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SINGER

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EDITOR'S LETTER



WE'RE PROUD TO
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COVER GIRLS'
INSPIRATIONAL
STORIES – OF
GETTING OUT
THERE AND MAKING
THINGS HAPPEN

Could there be a cooler cover for this month in which we celebrate freedom? We think not! Bringing together eight young women (one of them just a little girl) was not easy, but we're so proud to showcase and celebrate their inspirational stories of getting out there and making things happen for themselves and others. As a bonus, it was delightful to be at the shoot where all this vibrant energy lit up the room – and, you will agree, the photographs on the cover and in our Cover Story.

We give you more inspiration in The Big Story, where courageous women take on the odds to triumph and flourish.

Our celebration of Indian enterprise and ingenuity continues in our Fashion feature, in which we spotlight designers who are empowering Indian *karigars*, and the modern avatar of a traditional *desi* craft, *minakari*. Our Beauty section has the Indian brands you need on your dressing table, while you'll find easy ways to bring ethnic touches into your home in Living.

But, above all, this issue is about helping you celebrate yourself! There's advice on sensuality and romance – but keeping you centrestage. We want you to feel free to be yourself – always!

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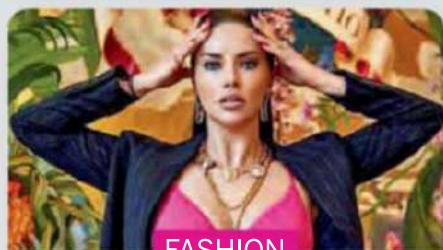
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I absolutely loved the *Small Wonders* feature in the July issue! The curated list of mini products is not only practical but also perfectly tailored to the needs of every Indian woman on the go. I've already purchased five of the recommended items, and they have been a game-changer among my travel essentials. Kudos to Team Femina for such thoughtful recommendations!

Simran Kathait, Delhi

Remember how people used to wait by the door for their letters to be delivered? That's me every month as I wait for *Femina's* latest issue to arrive. The July issue with Tabu on the cover left me feeling nostalgic. I have admired and adored her on screen for as long as I can remember. She continues to be one of the best actors in India and I absolutely love how she manages to leave people impressed with her performances even after all these years. *Femina* can truly make magic happen with icons on its cover!

Mehak Khanna, Mumbai

The cold Dehradun weather makes me just want to curl up and cuddle with my dog all day. The latest addition to my lazy girl routine has been reading *Femina* in bed. The feature *Inspiration Is Just Around The Corner* in the All About You section had an instant influence on me. It inspired me to step out and I ended up having the best day out in nature, listening to music, and taking pictures. I also picked up a skill or two and a lesson for the next time I feel like staying unenthusiastically in bed.

Poonam Mishra, Dehradun

This or that? The pink ones or the red ones? Nikes or New Balance kicks? A question that had been on my mind for two months was answered easily, thanks to *Femina's* Fashion section in the July issue. Choosing a pair of sneakers is not easy, but *Sneak-A-Peak* made the task relatively pain free.

This magazine always brings the latest and most interesting content to its readers, and I now have a pair of sneakers with which I will put my best foot forward.

Janhvi Jain, Jaipur

Being a college student living away from her hometown is hard, and being a woman has its challenges too. Thankfully, *Femina* comes to my rescue for all these problems. Rushing to classes without eating has become a habit, but I found solutions in the Living section with *Treats With Tea*, which features 10-minute, easy-to-make recipes that make my life – and many others' – easier. Thank you, Team Femina for whipping up thoughtful solutions!

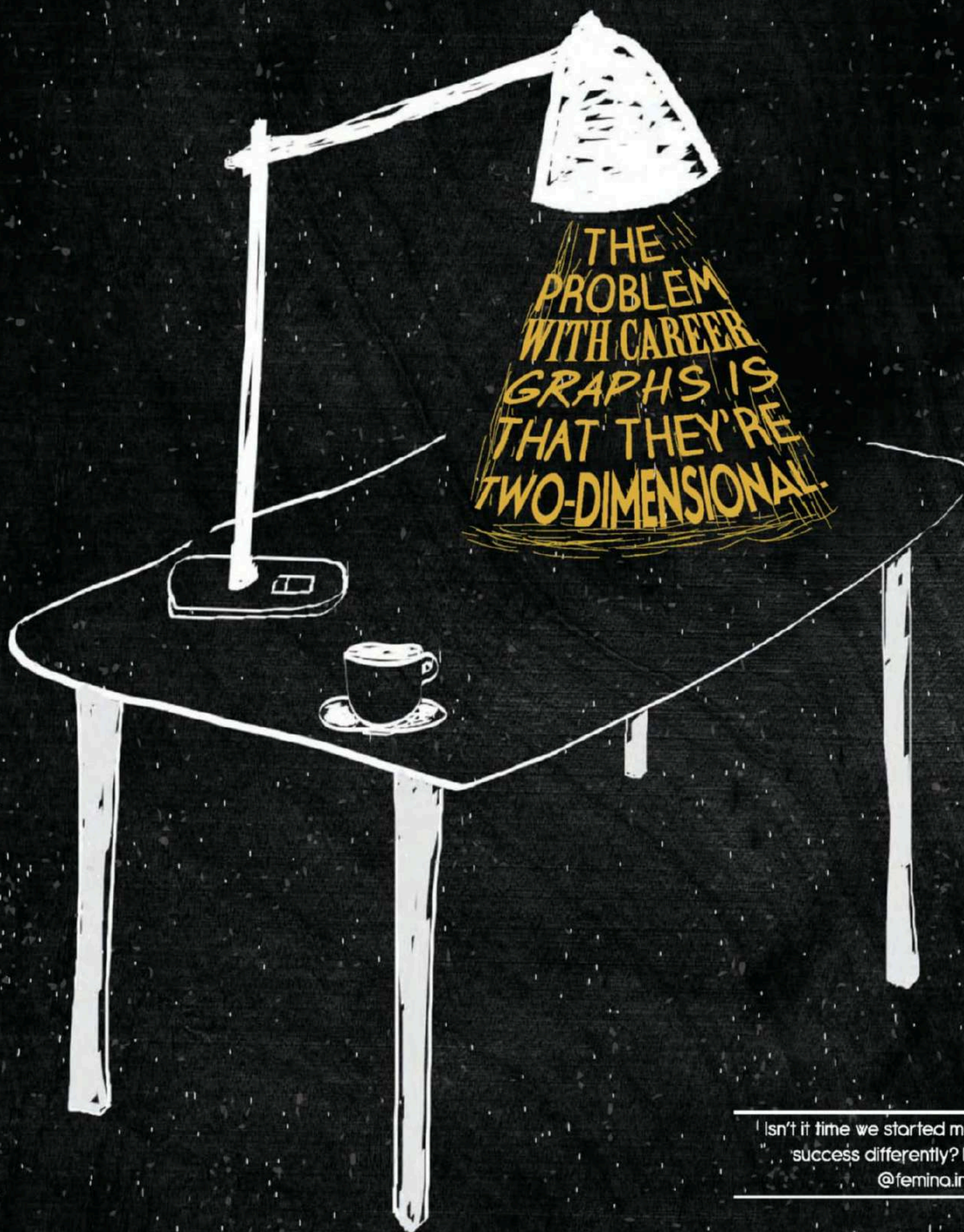
Ria Khan, Delhi

As a newlywed, I found the article *Ever Thine, Mine, Ours?* incredibly insightful and timely. Navigating finances can be daunting, but the detailed exploration of the pros and cons of combining finances offered a balanced perspective that truly resonated with me. It has also helped me and my partner have more informed and open discussions about our financial future. Thank you for addressing such a crucial topic with the depth and sensitivity it deserves!

Karen Carlos, Panjim

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success differently? Let's talk.
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The Future is Female...

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GIRLS ARE CONQUERING THE WORLD AND HOW! WHETHER
IN THE ARTS, SPORTS OR ACADEMICS, THEY ARE LEAVING
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GIRLS SHARE THEIR INSPIRING STORIES WITH US

PHOTOGRAPHS: SUSHANT CHHABRIA | STYLING: PRIYANKA CASTELINO
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TOP: JUBINAV CHADHA; PANTS: SAV LAMBA; EARRINGS: WOMENCODE; SNEAKERS: ALDO

THE DANCE FLOOR'S LEADING LADY

ALL OF 19, DANCER AND CHOREOGRAPHER SAUMYA KAMBLE IS HAVING A MOMENT RIGHT NOW, AND FOR ALL THE RIGHT REASONS! BY SHARON D'SILVA

In the vibrant world of Indian dance reality TV, stars occasionally emerge with such talent that they leave everyone spellbound. At just 19, Mumbai-based Saumya Kamble is one of those rare sensations.

Long before she dazzled audiences with her jaw-dropping performances and clinched the title in *India's Best Dancer Season 2 (IBD)* in 2021, Saumya was already a dedicated dancer – she started at the tender age of two. Her mother Shailaja, a firm believer in her potential, ensured she trained in over seven styles. By the age of 11, Saumya knew that dancing was her true calling. “I had participated in several reality shows already, but *IBD* allowed me to showcase my talents to the fullest, thanks to the supportive environment and the accepting space,” she

enthuses. “It was a competition, a place of exchange, and a playground where I could take on challenges and grow more confident in my art.”

She's had standout performances on tracks such as *Resham ka rumal* and *Prem jaal mein*, but, for Saumya, one of her most cherished moments was dancing to *Khatouba* in front of Asha Bhosle, who honoured her with a Natraj statue and the title of ‘*Chhoti Helen*’. Receiving such high praise from a legendary icon has been one of the highlights of her life.

Through the course of the show, her father – who initially opposed her dancing aspirations and hoped she would become a doctor – came around, going on to set up a dance studio in her name. Today, as a choreographer on the

same show, her creative process is guided by one simple principle: to find inspiration in everything and everyone around her. “I think of myself as very observant, and I strive to incorporate everyday experiences into my choreography,” she reveals. “My imagination and visualisation blend movement, philosophy, and technique, all executed at the highest level.”

No performer is immune to burnout or mental fatigue, and staying motivated through long, demanding schedules is crucial. Saumya has an easy fix: “Whenever I feel low, I listen to music, train with some of my favourite dancers, or get constructive feedback from my mom,” she shares.

“It helps me feel more productive and happy.” Shailaja believes it is Saumya's acceptance of rejection and her ability to transform it into a driving force that has propelled her to such great success at a young age. “As an artist, being able to gauge what appeals to the masses is very important since one dances to both express and impress,” her mom adds. “Saumya believes in substance over form, which helps her grow every single day.”

