the bustling inner courtyards; family-owned bakeries hidden between the walls of the homes. We pass sweet-faced kids in checked uniforms and oiled hair, holding hands as they walk past crosses and cows on their way home from school.

But when we board the Sea Eagle, we feel ourselves to be every bit as chic as tourists in Monaco or Cannes. Yes, today we are members of those classes, the ones who wear white





and blue linen and take their martini dry, very dry. The staff is politely professional, the boat comfortable and we are offered our first round of drinks--wine, breezers (what, no martinis?). Our anticipation grows as the cap'in heads out into the beckoning, mysterious hinterland. As we pick up speed, the pale green water sprays our willing sun-kissed faces as we look out at the . Underwater, schools of fish compete impetuously with the speed of our boat while out in the fallow fields, still as a photograph but for the wings of three great eagles, countless seeds bide their time, awaiting the monsoon's first showers.

As our boat moves deeper into the backwa-

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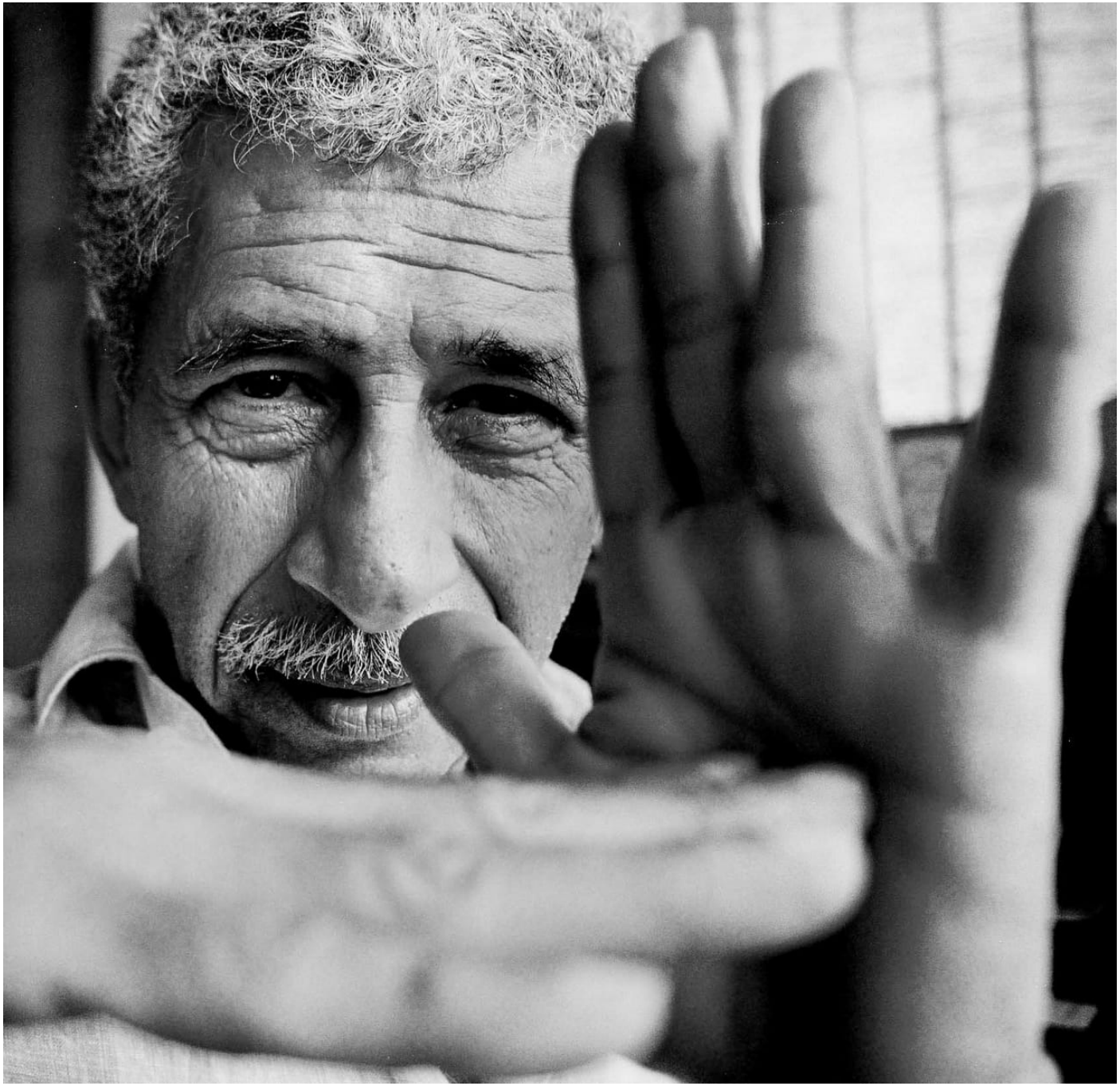
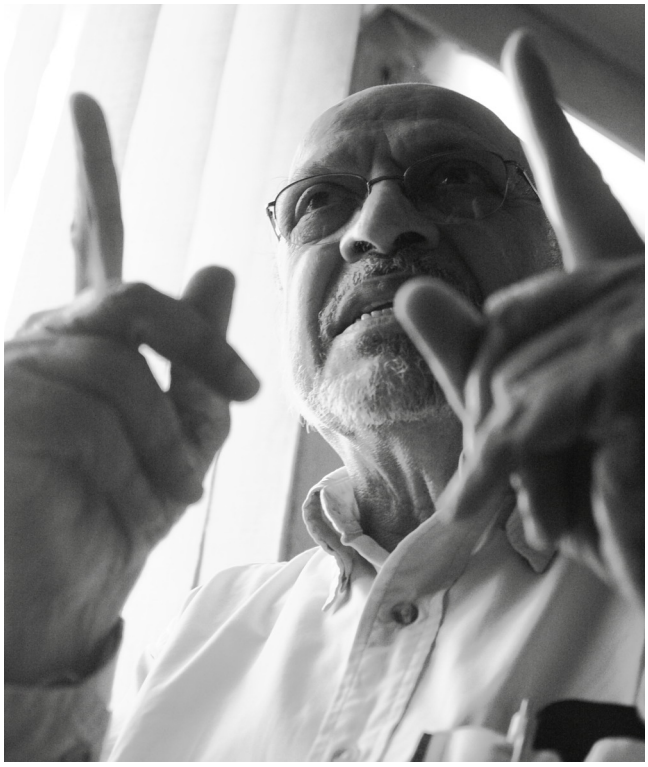
ters, our sense of time is disrupted and when the captain cuts the engine and lets us float, float, quietly flow we half expect an ancient row boat to meet us round the very next bend. Even talk of crocodiles does nothing to dispel the spell, and when a train chugs by on a vast bridge over the water, we wave to the passengers, imagining ourselves to be time travellers from Goa's distant past. When the captain turns around we nearly highjack the boat, such is our need to stay out on the river. We eat our dinner at A Tona, a delightful little place right on the Mandovi, Goa's grand river—but on the peaceful side, across the way from Panjim. The young proprietor and chef, the daughter of an illustrious Goan family, specialises in Portuguese dishes but all of her food tasted fresh and flavourful. We ate out on the open terrace, the colourful lights of the city twinkling across the way and reflecting like lollipops in the inky black water. The scene was both larger than life and sweetly cosy and we sat there for hours, happy to be exactly where we were.

