


**NOSTALGIC OBSESSIVE LUCRATIVE EMPHASISED NATURAL GORGEOUS
ULTIMATE ROBUST: NOLEN GUR; A PRAGMATIC YUMMY PRODUCT**

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ABSTRACT

Khejur gur is a type of uncertified jaggery that is generally produced in small scale industries of West Bengal and Jharkhand. They are produced from the early morning sap of the date palm trees. The nutritious sap of the date tree is usually collected from the jungles, and hence are heated and served in a sealed jar. Khejur gur is generally in liquid form because it is completely natural with no added preservatives or chemicals, which is usually added during processing. They are mostly brown to golden yellow in colour, with variation in their concentration. It enhances the taste of many delicacies and contains no chemicals or artificial ingredients. Khejur gur can be eaten as "nolen gur", which is a soft golden coloured gur, named after the nol, or the pipe, which is used for the collection of sap. Or as jhola gur comes in a viscous state, generally made by reducing the sap. Jhola gur has a low shelf life, but is very aromatic, hence is used to make the famous Joynagarer moa. Another such variety happens to be poyra gur, which is regarded to be the finest one. It is available only during the winters and happens to be a healthy alternative for white sugar. Palm jaggery is high in composite carbohydrates which help in digesting food faster than the regular sugar. Consuming a piece of palm jaggery regularly helps in releasing energy which keeps you fresh and energetic for hours. The dietary fibers present in palm jaggery also help in cleaning the system by flushing out unwanted toxins and stimulating bowel movements. Being rich in potassium, palm jaggery helps in maintaining electrolyte balance by reducing water retention and bloating. Thus, promoting weight loss. Date palm jaggery can provide relief from menstrual and abdominal cramps. It promotes the production of endorphins, which help soothe pain and relax the muscles in the abdomen. Studies suggest that date palm jaggery can be an effective home remedy in providing immediate relief in case of a migraine headache. Khejur gur is a good source of composite carbohydrates that help in better digestion and also boost energy levels. It is a good source of calcium and helps in strengthening bones. Dietary fibre in it helps to treat digestive disorders such as constipation, indigestion and improper bowel movements. It helps to flush out toxins from the body. It helps in weight management by reducing water retention and bloating. It also helps to provide relief from menstrual cramps and stomach aches. It has medicinal properties that help to provide relief from migraine pain. It also helps to cure common ailments, such as a dry cough and cold.

KEYWORDS: Nolen gur, khejur gur, notun gur, poyra gur, date palm, patali gur.

INTRODUCTION

'Nolen Gur', 'Notun Gur' or 'Khejur Gur' is Date Palm Jaggery that is unique to Bengal. With the onset of a nip in the air, the local sweet (dessert) shops, in my hometown of Kolkata, are buzzing with eager customers buying the dairy-based sweets made with the 'New Jaggery'. Khejur gur is a type of uncertified jaggery that is generally produced in small scale industries of West Bengal and Jharkhand.

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usually collected from the jungles, and hence are heated and served in a sealed jar. Patali Gur (Date Palm Jaggery), also known as Khejur Gur, is a Bengali winter delicacy and is well known to all Bengali people for its aroma. This Patali Gur is sourced from Joy Nagar in West Bengal. It improves digestion, which makes it a good option as a post-meal sweet. The gur activates the digestive enzymes and helps clean the intestinal tract. Owing to high iron content, it increases the haemoglobin level and helps treat anaemia. It is rich in magnesium as well, which regulates the nervous system.^[1]



Figure-1: Nolen gur preparation.



Figure-2: Pure nolen gur.

Jhola gur or Nolen Gur which means new jaggery in Bengali, is extracted from date palm trees using deft skills during the winter months in West Bengal. *Phoenix dactylifera*, commonly known as date or date palm, is a flowering plant species in the palm family, Arecaceae, cultivated for its edible sweet fruit called dates. The species is widely cultivated across northern Africa, the

Middle East, and South Asia, and is naturalized in many tropical and subtropical regions worldwide. *P. dactylifera* is the type species of genus *Phoenix*, which contains 12–19 species of wild date palms. Date trees typically reach about 21–23 metres (69–75 ft) in height, growing singly or forming a clump with several stems from a single root system.



Figure-3: Nolen gur sweets.

Khejur gur is a good source of composite carbohydrates that help in better digestion and also boost energy levels. It is a good source of calcium and helps in strengthening bones. Dietary fibre in it helps to treat digestive disorders such as constipation, indigestion and improper bowel movements. Palm jaggery is an excellent substitute for white sugar. Let's put it this way—As compared to white sugar that is devoid of nutrients, palm jaggery is a nutritious sweetener. All the phytonutrients of white sugar get flushed out during processing. Apart from its sweet taste, it contains no nutrient. On the other hand, jaggery is processed without any chemicals or artificial ingredients. So, it is a healthy and natural sweetener. Palm jaggery is the most beneficial and nutrient-rich variety of raw jaggery. It is prepared from palm tree extract and is loaded with minerals and vitamins. However, some people dislike its appearance. It is also

pricey. But palm jaggery benefits are enviable because of its medicinal properties, you won't really mind it!

Date fruits (dates) are oval-cylindrical, 3 to 7 centimetres (1 to 3 in) long, and about 2.5 centimetres (1 in) in diameter, with colour ranging from bright red to bright yellow, depending on variety. Containing 61–68 percent sugar by mass when dried, dates are very sweet and are enjoyed as desserts on their own or within confections. Dates have been cultivated in the Middle East and the Indus Valley for thousands of years. There is archaeological evidence of date cultivation in Arabia from the 6th millennium BCE. The total annual world production of dates amounts to 8.5 million metric tons, countries of the Middle East and North Africa being the largest producers and consumers.