What is Saumya's advice to other young achievers? “Stay humble and work hard without expecting instant results – trust the process completely. It's all about balancing self-belief with the understanding that many others are aiming for the same success. I don't believe in celebrating achievements; instead, I see them as a sign that I need to keep striving for more in the future.” ▶



SHIRT: HUEVN; TOP: WESTSIDE; SHORTS: H&M; EARRINGS: WOMENCODE;
SNEAKERS: NEW BALANCE; SOCKS: STYLIST'S OWN

MOVING TO THE BEAT

MEET KRITHI YARADI, THE 19-YEAR-OLD BEATBOXER WHO HAS EVERYONE GROOVING TO HER BEATS. BY KAREN ALFONSO

Beatboxing has long been viewed as a male-dominated field, but there has also been a slow and steady increase of popularity among women in the sub-culture. Nineteen-year-old Krithi, based in Pune, went viral on Instagram for her mean beatboxing skills. “When I was in the ninth grade, our school held an ‘unconventional’ music competition, in which we had to create music without any instruments. We used old pipes, put rice in jars and shook them, and a couple of seniors were beatboxing; I thought it was just so fascinating. After school that day, I came home and looked up tutorials on YouTube, and started teaching myself.”

Krithi is quick to admit that

everyone in the community has been welcoming. The hardest challenge she’s had to overcome? “Probably explaining to my grandparents what beatboxing is,” she says with a grin. She does encounter a fair bit of trolling as a female beatboxer who posts reels on Instagram, but that, she declares, doesn’t deter her at all – it just galvanises her to perform better. She urges others who are afraid to step out of their comfort zone to put themselves out there. “I motivate others by posting my reels,” she avers. “Because, if I can, you can too. Showcase your skills even if you’re in the process of learning or not that good; you’ll get support in the most unexpected places.”

On the days Krithi does feel low, she leans on family and friends for motivation. Fellow content creators also help guide and motivate her. She’s also very grateful for the opportunity she has to be representing so many amazing women beatboxers of India. “Each is so unique and cool; each shows how talented Indian women are, and, when given a chance, each will shine on any platform.”

Her advice to those who want to pick up this field? “Do it!” she exclaims. “Whatever it is that gives you joy, just do it, whether or not you’re good at it. Just enjoy doing it; you’ll get there eventually through time and practice.” ➤



TOP, PANTS: PÉRO; SNEAKERS: ONITSUKA TIGER

BATTING FOR THE STARS

FOUR-YEAR-OLD WONDERKID **RISHIKA SARKAR** BOWLED THE INTERNET OVER WHEN HER BATTING VIDEO WENT VIRAL A FEW WEEKS AGO. SHE TALKS ABOUT THE TWO LOVES OF HER LIFE: CRICKET AND VIRAT KOHLI.
BY **SHRADDHA KAMDAR** AND **DIVYA BURMAN**

She was the star of the set when shooting this cover, not just for her age but for the panache with which she swerved her bat at every shot! Rishika Sarkar, the cricket wonderkid from Kolkata, wowed everyone with her batting strokes in the same manner as she wowed super player Yuvraj Singh. But we get ahead of ourselves.

Born to parents from a modest background, Rishika had just turned three when her father Rajib – a tutor to students from grades 5 to 12 – gifted her a cricket kit. It was his own unfulfilled dream of becoming a cricketer that he hoped to realise through his child. Noticing that she played exceptionally well for someone her age, he started devoting time to practise with her every day for a few

hours. For Rishika, it is just something she loves to do – life is currently about playing cricket for her. The best part? “I love batting. I never get bored of playing,” she quips. Who is your favourite, we ask her. “Virat Kohli!” it takes her a split second to answer.

During one of the practice sessions that Rajib used to conduct with Rishika in a parking lot, he noticed a few keen observers watching their game from a nearby tea stall. They were enamoured by her playing. He didn’t think much of it and, when one of them approached him to shoot a video of the child batting to her father’s deliveries, he agreed. It was then that the group realised that the child was a girl, and just four. Little did Rajib know that the

incident would change the course of their lives.

One of the observers turned out to be popular content creator and RJ Praveen. He was so taken with the kid’s talent that he had to share it with the world. In a few weeks, Praveen and his team visited Rishika’s home to shoot a professional video of her practising and playing. The video went viral; within hours, it had over 10.8 million views and 1 lakh shares. It is also the video that Yuvraj Singh watched, amazed by the talent the child displayed. He offered her a spot at the Merlin Rise Yuvraj Singh Centre Of Excellence in Kolkata.

Rishika’s parents are over the moon; never in their dreams had they thought life would take this turn. “I had planned that, once she was 12 or 13, I would start looking for professional training options for her,” Rajib told us, “but the opportunity has come knocking when she is only four.”

Rajib recognises that this is Rishika’s first step towards success. She has to put in all the hard work she can to move forward. That is also his message to others. “First, you HAVE TO dream! Only then can it be realised. To achieve it, you have to give it your all – work hard and persevere, no matter the field. Until Rishika becomes a part of Team India, we, too, will keep working hard,” he smiles. ➤



BLAZER, TROUSERS: SAV LAMBA; BRALETTE: FREAKINS; NECKLACE, RING: MISHO;
EARRINGS: WOMENSCODE; SNEAKERS: ALDO

MUSIC & LYRICS

GINI, AN 18-YEAR-OLD INDIE ARTIST, TALKS TO ASHWINI ARUN KUMAR ABOUT MAKING SONGS THAT TELL STORIES – HERS AND EVERYONE ELSE'S

Gini remembers singing along to the songs of American crooner Harry Belafonte and numbers from old Hindi movies on road trips with her family when she was just six years old. Little did she know that that was the beginning of her career as a singer-songwriter, making her one of the most promising talents in the country today. “I’d be singing *Do lafzon ki hai dil ki kahani* (*The Great Gambler*, 1979) because my mom used to sing it to me as a lullaby,” shares the 18-year-old. “My parents had a stack of CDs that we would keep listening to on repeat and I would sing along to these songs,” she reminisces. From making cover versions of songs that her mother would record and upload to YouTube to writing and performing her own compositions, Gini has come a long way.

Her father is a fighter pilot,

her mom an author, and she has a sister who is three-and-a-half years her junior. Collectively, Gini tells us, they are “voracious readers” and literarily inclined. She credits the literature she has consumed and continues to devour as an influence in her works. “I started writing poetry when I was just six,” she tells us, “Of course, it was very different then.” Over the years, those poems have evolved into the lyrics of some of her most-streamed songs in 2024 – *Ansuna*, *Chaukhat* and *Sukoon* – none of which sound like they were written by a teenager. Her lyrics are composed and ‘sorted’ – just like the ‘old soul’ she seems to be. “I treat my lyrics as though I am telling a story,” explains Gini. “It’s the purest way of expressing myself. I don’t know if I am an ‘old soul’, but I enjoy certain things in music that

have now become associated with being one – like a six- or 12-minute song that tells a story.” For Gini, songs are a way of communicating feelings – especially to her 500k plus followers on Instagram.

Growing up, Gini frequently changed home bases because of her father’s job with the Indian Air Force; She found in music a semblance of the missing permanence in her life.

“I was in grade 2 when I picked up an instrument – a harmonium – for the first time,” she shares. “When I was 10, I started playing the guitar and, later, the piano at 14.” Her musical journey, she says, has been progressive. She’s also found inspiration along the way in the works of many artists who have come before her. “For Hindi music, I look up to Swanand Kirkire and Amitabh Bhattacharya’s lyrics, and Amit Trivedi’s production. I love Jacob Collier’s harmonies and Phineas’s honest writing, too.” Ask the Dehradun-born musician to define her music, and her answer is as earnest as her melodies. “I want to tell stories that people might or might not have heard, but are able to interpret in their own way and add their own emotions to,” she avers. “My art should have the permanence that I lack, and it should be able to live a life of its own.” If this is not proof of being an old soul, we don’t know what is. ▶



BLOUSE, SHORTS: H&M; RING: WOMENCODE

MAKING THE EARTH HER STAGE

CLIMATE ACTIVIST **RIDHIMA PANDEY** IS UNSTOPPABLE
IN HER QUEST TO PROTECT THE PLANET AND
CHILDREN'S FUTURES. BY **SHARON D'SILVA**



cross the globe, activism is reaching unprecedented heights, and India's Ridhima Pandey is a shining example of this movement. Passionate about child rights and environmental conservation, this 16-year-old from Uttarakhand is tirelessly working to create a better world for future generations.

Ridhima was just five years old when she witnessed the devastating impact of climate change through the aftermath of the Kedarnath flash floods in 2013. Reflecting on that experience, she shares, "Observing the lacklustre response from the older generation with regard to climate change made me realise the urgency of taking action." She went on to file a landmark petition against

the Indian government in 2017. Despite her plea being dismissed, she continued to champion her cause on both national and international platforms. In another notable achievement, she was the sole Indian with Swedish activist Greta Thunberg and 14 other youth leaders collaborating to file a formal complaint with the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2019.

As someone who believes it is very important for a country such as India to take climate change seriously, Ridhima emphasises the role of personal responsibility: "Channelling all our efforts towards making people aware and always making small sustainable changes in our lives is very important because even our small actions can

change this earth." In the next five years, she hopes to see a dramatic reduction in corporate investments in fossil fuels, a more conscientious society that is mindful of its environmental impact, and a government that prioritises transparency and genuine action. Her vision includes respecting animals and biodiversity, treating them not as mere resources for development but as integral components of a healthy ecosystem.

Today, Ridhima stands as a beacon of inspiration across generations. Her remarkable journey earned her a spot on the BBC list of the 100 most empowering and influential women in 2020. She also took on a significant role as a central figure in *The Letter*, a film inspired by Pope Francis's encyclical. How does she stay motivated? "When I hit a low point, I find solace in nature... trees and animals, which reignites my passion to protect their beauty. I also turn to my mom, whose support reminds me that I'm doing my best; she reassures me that it's okay if things don't always go as planned."