When I wake the next morning I don't know where my body is. I would panic if I weren't so profoundly relaxed. Finally, I find my hands and feel under the sheets and lo! there I am. Who is this mellow, smooth creature, surrounded by bird song, tickled by breeze and as hungry, I now realise, as a horse? And is there time for a dip in the creek before breakfast? Ah, too many questions for this quiet mind of mine.

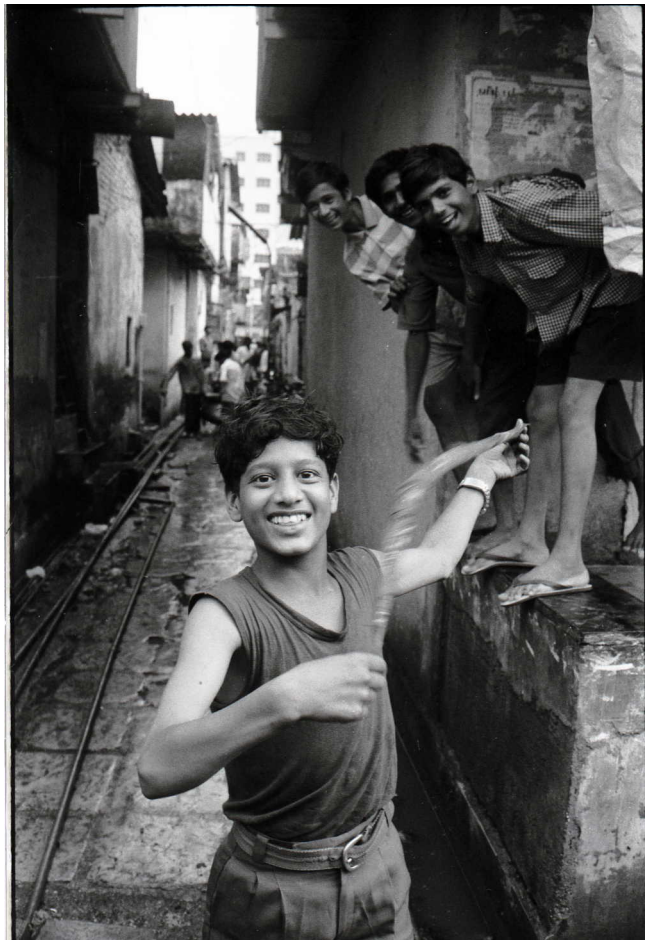
We don't really feel the need to do anything besides swim in the creek and the infinity pool, eat Peirko's food and try our hand at a river poem or two. We have brought drawing books and pastels, and have been sketching the creeks and backwaters—yellows and blues, greens of many hues. We have been trying (lazily) for days to catch something of the reverie we



