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SHOPPING TRENDS

Chill out with hot coffee at Goutam's

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NOWADAYS THE characteristically odious odour on EM Bypass has a whiff of coffee. So while driving down the road if you care to trace the aroma, you will land up at Goutam's.

And once you taste the dark brown brew here, you get hooked on it. The small coffee-chocolate joint, open between 4 pm and midnight, is the first among six others on the Bypass.

"But none betters Goutam's," says Sumit, who drives down from Bhowanipur as often as he can just to have his cuppa coffee here.

A video-cassette library once stood on the plot where Goutam's stands today.

The library wasn't doing very well, so it was closed down and in its place was set up Goutam's. The coffee shop was originally named Coffee Iceland, but it was rechristened Goutam's by cus-

tomers who identify best with the friendly owner Goutam, or Goutam Bhai as he is more popularly called.

Hot coffee and cold coffee, though quite common, have an altogether different taste at Goutam's, probably because of the choco flavour that he adds to them.

"Unlike at other places, the coffee here is very thick," is what most customers have to say about Goutam's brew.

Some leftover choco flavour once prompted Goutam to mix some

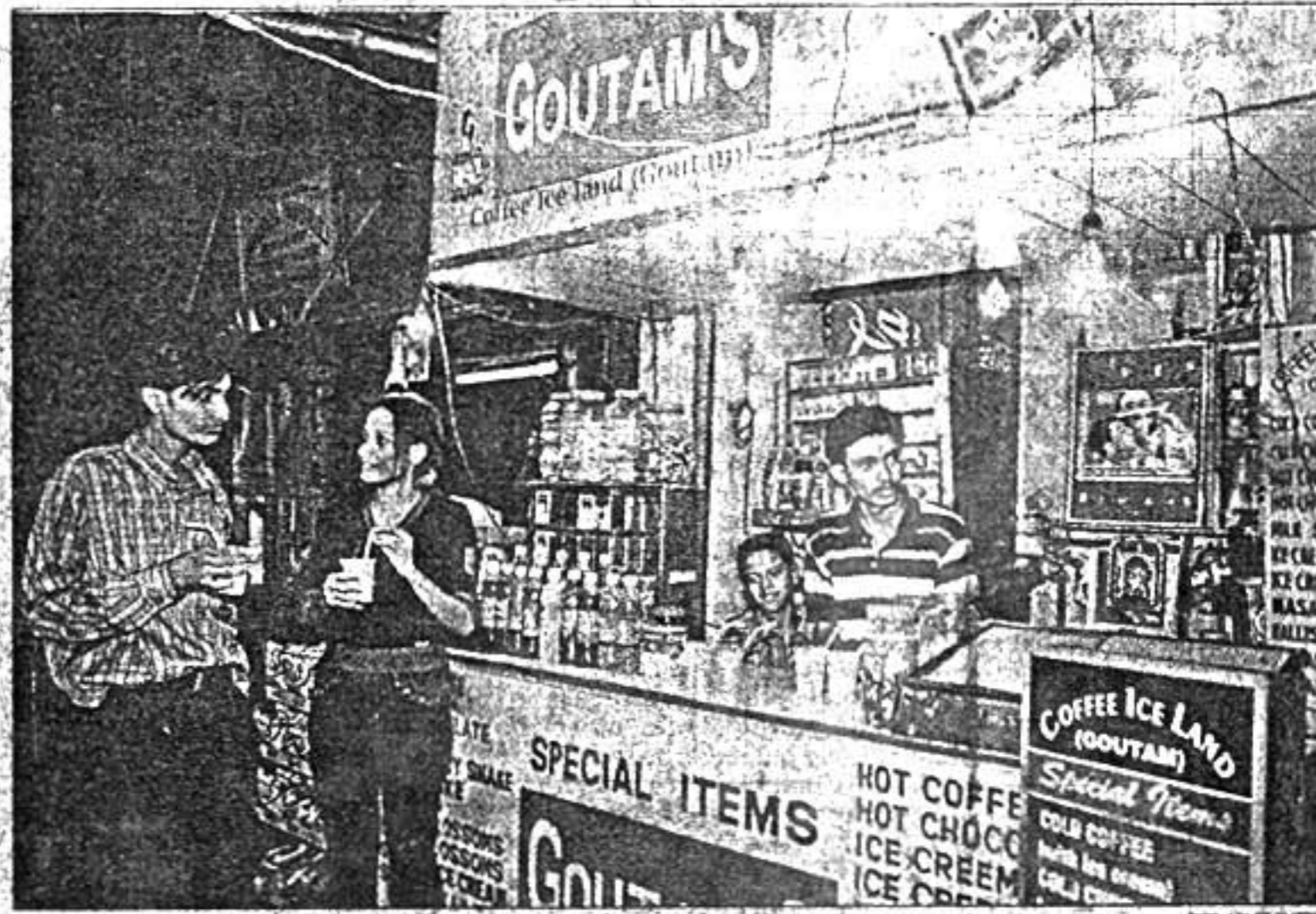


Hot coffee Rs 10

Cold coffee Rs 12

with milk. This is one of the best sellouts here. Hot and Cold Chocolates, at Rs 10 and Rs 12 are mixes of milk, drinking chocolate and sugar in carefully measured amounts.

Besides these, there are



Orange or Lemon Blossoms with ice cream, and Cola/Vanilla or Kesar Floats, all priced at Rs 25 while the yummy strawberry shake comes for a mere Rs 20.

But one thing that comes for

free here is, of course, Goutam's affection and care towards his customers that keeps bringing them to his shop. "I have never tried to publicise my shop. My customers do it for me by word of mouth, often bringing in

their guests to try out my stuff. So much so, a customer once gifted me a stall at International Club Festival. So the next time you want to chill out with hot coffee, you know where to head.

PHOTO: ANIL K. GUPTA