Ridhima's parting message resonates deeply: "Though our generation might not have caused this crisis, we're doing everything we can to address it. If I, as a young activist, can sacrifice my childhood to correct the mistakes of others, then, surely, you can step up and be more responsible. We need your support and action to drive meaningful change." ➤



WAISTCOAT, TROUSERS: SAV LAMBA; RINGS: MISHO; WATCH: HER OWN

SURFING AGAINST ALL ODDS

SUGAR BANARSE, AN 18-YEAR-OLD INDIAN SURFER, IS RIDING THE WAVE OF BEING A YOUNG ATHLETE IN UNCHARTED WATERS. BY ASHWINI ARUN KUMAR

W

hen we ask 18-year-old surfer Sugar Banarse to share with us the feeling of riding a wave, her face lights up: "It's like you're connecting with nature," she enthuses. "It's just you and the ocean. It's so satisfying to catch a wave, and a lot of fun!" Sugar, shy and reserved when she's not showing off her moves in water, is one of the handful of people in the country to experience the adrenaline rush that comes from this extreme sport – and one of the best, too. By the time you read this, the four-time national champion would have competed in the Point Break Challenge held in

Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu, and be in training to represent India at the third Asian Surfing Championships taking place in Thulusdhoo, the Maldives. "Surfing gives me a lot of freedom," shares Sugar. "When I am on the wave, I don't think about anything else. It takes my mind off a lot of things and brings me peace."

Sugar grew up around pristine beaches and in close proximity to the ocean in Goa, where she continues to reside. "I was always a water baby," she says. "My friend introduced me to surfing when I was 12 years old. At 15, I participated in my first competition and that's all I have wanted to do since." It is as though she was destined to surf. In a country where parents place tremendous emphasis on education in the hope of their children landing high-paying jobs in the future, Sugar's mom, Michelle, a costume designer and stylist, let her pursue surfing as a full-

time job to actualise her dream of becoming a professional athlete. "My mom recognised that I wanted to surf and she's been super supportive. If it weren't for her doing things behind the scenes, I don't think I would be where I am today," admits Sugar.

Sugar's schedule is gruelling and the number of hours she puts in every day is proof of how bad she wants this. "When we're training for competitions, I usually surf for seven hours a day," she tells us. "We start pretty early with some free-style surfing and then my coach (Samai De Kallialay) sets drills and goals throughout the day. We then analyse our training sessions, which are usually recorded, so we can correct specific moves." When she is not training, she works at her local surf school to keep herself going.

Don't be fooled by Sugar's petite frame and lean structure; surfing has turned her into a person with a lot of physical strength. But it has also made her mentally strong – and that is what Sugar likes most about the sport. "I love how surfing keeps me sane; it has helped me find the confidence within." She wants that for young girls – and their parents – who are apprehensive of taking up extreme sports or anything that is unconventional. "Explore your passion and embrace the challenges that come with it, and I promise you will grow from that," she says.

Sugar's goals are straightforward. "I want to promote surfing culture as much as I can and be a role model for young girls." In her own way, she already is. ➤



JUMPSUIT: FREAKINS; CROP TOP: ONLY; EARRINGS: WOMENCODE;
SNEAKERS: ONITSUKA TIGER

AIN'T NO MOUNTAIN HIGH ENOUGH

MOUNTAINEER KAAMYA KARTHIKEYAN'S GRIT
AND LOVE FOR TREKKING HAVE LED HER TO SCALE
EVER-GREATER HEIGHTS. BY KAREN ALFONSO

Conquering mighty Mt Everest is an achievement few can boast, which makes 17-year-old Kaamya Karthikeyan's feat even more notable. She is the second youngest mountaineer in the world to scale the peak, and the youngest Indian to do so.

As a precocious three-year-old, Kaamya often wondered where her naval officer father Cdr S Karthikeyan would disappear off to on the weekends – he trekked small trails. When Kaamya turned seven, her mother Lavanya decided they would join him. The family went to Uttarakhand, and that's where she fell in love with

the adventure sport. Soon, the family was scaling peaks every summer vacation, often joined by cousins and other family members. "It was after I scaled Mount Stok Kangri in Ladakh that my dad pointed out that I had scaled the highest peaks in four continents," she recalls. "I immediately expressed a desire to scale peaks in the other three as well, and that's how the Seven Summits plan took shape."

Mountaineering is not for the faint-hearted – there's dangerous terrain, altitude and inclement weather that could lead to not-so-favourable conditions attached to the sport. "There's a lot of mental

preparation needed to prepare ourselves for the climb to know the route inside out," Kaamya elaborates. "My dad always says, 'Mountaineering is 40% physical, 40% mental, 10% logistics – the last 10% is just up to the mountain.'"

There have been plenty of setbacks on Kaamya's journey, but the fact that she started young keeps her going. "Yes, I did face a lot of challenges because I was a young climber, and I was female. But it never felt like I was doing something very out of the ordinary," she muses. "For me, I was going with my family, with my parents, to the mountains, where I was having fun. My dad always says that climbing is about collecting stories you can share with other people. I've been doing that, especially during the pandemic, when I would speak to many schools as well as corporate entities."

The Mumbai-based mountaineer's advice to aspiring achievers draws from her mountaineering experiences: "When you're really tired, just keep your head down and keep putting one foot in front of the other and you will eventually reach your summit. This is a very famous saying within the community, and something that I have always followed in all facets of my life." ➤



TOP: SKIRT: MELLOWDRAMA; EARRINGS: WOMENCODE; RING: MISHO; BOOTS: FIESTA

COMING UP ROSES

ACTOR NITANSHI GOEL DAZZLES AUDIENCES
WITH HER VERSATILITY AND NATURAL CHARM,
ESTABLISHING HERSELF AS A RISING STAR
IN INDIAN CINEMA

When you

think of *Laapataa Ladies*, a breakthrough movie by Kiran Rao that released earlier this year, the sweet melody of guitar strings comes to your ears. That's exactly how one imagines the beauty that is Phool. Nitanshi Goel, who essayed the role of Phool Kumari, was only 16 when she shot for the movie right after the pandemic. Phool's innocence, effectively portrayed by the teenaged actor, is one of her most striking traits, making her the nation's favourite overnight.

Despite her youth, Nitanshi's maturity and depth are rare and endearing. In the movie, Phool was caught in an unusual situation – she was swapped with another bride

on a crowded train. Nitanshi navigates the character's predicament with grace and quiet strength. Her remarkable performance has garnered her critical acclaim and earned her the prestigious IMDb Breakout Star STARMeter Award, making her the youngest recipient of this accolade globally. Her talent has been noticed internationally as well. She received a nomination for Best Actress at the 2024 Indian Film Festival of Melbourne, a prestigious recognition that places her alongside established stars such as Alia Bhatt, Jyothika and Sanya Malhotra.

Born in Noida, Uttar Pradesh, she embarked on her acting career at a young age, starting as a junior artist and gradually making her way up the ladder. Nitanshi's first break on screen was with *Vicky Donor* (2012) in which she played one of the child artists. Her early experiences in the industry were marked by perseverance and a relentless pursuit of her passion. She gained recognition for her roles in various TV

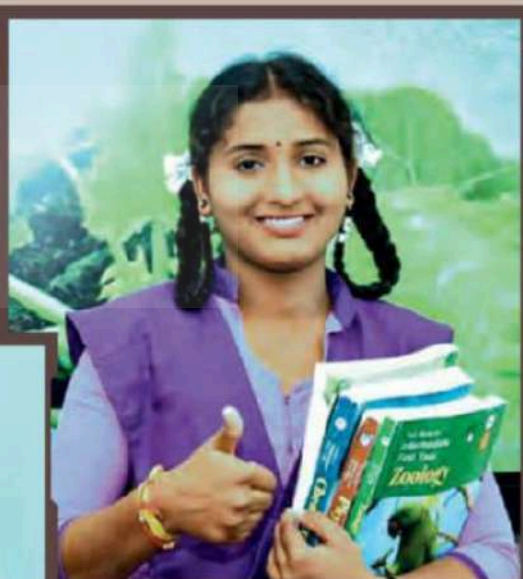
shows and films, including *M.S. Dhoni: The Untold Story* (2016), *Thapki Pyar Ki* (2015), *Daayan* (2018), *Masoom Sawaal* (2022), and *Ishqbaaz* (2016).

For her love of the craft, Nitanshi has balanced her academic responsibilities with her acting career, often studying on set, making the most of her time between takes. During the filming of *Laapataa Ladies*, she was also preparing for her grade 9 exams, a balancing act made possible with the support and guidance of her mother, a former teacher.

Beyond her acting skills, Nitanshi has also built a substantial following on social media, boasting over 10 million followers on Instagram. She affectionately refers to her fans as 'Nitanshians', and they, in turn, call her 'Nits'. This strong online presence has made her a role model for many young aspiring actors. In interviews, Nitanshi often shares advice for those looking to break into the industry, emphasising the importance of auditions as a learning experience. She credits much of her own growth to the numerous auditions she has participated in over the years.

As she continues to impress with each new role, Nitanshi is looking to make varied choices that allow her to explore her range as an actor. With her impressive accolades and promising future, she is undoubtedly a star on the rise in Indian cinema. **F**

MAKEUP: SAIKAT CHKRABORTY, NATIONAL MAKEUP ARTIST FOR MAC COSMETICS INDIA; HAIR: POOJA SAVLA, CREATIVE DIRECTOR FOR LOOKS SALON; VIDEOGRAPHY: KRIS ARSHAD; MAKEUP ASSISTANCE: RASHMI PARDESHI; HAIR STYLING ASSISTANCE: NILESH KUMAR SHARMA AND TRUSHALI; STYLING ASSISTANCE: RITIKA AGRAWAL; STYLING TEAM: ANAKSHI PEDNEKAR; HOSPITALITY PARTNER: iiiii



BIGGER, HIGHER, STRO

THESE WOMEN PROVE
THAT HURDLES IN LIFE
MUST BE TAKEN HEAD
ON AND OVERCOME
WITH COURAGE
AND DETERMINATION.
THEIR INSPIRING
STORIES WILL TAKE
YOU THROUGH
A RANGE OF EMOTIONS
BUT END ON A SMILE
OF VICTORY





NGER





DEVANSHI YADAV

CRUSADER FOR VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



From personal tragedy to becoming a beacon of hope for others, Devanshi Yadav's life is a journey of resilience and empowerment. Hers is a story of transforming pain into purpose.

When she was just nine months old, Devanshi's father was martyred in a terrorist bomb blast, leaving her mother a single parent at 24. As she grew up, she heard tales of her father's bravery and saw her mother defy societal norms with unwavering determination. Social work called to her early on, but her fight became personal when she was assaulted at 14 while

visiting a temple with her friend one evening. Two boys rode by on a bike, and the pillion rider threw acid at her. The sharp smell, the fumes from her skin, the excruciating pain... She collapsed and was rushed to the hospital almost immediately, but she came dangerously close to losing an eye. While the physical scars have faded,

"IT'S THE JOURNEY OF MY YOUNGER SELF STRUGGLING TO SPEAK OUT AGAINST ABUSE. SEEING OTHERS ON THEIR PATH TO HEALING IS DEEPLY FULFILLING"

the emotional wounds from facing such an incident during her formative years made it difficult for her to trust people. In the aftermath of the incident, Devanshi sought solace by moving in with a family friend, hoping to find refuge in a home away from home. One night, however, he entered her room, heavily intoxicated, and began to touch her inappropriately. She managed to escape, lock herself in the bathroom, and call her friends for help. Despite her bravery, she was met with harsh judgement; relentless slut-shaming and victim-blaming left her unable to process the trauma at the tender age of 18.