Portrait: Actor Naseeruddin Shah



Portrait: Filmmaker Shyam Benegal



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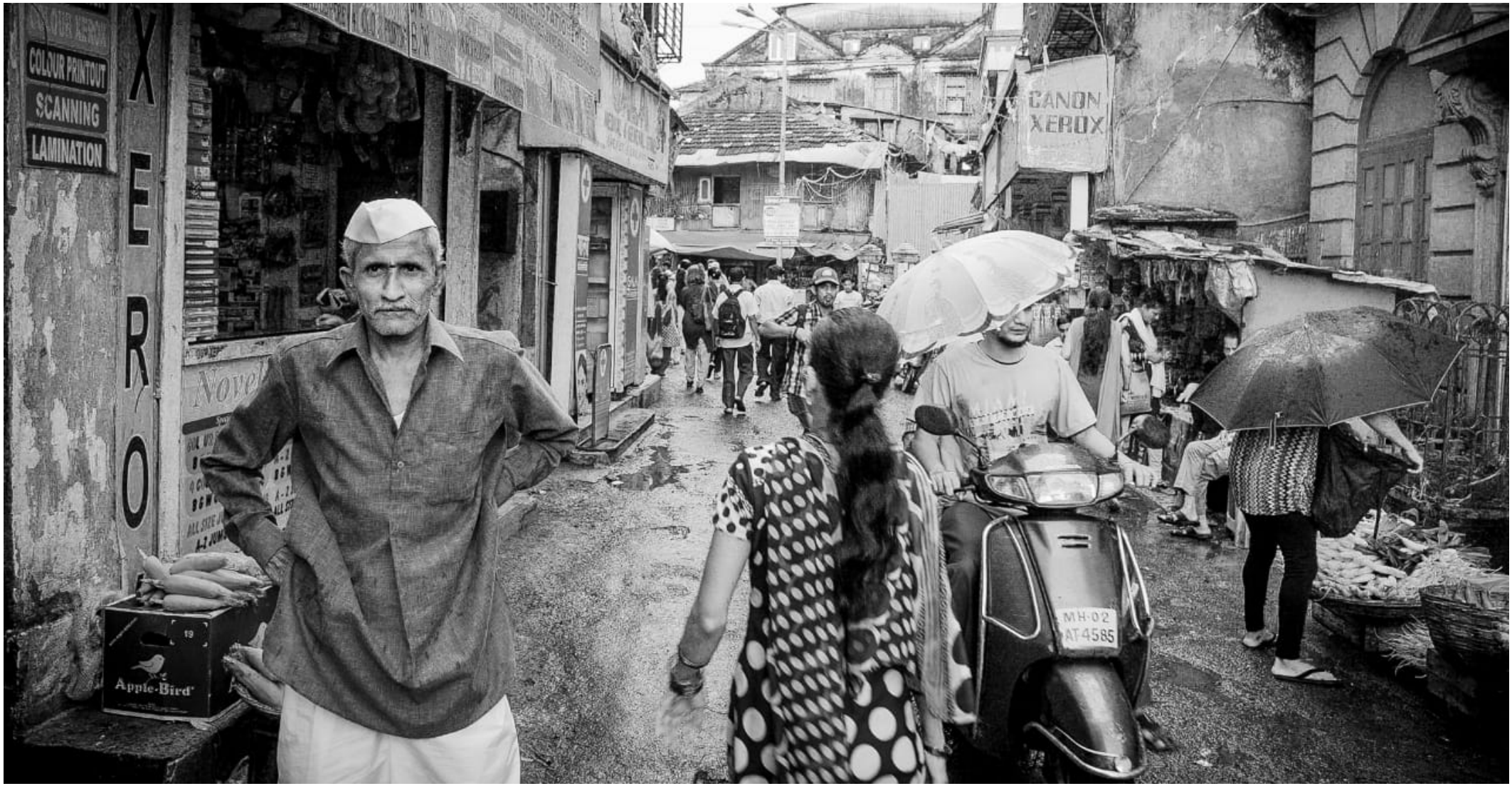

(Personal work)

(Personal work)

Client: Akshara Foundation

The last head hunter of the Nocte Tribe/ Client: Arunachal Tourism

Client: Arunachal Tourism

Idu Mishmi Tribal Shaman. Personal project

Client: India Book House

Client: Outlook Traveller magazine

Documentary style Wedding photography (separate portfolio available)

Client: Arunachal Tourism

Client: Arunachal Tourism

Client: Arunachal Tourism

Client: Volvo Excavators