Figure 4: Yummy dishes of khejur gur.

Benefits of nolen gur:

1. Purifies blood: Coupling its amazing sweet taste, jaggery also purifies the blood after consumption. Acting as a cleaning agent, jaggery is one of the ancient blood purifying agents.
2. Aids digestion: Also, due to its natural cleansing properties, it helps fight digestion problems. Eating a piece of nolen gur with water everyday frees the body from almost all toxins.
3. Soothes and cools the stomach: Your body and stomach can be cooled down by consuming a small piece of jaggery every day. This is recommended during the summers, or if you are consuming rich foods every day
4. Prevents anaemia: For women suffering from anaemia, consuming nolen gur might help. Jaggery is a rich source of iron, and if added to the daily diet, might cure anaemia.
5. Benefits the skin: Nolen gur acts as a cure for acne and pimples. For everyone who wants their skin to be flawless, consuming nolen gur is a must.
6. Cures cough and cold: Nolen gur is an age-old remedy from dry cough and cold.
7. Is a good energy booster: You don't need energy drinks when you have nolen gur. It is an instant energy

provider, and due to its easy digestibility and gradual absorption into the system, it does not raise the blood sugar levels immediately.

8. Prevents asthma: Often recommended to asthma patients, nolen gur's anti-allergic and body temperature regulating properties are ideal for people suffering from asthma.
9. Reduces joint pains: Eating nolen gur with a piece of ginger eases joint pain and migraine.
10. Creates autophagy: Nolen gur is a natural sweetener and can be used as a healthier alternative to refined sugar. Nolen gur is extremely rich in iron and potassium, which may help manage your haemoglobin level. Nolen gur also contains a good amount of magnesium, which may be helpful for our nervous system, and muscles and bones.^[2]



Figure-5: Joynagarer Moya, Patisapta & Payes.

Nolen gur recipes:

1. Jaynagarer Moa is a seasonal Bengali sweetmeat delicacy prepared from date palm jaggery and Kanakchur khoi. This variety of Moa originated in Jaynagar of the South 24 Parganas district in the Indian state of West Bengal. It is now a popular sweet, being produced in Kolkata and elsewhere, sometimes with cheaper ingredients and chemical flavours. Jaynagarer Moa was given a Geographical Indication tag in 2015 which will enable the product to be protected from unauthorized uses and piracy. Jaynagarer Moa is made with Nolen Gur (jaggery made from date palm tree extract with exquisite taste and aroma), Kanakchur khoi (a form of popped rice made from a special variety of aromatic rice), Gawa ghee (a type of clarified butter made from cow's milk), elach (cardamom), and posto (poppy seed). Both Nolen Gur and Kanakchur rice are winter products (available around November to January) and hence Jaynagarer Moa is available during this period only. The ordinary or common Moa is a small crispy ball made of puffed rice ("Muri" rather than "Khoi") and jaggery. It is produced in homes all over Bengal and is also generally available in grocery shops in small plastic packets, throughout the year.

2. Patisapta is a famous Bengali-style traditional pancake, which is basically crepe made with refined flour, rice flour and semolina and stuffed with a sweet coconut and date palm jaggery filling. A traditional pancake like recipe, Patishapta is a very popular Bengali dessert recipe. The festival of rice harvest in Bengal, 'poush sankranti' is celebrated by relishing the most delicious sweet the bengali cuisine offer- 'pithe', a category of sweets that are prepared using rice along with milk, coconut, date, etc. Patishapta is a type of pithe prepared on such celebratory occasions. It is a quick and easy Indian dessert recipe, made in about 30 minutes, so you can prepare it casually for breakfast or as a snack to serve unannounced guests. You can also pack these in your kid's tiffin. Thin crepes made with refined flour, rice flour and semolina. Stuffed with a tasty coconut and jaggery filling.

3. Payes is Bengali nolen gurer payesh or chaler payesh / rice pudding with date jaggery / molasses is the most favoured desserts in Bengali homes for any occasions. If there is any dish that is as ancient as the human

civilization itself, it is the paramanna or payesh or payasam or kheer as we commonly know it. Rice and milk boiled together and sweetened with sugar cane was the food that has been the traditional offering to the gods for thousands of years. The first food that child eats in Indian culture and here birthday celebrations remain incomplete without this. Predominantly, Payesh is made with special rice called Gobindobhog rice, which has a special aroma in itself which makes it taste even more delicious and sweet. 'Nolen Gur', 'Notun Gur' or 'Khejur Gur' is Date Palm Jaggery that is unique to Bengal. With the onset of a nip in the air, the local sweet (dessert) shops, in my hometown of Kolkata, are buzzing with eager customers buying the dairy-based sweets made with the 'New Jaggery'.

CONCLUSION

West Bengal is the mastermind of yummy sweet dishes and out of that the preparations of nolen gur is marvellous and so delicious that no one can escape from that. It is available only in winter season and specially enjoyed by the people of West Bengal during Makar Sankranti [Poush Sankranti] by making pithe, puli, payes etc. Special item of nolen gur which is the powerhouse of so many nutrients produce Joynagarer moya, Patisapta, Payes, Pithe, Puli and so many mouth-watering dishes.

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