Reaching a turning point, she resolved that no other survivor should endure what she had faced alone. Devanshi founded the Shaheed Ramashray

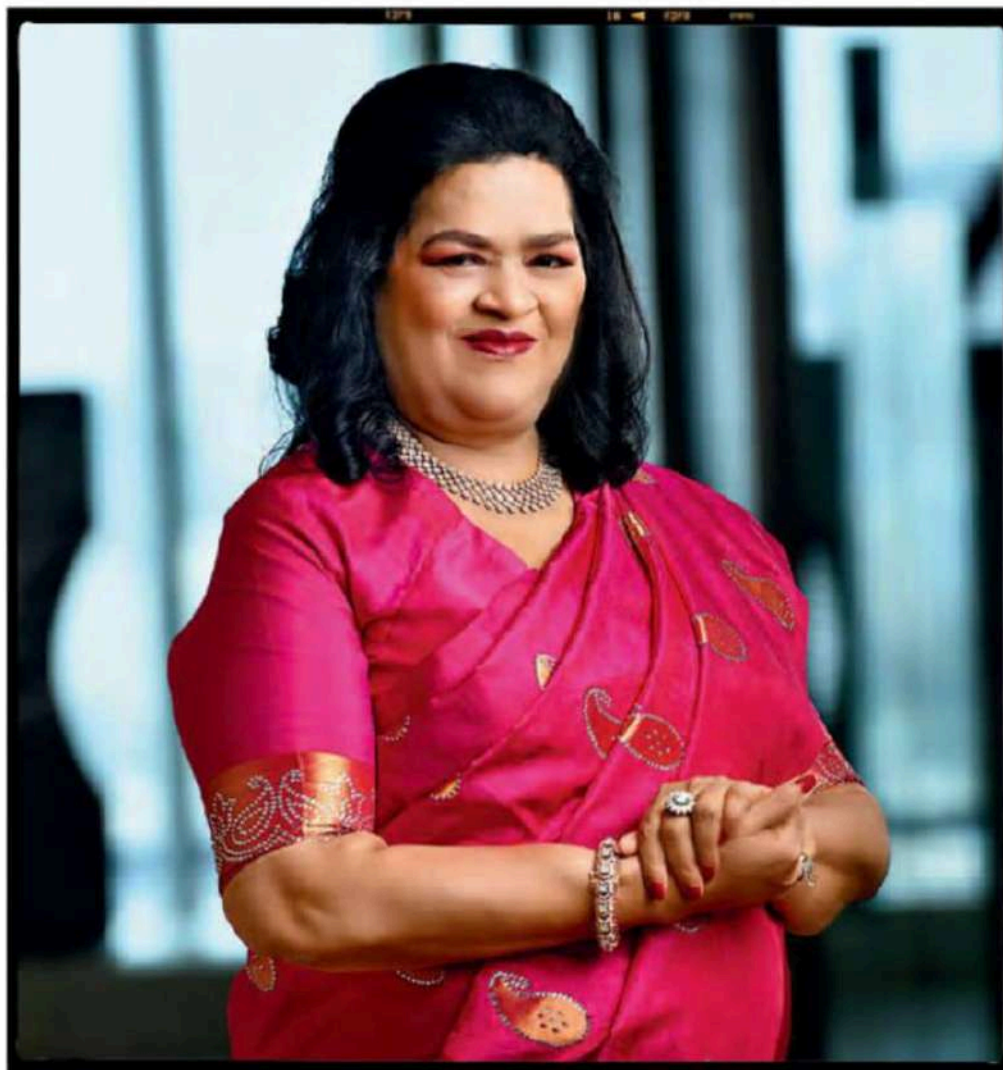
Welfare Society (SRWS), named in honour of her father, with a mission to empower those whose voices had been silenced. SRWS aims to challenge injustice against women, offer rehabilitation, and provide free legal and mental health support, creating a sanctuary for survivors.

Over the past six years, her initiatives, including campaigns such as Log Kya Kahengey, Aazad Pankh, Badlaav and Your Safe Space, have profoundly impacted over a thousand lives. When asked about her greatest joy, Devanshi reflects, "It's the journey of my younger self struggling to speak out against abuse. Seeing others on their path to healing is deeply fulfilling, as it feels as if we are healing and growing together."

By Sharon D'Silva

DR GRACE PINTO

CHAMPION FOR INNOVATIVE, INCLUSIVE AND VALUE-BASED EDUCATION



In 1976, driven by a shared passion for education, Dr Grace Pinto and her husband Dr AF Pinto embarked on a journey to revolutionise learning. From humble beginnings – their first English medium school had just 36 children – they nurtured a vision that has blossomed into the Ryan International Group of Institutions, a sprawling network of over 150 academies. With Dr Grace at the helm as Managing Director, this educational powerhouse has redefined excellence and innovation in the sector.

“As an educational group, we’ve encountered numerous and complex

challenges, but these have only reinforced our dedication to our vision, keeping us grounded in our values and faith,” shares Dr Grace. “These challenges have strengthened me, shaping me into a confident leader in the education sector. In this age of technology, it is challenging for teachers and educators to instil values in children. However, we have ensured our pedagogy remains value-centric.” This commitment is evident in how the Ryan International Group has expanded to the farthest corners of India, bringing quality education to towns such as Shahjahanpur in UP, Jalna in Maharashtra, Bolpur in Kolkata, and Durg-

**“I BELIEVE EVERY
WOMAN HAS
THE POWER
TO POSITIVELY
IMPACT NOT
JUST HER FAMILY
BUT SOCIETY
AS A WHOLE”**

Dhamtari in Chhattisgarh, achieving remarkable results.

Inspired by the life and teachings of Mother Teresa, Dr Grace has led the organisation to significant recognition for its contributions to education and social service. Accolades

not only honour her efforts but also drive her to achieve new milestones. “For me, it is incredibly gratifying to hear the stories of our alumni thriving in their respective fields,” she reveals.

Dr Grace's message for women facing challenges is equally inspiring: “I believe every woman has the power to positively impact not just her family but society as a whole. Education has given us a new lease of life, and I urge every woman to happily embrace her individuality, as it defines her unique identity. You are born to win. Think big, dream big, achieve big, and always remember, ‘forward ever, backward never’.”

NATASHA MOOR

FOUNDER OF NATASHA MOOR COSMETICS,
WHO LEFT AN UNHAPPY MARRIAGE TO
STRIKE OUT ON HER OWN



NATASHA COUNTS HER TEAM AND
FAMILY AS A STRONG SUPPORT
SYSTEM, BUT SHE KNOWS
SHE MUST RELY ON HER OWN
RESILIENCE AND DETERMINATION

Divorce has long been frowned upon, especially in Indian society. Stuck in an unhappy marriage, Natasha was afraid of what the close-knit Indian community in Hong Kong would think if she opted for it – but her steely resolve to find happiness buoyed her. She had already experienced bullying around her ethnicity, skin colour and overweight growing up in the same country and, consequently, had suffered anorexia and bulimia. And she decided enough was enough – she would build something from her pain. It led her to found her own eponymous cosmetics brand.

As a jet-setting makeup artist who travelled the world, she had been exposed to diverse cultures that she usually found very exciting, but there were also many times her own values clashed with local norms. She recollects a particularly vivid incident – where a client's father insisted she should collect her payment from his hotel room, which totally gave her the jitters. It was a moment she knew she had to stand her ground. She insisted on a professional setting for the payment, and it taught her the importance of setting boundaries and standing up for herself – especially as a young woman navigating unfamiliar cultural waters. Natasha counts her team and family as a strong support system, but she knows she must rely on her own resilience and unwavering determination to keep propelling herself forward.

The moments of struggle – and there have been many – haven't just toughened her resolve but have also deepened her commitment to empowering others – both financially and emotionally – through her work. Natasha believes that sharing her story and championing authenticity and self-empowerment will inspire women globally to chase their dreams boldly and find strength in their own unique journeys.

One guiding principle that has kept her grounded through times of adversity is understanding that every experience – be it a triumph or a stumble – contributes to our growth and shapes who we are as people.

By Karen Alfonso



NEETU KISHORE

CHAMPION FOR INNOVATION, INCLUSIVITY, AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AT VaaaN INFRA



As the Managing Director of VaaaN Infra Pvt Ltd, Neetu Kishore epitomises resilience and visionary leadership in the infrastructure sector. She assumed the role in 2021 after the demise of her husband Aman Kishore, who had set up the company in 2011. Under her leadership, she has taken the company to unprecedented heights and reinforced its commitment to innovation and excellence.

Neetu lost her husband and parents to COVID-19 within a span of 11 months, but she made the choice to move forward with courage instead of just surviving as a victim. She wanted to take forward her husband's legacy and safeguard the future of over 600 families, including her own that depended

on the company; that responsibility was her motivation and inspiration.

There were challenges, of course, but Neetu says, "I chose to see and receive only love, generosity, kindness and positivity from the people around me rather than the negativity and doubts of a few people after I became a widow. I rose to the challenges of running a business that changes dynamically and is operational 24/7. I continue to work to grow it and innovate to deliver better value to the end users. VaaaN Infra has undertaken and successfully delivered several landmark projects that have significantly enhanced India's digital infrastructure. Notable among these is

"I CHOSE TO SEE AND RECEIVE ONLY LOVE, GENEROSITY, KINDNESS AND POSITIVITY FROM THE PEOPLE AROUND ME"

the implementation of the FASTag system across the majority of toll plazas, including the Delhi-Mumbai Corridor, and the AI-based toll management system on the Western Peripheral Expressway. These initiatives have revolutionised toll operations, laying the foundation for a more connected and automated

transportation network nationwide. Another important project has been the transformative Kochi Water Metro one under Urban Mobility, which implemented an advanced passenger counting system; it underscores VaaaN Infra's dedication to sustainable urban development and innovation in public transportation. The company's recent ventures into automated parking management systems and EV charging infrastructure for Pune Metro further highlight its commitment to sustainable transportation solutions."

Neetu's personal journey is as inspiring as her achievements in the industry. She is a mother of two children Arnav and Arhaan, whom she successfully guided to gain admission to Ivy League and premier universities in the UK and USA.

Neetu is propelled forward in everyday life by a mixed bag of emotions. She expresses gratitude for life's many lessons that have shaped her into the person she is. She is inspired by her father and husband. "Both were self-made individuals, and I witnessed their unwavering determination in the face of numerous adversities. Their perseverance helped me build my values and self-belief, preparing me for this life. My organisation's values – simplicity, integrity, respect – and its corporate DNA of passion, innovation, and action are a tribute to the values I learned from them."

What, we ask, is her advice to women? "Give self-love the importance it deserves, and work towards creating the life you desire for yourself and your loved ones. Hard times introduce you to your true self and lead you to a path of either immense gratification or regret. If you are in a position of power, have the big heart and vision to help people around you and elevate them on your journey." ➔

ARUNIMA SINHA

FIRST FEMALE AMPUTEE TO SUMMIT MOUNT EVEREST



Imagine being flung on the railway tracks, being able to feel the vibrations of the 49 trains that pass you, but not being able to move away. Arunima Sinha was a national-level volleyball player when two robbers threw her off a running train. With one leg mutilated and the other severely fractured, she could not move, despite knowing that rats were gnawing at her wounded limbs. Help came seven hours later, and she bravely agreed to a leg amputation without anaesthesia since the local district hospital she was being treated at didn't have any. She was later moved to larger, better equipped hospitals, and it was during

the last part of her recovery that she resolved to take up mountain climbing, with Mt Everest as her goal. She had to prove to the naysayers and the world that life was still worth living and that there were no limits to what she could achieve.

It was not an easy task, she revealed at a forum talk; apart from the strenuous training, there was also the need to raise sponsorships. "Everyone saw only the physical – one prosthetic leg, the other with a rod, and three spinal fractures," she mentioned. "No one saw my will power and my determination."

Arunima's family – always her strength – suggested

"AT 8,848 METRES ABOVE SEA LEVEL, WHEN I ASKED MY SHERPA TO CLICK A PICTURE AND A VIDEO OF ME AT THE PEAK, HE LOST HIS COOL!"

she meet Bachendri Pal, the first Indian woman to have scaled the highest peak in the world. "When Bachendri ma'am saw my resolve, she said that, in my own mind

I had already reached the top of the peak, now I had to do it to show the world." And so began Arunima's training and activity to raise funds. She had to fight at every step; when her Sherpa met her for the first time, he, too, suggested she give up!

Finally, with rigorous training and practice, she was fit to climb. A strong believer in the body responding to what the mind thinks, Arunima constantly affirmed to herself that she would climb and come back alive. Every step was a win, and she didn't let the hurdles on the way deter her. And the hurdles were many and varied – her prosthetic leg slipping on the snow in phase four, her passage between the bodies of those who had had to give up their pursuit of summiting the peak, and her oxygen depleting rapidly just short of the final stretch. "At 8,848 metres above sea level, when I asked my Sherpa to click a picture and a video of me at the peak, he lost his cool! I did not have much oxygen left, but I wanted this video to reach the youth of the country if I did not make it back alive." Her aim: that everyone should understand that it is your attitude that matters. "I am a woman, handicapped, and from the middle class," she summed up. "If I can do it, so can anyone else. The handicap is only in the body, not in the mind and heart."

The Padma Shri awardee has also scaled the highest peaks in other continents, including Mount Kilimanjaro (Africa), Mount Elbrus (Europe), Mount Kosciuszko (Australia), Aconcagua (South America), Denali (North America) and the Vinson Massif (Antarctica). She is working towards setting up a sports academy for the differently-abled and the Prosthetic Limb Centre Society in Unnao (Uttar Pradesh) to create opportunities for others.

DR MANJULA POOJA SHROFF

THIS EDUPRENEUR FOUGHT SOCIETAL NORMS TO FORGE HER OWN PATH AND IMPACT NUMEROUS LIVES



Born into the erstwhile royal family of Odisha, Dr Manjula Pooja Shroff, now the MD & CEO - Kalorex Group, would often question the norms society imposed on her. While she was well educated, she was dissuaded from pursuing higher studies – rather, she was expected to follow tradition, get married, and start a family. This helped her realise that she had to take responsibility for her own actions and forge her own path in life.

One of the biggest challenges she faced was the pressure to get married. “The pressure to marry at a young age was a major challenge in my journey,” she explains. “I have always valued my

independence and personal growth, and I wanted to ensure that I stayed true to my own path. Balancing these aspirations with the traditional expectations placed on me required determination and resilience.”

“IT IS CRITICAL FOR WOMEN TO RECOGNISE THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-CARE, NAMELY THE CONCEPT OF ‘ME TIME’”

Determined to make a difference in society, Dr Manjula realised very early that only education could bring about positive change. She resolved to kindle the flame of education for as many children as possible, and thus became an ‘edupreneur’ – an entrepreneur in the field of education. This passion led to the development of MAYA, her AI clone and avatar, which embodies her vision for education and personal development. Through MAYA, she has been able to extend her commitment to quality education beyond traditional boundaries, standing up for her vision of educational advancement.

“‘Content’ is one word that comes to mind when I think of what I have been able to achieve,” Dr Manjula reveals. “To be able to make a difference not only to the students who were the initial target group but also to work on the quality of life for my staff and the parent community, through my Conscious Living curriculum on Shroffism.com, has been very satisfying indeed. I’m also proud of what we, as a group, have managed to achieve over a span of three decades. Seeing my dreams turn into reality is something that I can only be grateful about.”

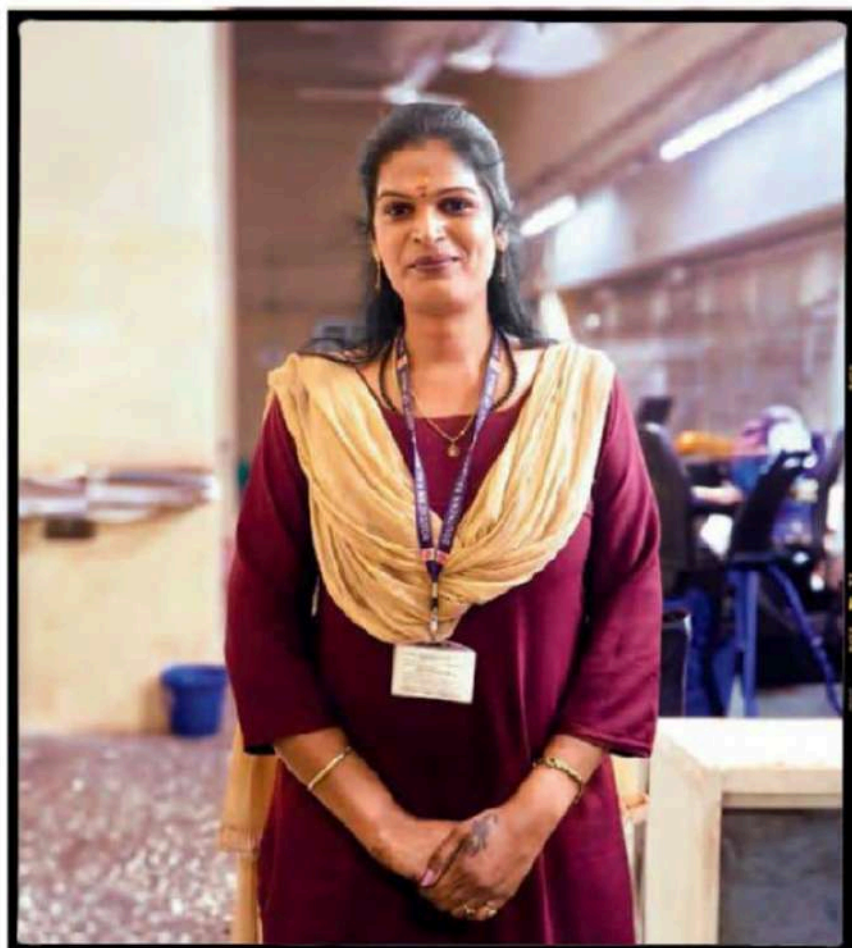
The huge impact her book *Baby Steps To Big Dreams* has had also pleases her. “For me, it was all about bridging communication gaps between parents and children of all age groups in today’s AI world.”

When it comes to drawing inspiration, Dr Manjula looks to her late grandmother, who was a strong and resolute woman with a very liberal attitude.

Sharing advice for fellow women aspirants to greatness, she says, “It is critical for women to recognise the importance of self-care, namely the concept of ‘me time’. In the midst of daily life, women – including professionals, caregivers, wives, moms, and more – frequently find themselves juggling many roles. Amid these responsibilities, it is easy to lose sight of one’s own worth and significance. Women must reconnect with themselves and develop a deeper sense of their intrinsic worth beyond what society expects of them as stereotyped behaviour.” >

SINDHU GANAPATHY

FIRST TRANSWOMAN TRAVELLING TICKET EXAMINER WITH SOUTHERN RAILWAY



ur world is made wonderful by its diversity – in flora, fauna and even humanity – yet there are still strides to be made when it comes to inclusivity. In February this year, in a long overdue move, Southern Railway proudly announced the appointment of 37-year-old Sindhu Ganapathy as its first transwoman Travelling Ticket Examiner (TTE).

Sindhu's journey from the town of Nagercoil in Tamil Nadu to this milestone has been dotted with many ups and downs. She joined the railways in 2003 in Ernakulam in the Trivandrum division of Kerala – but as a male employee G Sindhan. Her feminine behaviour threw up challenges because society was not ready to

SINDHU'S JOURNEY FROM THE TOWN OF NAGERCOIL IN TAMIL NADU TO THIS MILESTONE HAS BEEN DOTTED WITH MANY UPS AND DOWNS

accept her evolving gender identity. Transferred to Dindigul in the Madurai division in 2009, she was buoyed by support within the railway community but forced by external pressures to take a break in 2010. Seeking peace of

mind, she retreated into the embrace of the transgender community, but, after 18 months, recognising that she could be a flagbearer for the community out in the world, she bravely sought to return to the railways. There was some hesitation because her gender transformation was now complete, but she enjoyed the support of the leaders of the Southern Railway Mazdoor Union. They insisted that the railway doctors carry out a medical examination, the results of which confirmed that she could now be absorbed as a woman employee. Her gender identity was recognised by the railway administration, and Sindhu was absorbed back into service. Becoming a TTE had been a dream since childhood, and Sindhu underwent training and cleared the exam to be eligible for the position. She also mans the lobby at Dindigul station.

Her reinstatement sends a powerful message of inclusivity and acceptance, and Sindhu is fully cognisant of how this position is a milestone not just for herself, but for the transgender community as a whole. "Transgenders still need to struggle a lot to find better opportunities; reservation for us in state and central government jobs would erase the bad image (we suffer) in society and give (us) respectable positions," she said in an interview. She consciously chose a position that would bring her in contact with a large number of travellers, because she knows that it would help put the spotlight on the transgender community and raise awareness about it. "I am overwhelmed by the acceptance of my physical changes by the majority of the public," she shares. "This shows that the public perception about transgenders has undergone tremendous change in the last seven to eight years."

DR ANKITA SINGH

THIS CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER MADE TOUGH CALLS AT THE RISK OF HER JOB



Like most well-meaning Indian parents, Dr Ankita Singh's parents, too, wanted to ensure a safe future for her. A degree in engineering, they thought, would be the best way to secure it. Despite enrolling in an engineering programme upon her parents' insistence, Ankita knew that her interests lay elsewhere – in management studies. So, she dropped out to pursue a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and stayed resolute in her decision to complete her education, even if it meant going against her parents' wishes – a decision, she says, that changed the course of her life.

Currently the CPO and a member of the Board of Directors at CIGNEX and Relevance Lab, and Founder – HR Association of India, Ankita learned that

a corporate job requires her to be a multi-hyphenate. "My background was primarily in HR, so managing IT, business administration, quality engineering and travel presented a steep learning curve," she shares. Proving her capabilities in diverse roles took longer than she expected. She was also responsible for driving organisational transformations that involved making cultural shifts, overcoming resistance to change, and fostering a mindset of continuous improvement. Luckily for Ankita, she was surrounded by people who became her guiding system. "The support from mentors, team members, and family has been instrumental in balancing my career with my personal life," she avers.

For Ankita, 'standing up for oneself' is not any one moment but an ongoing journey. "Standing up is not always about making major decisions. I view it as an everyday practice aligned with ethics and purpose," she says. From sharing her opinion in the boardroom to making difficult business decisions, there have been several instances in her professional life where she

"I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT COMPROMISING ON CORE PRINCIPLES TO ACHIEVE NUMBERS IS UNACCEPTABLE"

has held her own. There's one in particular, though, that she remembers very fondly: "For the sake of business continuity, I was expected to overlook the unacceptable behaviour of one of our delivery heads," she recalls. "At the risk of losing my job, I made it clear that I would not condone such behaviour. I firmly believe that compromising on core principles to achieve numbers is unacceptable. Ultimately, the individual was let go, reinforcing my belief that standing up for what is right should be a consistent and integral part of one's professional life."

Ankita's success is also rooted in gratitude for the opportunities that have come her way and the people who have supported her on her journey. This has also kindled a feeling of responsibility to give back to society, to mentor emerging leaders, and to continue driving positive change in the industry. She also finds inspiration in the stories of people she meets. "Their remarkable journeys and achievements continually motivate me and provide valuable lessons that push me to strive for greater heights in my own life," she reveals. She also looks to her mother for motivation, citing her values of resilience, compassion, and the importance of education, which have come handy in Ankita's life.

Ankita wants to share her wisdom with women who are giving their all to make it big in their lives. "Remember that each day brings new opportunities and possibilities," she says. "Identify your strengths and find where you fit best. Understand that not every environment will be a perfect match, and that's perfectly okay." For Ankita, what defines success is not hidden in the challenges we face but in how we deal with them. "My mantra is, 'I am what I am, and I will become what I want to be.'" She wants her fellow women to believe in this, too. ➤

SARIKA AK

WOMAN WITH CEREBRAL PALSY WHO ACED THE UPSC EXAM



The civil services examinations for the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) are considered one of the most challenging entrance exams in India. This year, Sarika AK, a 23-year-old from Kozhikode, Kerala, took the challenge head on and triumphed, her success made sweeter by the fact that she lives with cerebral palsy. With a rank of 922, she is also the first person in the state with this condition to achieve such a feat.

A congenital disorder caused by damage to the developing brain, cerebral palsy affects movement, muscle tone or posture, and symptoms – including floppy and rigid limbs, involuntary movements or exaggerated reflexes – can vary from very mild to serious. Sarika's right hand has minimal mobility,

“BEING A DIFFERENTLY-ABLED PERSON HAS ITS OWN CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS. I THINK THE CIVIL SERVICES OFFER FAVOURABLE CONDITIONS AND I BELIEVE I CAN EXCEL IN THEM”

and only three fingers work on her left hand. She uses the remaining two fingers to move her motor-operated wheelchair. These limitations might have deterred most individuals, but Sarika is

made of sterner stuff. “After my graduation, I knew I wanted to achieve something more,” she said in an interview of her decision to sit for the UPSC exam. “Being a differently-abled person has its own challenges and physical limitations. I think the civil services offer favourable conditions and I believe I can excel in them.”

Preparation for the exam was not easy. Challenges included difficulties with accessing exam centres, physical discomfort during the interview phase, having to work with a scribe because she would not have been able to write fast enough herself, and not clearing her first attempt. Through it all, Sarika was supported by her family, especially her father who flew down from Qatar to be by her side during the interviews. “My family is my backbone, they are my pillar of strength,” Sarika revealed. And yet, even as she acknowledges that her family and her family home make up her comfort zone, she has taken the conscious decision to move out of that zone and make her own way in the world with the civil services as her path and career.

Sarika hopes to be absorbed into the IAS stream of the civil services. She wants to work for the betterment of differently-abled individuals and the marginalised in society. “I want to bring them into the mainstream,” she shared. Her achievement proves to the world that being differently abled is but a small hindrance when one's vision for the future is clear.



DR SHRUTI SHARMA

PASSIONATE ADVOCATE FOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING



In the world of education, Dr Shruti Sharma is a standout name. Renowned for her academic prowess and visionary leadership, she proudly serves as the CEO of the Brindavan Group of Institutions (BGI) in Bengaluru. Her relentless pursuit of excellence drives her forward: "It's a role that encompasses not just managing an educational establishment but also shaping the future of the students and guiding a dedicated team of educators and administrators," she shares.

Dr BR Shetty, the esteemed Indian businessman, is Dr Shruti's

**"TRUST YOUR
JUDGEMENT AND
INTUITION; THEY
ARE POWERFUL
TOOLS IN
OVERCOMING
CHALLENGES"**

greatest inspiration. His remarkable journey from humble beginnings to becoming a distinguished entrepreneur and philanthropist has provided her with invaluable lessons in leadership, perseverance, and social responsibility. "At BGI, we encounter various challenges such as improving admissions and enhancing infrastructure. Dr Shetty's example motivates me to keep a clear vision for the institution's future and persistently pursue it, regardless of the obstacles," she explains. During the challenges of COVID-19, when admissions at the institution were

declining, Dr Shruti seized the opportunity to drive improvement. She implemented strategies such as showcasing BGI's infrastructure, academic achievements, and faculty testimonials directly to households within a 10-km radius. This proactive approach led to a substantial increase in admissions across all BGI constituent colleges.

Taking on the role of not just a leader but also a custodian of the institute's values and traditions, Dr Shruti is very clear about the vision and mission for BGI's future. "Ensuring clear communication and transparency with all stakeholders, upholding strong work ethics, and fostering a culture of open dialogue and active listening are essential for building trust and making informed decisions," she explains. "Recruiting staff who align with our values and creating a supportive, positive culture go a long way in navigating challenges effectively." From regular and periodic evaluations of faculty and staff to SWOT analysis and coming up with target-based strategies, Dr Shruti is all about making a tangible impact.

"First and foremost, believe in your capabilities," Dr Shruti says, when asked what her advice to women in difficult positions would be. "Confidence is crucial when facing adversity. Recognise your strengths and achievements, and remind yourself of these when doubts arise. Self-belief acts as a foundation, giving you the courage to take actions and stand firm in your decisions. Trust your judgement and intuition; they are powerful tools in overcoming challenges. Surround yourself with people who believe in you and your vision." >



KIRAN KAMDAR

PARKINSON'S WARRIOR WHO FEEDS A HUNDRED HOSPITAL PATIENTS AND UNDERPRIVILEGED INDIVIDUALS EVERY DAY



Kiran Kamdar has battled Parkinson's disease for seven years now, and the condition has its typical cruel grip on her body. Yet, for over three years, the 62-year-old has looked beyond her physical constraints to reach out to others in the most practical way. Every day, she selflessly makes and provides free *khichdi* to a hundred patients and their families at the DM Petit Government Hospital in Palghar, Maharashtra.

She first felt her calling in 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic, when she realised the overwhelming number of patients in need. Every morning since, she has

woken at 5 AM to prepare *khichdi* – known for its nutritional value – to ensure that these patients, often far from home, feel the warm hug of being fed and cared for.

“ALTHOUGH MY DISABILITY IS MY BIGGEST CHALLENGE, I CONTINUE TO PUSH MYSELF AND PURSUE WHAT I LOVE”

It is not an easy task for Kiran. “I struggle with having no control over my body, but I like the work I've been doing,” she shares. “Although my disability is my biggest challenge, I continue to push myself and pursue what I love. Every single day, I make it a point to prepare 20 to 22 kilos of free vegetable *khichdi* to feed nearly a hundred patients, including children, pregnant women, those who have undergone surgery, the impoverished, abandoned individuals, and the underprivileged.” Her goal is to provide nourishment to as many people as possible. “My greatest joy comes when

doctors and hospital staff inform me that patients are recovering quickly because they are able to eat nutritious, homemade food, enabling them to take their medicines on time,” she smiles. And that is not all this angel on earth does for society – besides caring for her own son who has cerebral palsy, she dedicates her spare moments to teaching underprivileged children.

Kiran has a message for anyone who feels the brunt of life's challenges: “Don't let your disability hold you back. Challenge it! With the right attitude, nothing can stop you.”

VIRALI MODI

THIS DISABILITY RIGHTS
ACTIVIST INSPIRES
WITH HER VIBRANT SPIRIT



When Virali Modi was a teenager living in the USA, she came to India for a month-long visit. When she returned home, she developed major complications after a malaria infection, was in a coma for 23 days, and declared brain dead. Against all odds, she regained consciousness, but found herself paralysed from the neck down.

This challenging turn of events acted as a catalyst, taking the inspiring young woman on a tumultuous journey – from learning to accept herself, working to

survive and thrive, to going on to become India's first wheelchair-using model.

Virali now works to build others up. She won the Miss Wheelchair India contest in 2014, and since then, she has leveraged her influence on social media to help people with disabilities grow their self confidence and self-esteem by her own example. She is an active voice championing for a more inclusive world, spearheading campaigns to make India's train systems, public spaces and restaurants more accessible.



VIRALI LEVERAGES
HER SOCIAL MEDIA
TO HELP PEOPLE
WITH DISABILITIES
GROW THEIR SELF
CONFIDENCE

Notably, India now has nine accessible railway stations and the number is sure to slowly increase. Virali continues to work tirelessly on more initiatives to ease the lives of those with disabilities, even as her own indefatigable spirit lights the way.



PHOTOGRAPH: INSTAGRAM

JYOTI RATRE

THIS 55-YEAR-OLD SUMMITTED
MOUNT EVEREST THIS YEAR,
SHATTERING RECORDS



During the COVID-19, Jyoti Ratre left the four walls of self-isolation to climb the Deo Tibba mountain in Himachal Pradesh. It marked the beginning of her passion for mountain climbing. Since then, the Bhopal-based entrepreneur has conquered Island Peak (Nepal), Mount Elbrus in the Caucasus Mountains, Kilimanjaro (Tanzania), Mount Aconcagua (Argentina), and Mount Kosciuszko in Australia, before taking on Mount Everest this

year – at the age of 55!

This was her second attempt – her first, in 2023, was thwarted by severe weather conditions. Jyoti faced obstacles on her second attempt as well, but was ably supported by a 15-member team led by Bolivian climber David Hugo Ayaviri Quispe, which helped her make her victorious ascent. Jyoti touched 8,848.86 metres of Mount Everest, marking a truly remarkable milestone in her mountaineering journey.

Her triumph betters the record that Sangeeta Bahl set in May 2018 at the age of 53. Jyoti has well earned the honour of being India's oldest woman to climb Mount Everest. >

JYOTI FACED
OBSTACLES ON HER
SECOND ATTEMPT AT
MT EVEREST AS WELL

PANA DEVI GODARA

92-YEAR-OLD CHAMPION ATHLETE



he could give most people half her age a run for their money. At 92, Pana Devi is winning sporting laurels and inspiring women to follow their dreams at any stage in their lives. In February this year, at the 44th National Master Athletics Championship 2024 in Pune, she clinched gold not once but thrice – in the 100-metre

AT 92, PANA DEVI IS WINNING SPORTING LAURELS AND INSPIRING WOMEN TO FOLLOW THEIR DREAMS

race, discus throw and shot put events.

Pana Devi hails from the village of Akhisar in Rajasthan, and her journey to finding herself is inspirational. Watching children training at the local stadium prompted her to take up running herself and, encouraged by her grandson Jaikishan, she was soon burning up the tracks. Not one to be content with just that, she soon started taking part in competitions for shot put and discus throw as well. Her own determination and her family's support and encouragement took her from district- to state-level competitions, and, ever victorious, she finally made her mark at the national level. Her sights are now set on international events – including the World Masters Athletics Champions in Sweden this month.

As part of her disciplined approach to training, she devotes two hours every day to rigorous practice, and eats a healthy diet. Pana Devi effortlessly proves that age is just a number – not a deterrent to pursuing one's passions.

PHOTOGRAPH: INSTAGRAM

G NIRMALA

RESCUED BEFORE A CHILD MARRIAGE, SHE TOPPED THE INTERMEDIATE EXAM IN ANDHRA PRADESH



Nirmala grew up with three older sisters in Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh. Hailing from an economically-disadvantaged background, all the parents wanted was to marry the daughters off. Once her three sisters were married, the weight of familial expectations fell on Nirmala's shoulders. She refused to buckle under the pressure and sought help from local legislator Y Saiprasad Reddy at a community outreach programme in 2023, who, in turn, informed the district



collector, G Srujana, of her ordeal. Moved by her predicament, the collector stepped in and rescued Nirmala from the spectre of child marriage.

Through all of this, the primary goal in Nirmala's mind was to become an IPS officer. She still holds that aspiration dear, while forging ahead on that path. And she has already proved her mettle. She topped the First Year Intermediate Exam in Andhra Pradesh state with an exceptional score of 421 out of 440. The Ministry of Education celebrated her remarkable achievement with a heartfelt congratulatory message, shared on X. Now, there is no looking back! Nirmala's achievement is proof that one can surmount any obstacle on the path to success.

PHOTOGRAPH: X

ONE VOICE, MANY ECHOES

*"Each time a woman stands up for herself,
without knowing it possibly, without
claiming it, she stands up for all women"*

— Maya Angelou



FORGET THE 'OPPOSITES ATTRACT' CLICHÉ AND FIND SOMEONE LIKE YOU!

After all, **Sharon D'Silva** asks, isn't the ultimate goal to find someone who truly 'gets' you?

We live in a world where the 'opposites attract' mantra has long dominated our understanding of love. Take a quick look at pop culture; you're going to be nodding in agreement. It's like a rom-com cliché come to life: the mysterious loner drawing the attention of the social butterfly; the bad boy that mothers are always warning you about catching feelings for the overachiever aiming for Harvard; or the shy, quiet bookworm doodling hearts as she tutors the troublemaker who's always in detention.

But here's a radical thought: why not flip the script and find someone just like you? Yes, you read that right! Before you dismiss the idea entirely, let me explain: Finding someone like you doesn't mean looking for your clone or carbon copy. It's about seeking someone who looks at life the way you do.

Sure, opposites attract – there's no doubt about it – but here's the catch: that initial attraction, while thrilling, often comes with a Pandora's box of differences that, with time, can throw you for a loop and leave you feeling more queasy than exhilarated. Imagine this: you're a homebody who loves nothing more than curling up with a good book and a cup of tea, while your partner is always seeking the next big adventure.



FINDING
SOMEONE
LIKE YOU
DOESN'T
MEAN
LOOKING
FOR YOUR
CLONE OR
CARBON
COPY

Or perhaps you're someone who fiercely guards her eight-hour sleep schedule, while your partner likes partying into the wee hours. Why spend time trying to bridge the gap between 'early bird' and 'night owl' when you could just cosy up with someone who enjoys lazy Sundays and late-morning lie-ins just as much as you do?

In my 26 years on this wild ride called life, I've learned one thing: spending energy

dissecting the unfairness of love, timing, and everything else in between is just plain silly. Do I think we'd all benefit if we just invested in a relationship with someone on the same wavelength instead? Absolutely!

Even Bollywood agrees! Remember *Wake Up Sid* (2009), in which Aisha's independent spirit resonates perfectly with Sid's journey of self-discovery, igniting >

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IN THE LABYRINTH OF LOVE,
OPPOSITES MIGHT ATTRACT, BUT IT'S
THE SIMILARITIES THAT STEER US
TOWARD SMOOTHER SEAS

a bond built on shared dreams and aspirations set against the backdrop of Mumbai? Or *Band Baaja Baaraat* (2010), in which both Bittoo and Shruti are entrepreneurial go-getters who ultimately realise their mutual love for each other? And then there's *Jaane Tu... Ya Jaane Na* (2008), a quintessential coming-of-age tale where Jai and Aditi, despite their contrasting personalities, prioritise honesty and authenticity above all else.

Variety is the spice of life, it certainly adds flavour, but it's the underlying harmony that keeps the melody of love playing on. Why embark on a journey with someone deeply devout when you identify as agnostic? Or perhaps you revel in celebrating life's everyday moments, while your partner fixates on monumental milestones. There are quite a few differences that come with dating somebody who is nothing like you, and they can only be put up with for so long.

This isn't just the hopeful

romantic in me, raised on a diet of swoon-worthy fairytale endings, speaking. In any relationship, disagreements and compromises are par for the course. Yet, when you're with someone who's truly in sync with you, these challenges usually transform into playful banter rather than full-blown confrontations. Someone who truly gets you – your questionably funny memes, your all-over-the-place taste in music, your ability to trip over invisible objects, your love for end-of-season sales, and your need to end every meal with the same chocolate chip ice cream – is worth looking for.

If you ask me, dear reader, in the labyrinth of love, opposites might attract, but it's the similarities that steer us toward smoother seas. Ditching the search for the yin to your yang might be just what you need. Who knows, you might just stumble upon your perfect match – someone who's not just your partner in crime but your partner in everything! **F**



SNEHA AGARWAL:

CARVING A NICHE IN THE WORLD OF HOSPITALITY

Sneha Agarwal, the dynamic Director of the Hillock Group of Hotels, epitomizes passion and excellence in the hospitality industry. Guided by her philosophy, "To give real service, you must add something which cannot be bought or measured with money, and that is sincerity and integrity," Sneha's journey is a testament to dedication and vision.

With a strong academic background in Economics

and Business Administration, Sneha entered the family business at the age of 20. Her hands-on approach to learning every aspect of hotel operations at Hillock, Mount Abu—from purchase and kitchen management to housekeeping—has given her a comprehensive understanding of the industry. Today, the Hillock Group boasts hotels in Rajasthan and Ahmedabad, showcasing her leadership and innovative vision.

The development of

Hillock Ahmedabad stands as a testament to Sneha's meticulous attention to detail and her love for European architecture. Sneha says my Husband Panil Agarwal is a visionary he has the gift to foresee business and opportunities much before any of us. The Hillock Ahmedabad and many other ventures of the past and future are his brainchild. Together they make active decisions on new expansions, ensuring the continuous growth of their enterprise. The hotel features Parisian-inspired interiors, a majestic façade, extensive use of marble, mosaic, rich linens, and wooden textures, creating an ambiance of elegance and sophistication. "The property has been planned to the extent that the chandelier's tip matches the center of the carpet," she proudly shares.

Sneha's commitment to quality extends to the culinary offerings at Hillock. She emphasizes the importance of fresh ingredients, texture, and presentation, ensuring that the dining experience is always top-notch. Under her leadership, Hillock Ahmedabad has become a preferred venue for weddings and social events, celebrated for its exceptional

banquet facilities and delectable cuisine.

Looking ahead, Sneha envisions expanding the Hillock brand through franchising. She believes that their model of offering great quality at reasonable prices can be successfully replicated in different regions. "We have mastered the art of serving great food and great taste at very reasonable rates," she says, highlighting the rare combination of affordability and quality in the hospitality industry.

Beyond her professional achievements, Sneha balances her roles as a mother, entrepreneur, and host with grace. She is confident about the hospitality industry's growth in India, noting the government's supportive policies and the country's growing appeal for foreign investments. Driven by Sneha's passionate leadership, the Hillock Group of Hotels is poised to continue to reach new heights, setting benchmarks in the industry.

Sneha Agarwal's story is not just one of professional success but also of inspiring perseverance and commitment. Her ability to blend passion with practicality, vision with execution, makes her a standout leader in the hospitality industry. With her unwavering dedication and innovative spirit, Sneha continues to carve a niche, leaving an indelible mark on the world of hospitality. As she wisely says, "Success is not just about reaching the top, but about how many people you bring along with you on the journey."



@: sneha_vithalaniagarwal

AFTER THE LOVE HAS GONE

If you're in a relationship that makes you unhappy, ask yourself if it's time to leave. By **Ravina M Sachdev**

Love can be life altering, but not necessarily in the best way. Relationships aren't always about sweet conversations, beautiful surprises and grand gestures. Sometimes, they can be hurtful and toxic as well. It's a truth we often choose to ignore because we find ourselves holding on to the love we once shared with our partner. Or we might justify their behaviour because we're too scared to be alone.

If you're feeling trapped in your relationship, take the time to look for these signs of a toxic relationship...



THE STRESS IS THROUGH THE ROOF

Fights and arguments are part and parcel of most healthy relationships, but feeling stressed 24/7 is not. Being constantly worried about how your partner will react and having to tread carefully in a relationship can have negative impacts on your mental health. "If you're constantly feeling at edge while you are with your partner, it's time to rethink your relationship," warns **Aanchal Gupta**, Mumbai-based life coach and author. "Feeling stressed all the time can lead to panic attacks and even depression."



YOUR PARTNER IS UNAPPROACHABLE

Your partner is the one person with whom you should be able to discuss anything and everything, so, if you try to discuss a problem with your partner only for them to shut you down or blame you for bringing up the topic, there are serious issues at play. "You might be in a toxic relationship if you're wary of sharing something with your partner for fear that it might provoke them," cautions **Preetjyot Kaur**, a life coach from Pune. "This can cause you to turn in to yourself and you might end up feeling (erroneously) that you're the >



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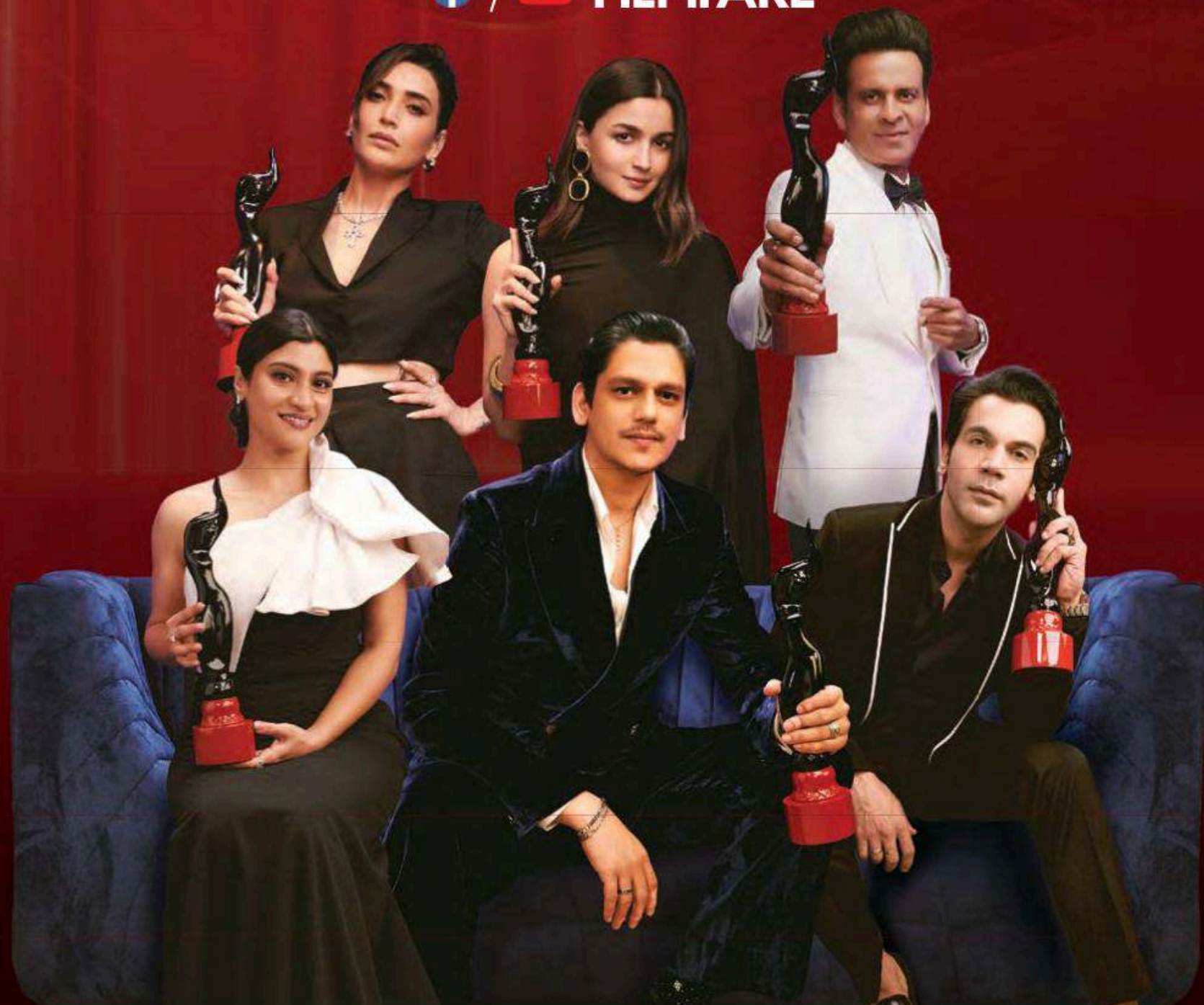
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problem in the relationship.” Keeping things bottled up for too long or not getting the apology that you deserve will only make things difficult for you down the road.



YOU CAN'T COMMUNICATE

If every discussion or argument culminates in a huge fight, even you will come to recognise that it's a sign of an unhealthy relationship. “When commonplace discussions start becoming hurtful arguments, it's a sign that you should not ignore,” Preetjyot points out. “If you and your partner continue to bring up past incidents, keep criticising each other, call each other names, threaten to break up or stonewall each other, you need to cut off the relationship immediately as things will only worsen with time.”



YOU'RE LIVING IN THE PAST

The past might have been incredible – perhaps your better half used to surprise you every day or make you feel special regularly – but, if the present seems to be an endless loop of you making one-sided efforts only to be rebuffed in return, it's time to face reality. “If you're constantly offering support, love, and other things without receiving anything, and if your own physical and emotional needs are being sacrificed for your partner's, you need to take a step back and rethink things,” Preetjyot asserts.

“A toxic relationship can change only if both partners are committed to overcoming the problem...”

—Aanchal



TAKE A BREAK

Often, it's impossible to think with a clear mind when you're around your partner in a toxic relationship, which is why Aanchal advises taking a break. “Putting some distance between the two of you might help you to clear your head and think clearly, and also to put yourself first,” she explains. “Go over the pros and cons and decide your next step.”



UNDERSTAND WHEN TO STAY OR LEAVE

“Yes, toxic relationships can change, but that comes with a very big ‘if,’” Aanchal says. “A toxic relationship can change if and only if both partners are equally committed to overcoming the problem with lots of open communication, honesty, self-reflection, and professional help, individually and together.” If it's just you putting in all the work with your partner ignoring all your attempts to talk to them, know that leaving would be a good choice.



REACH OUT TO PEOPLE

Whether it's your family, close friends, or a professional therapist, we strongly

“When commonplace discussions start becoming hurtful arguments, it's a sign that you should not ignore...”

—Preetjyot



suggest you reach out to them and address the issue instead of suffering silently. “It's safe to speak to your loved ones and ensure that they know about the entire situation – this will help you while dealing with the process of the break-up, as well as afterwards,” states Preetjyot, adding that you should seek professional help in order to truly heal from the relationship. In case you feel safety is a concern, try moving in with a family member or friend for some time. Also, only inform your coworkers and friends of your whereabouts until you're sure you'll be fine. **F**



Padmaja Reddy Conquering Rural Hearts with Micro Finance

Padmaja Reddy knows the magic that timely finance can do. A domain expert, she has seen how rural and small entrepreneurs miss out opportunities because they are up against the challenge of liquidity. She took over as the Promoter and Managing Director of Keertana Finserv in April 2022. Prior to that, she served as the Managing Director of Spandana Sphoorty Financial Limited, the second largest MFI in India. She shared her thoughts answering questions that were posed to her.



Padmaja Reddy
Promoter and Managing
Director of Keertana Finserv

What inspired you to start Keertana Finserv?

I established a Micro Finance Institution, Spandana in 1998. It became the second-largest Micro Finance Institution by 2009. We were to go public when the Andhra Pradesh (AP) Government implemented an ordinance, bringing microfinance activities in the state to a standstill. The company's net worth plummeted to a negative 1,400Cr and we went into Corporate Debt Restructuring (CDR). With unwavering determination, perseverance, and passion, we successfully emerged from the CDR process, increasing our Assets under Management eightfold and eventually listing it in 2019.

The Business faced another setback due to the impact of COVID-19. Micro Finance, as a monoline product, proved highly susceptible, experiencing crises every three to four years.

While proud to be one of the pioneers in this emerging industry, there remained a sense of dissatisfaction due to the inability to build a more sustainable and stable business. This fuelled the birth of Keertana Finserv. Here, there is a continuous focus on scaling the business, institutionalizing systems and policies, establishing layers of leadership, and optimizing technology adoption.



Tell us about the company and its products and services.

Keertana Finserv Private Limited is now a prominent Non-Banking Financial Institution (NBFI) in South India with an AUM of Rs. 1,800 Cr. It provides a diverse array of financial products such as Micro Enterprise Loans, Business Loans, Gold Loans, Loan Against Property and Housing Loans. Our distinctiveness lies in our dedicated focus on rural areas, particularly in interior and remote regions where financial services are sparse. Operating with a commitment to fairness and ethical conduct, Keertana ensures that its employees are not only skilled professionals but also trained to remain grounded, treating customers with utmost respect and dignity. This approach is pivotal in establishing strong and trustworthy relationships with our clientele.

What were the initial challenges you faced?

The initial challenges faced by Keertana revolved around the constant need for capital. Since we had just commenced operations in 2022, lacking a substantial vintage posed a unique challenge in gaining the attention of lenders. We navigated through this situation



by positioning ourselves as an exceptional case. It is a testament to our commitment and excellent financial performance, Keertana has successfully attracted numerous lenders and funding is no longer a hindrance.

Attracting and on boarding the right talent for employment, remains an ongoing challenge. We are proactively addressing this challenge by providing ample growth opportunities and fostering an employee-friendly environment, ensuring a holistic approach to talent acquisition and retention.

What are your future plans for Keertana Finserv?

With a diverse product range offering loans ranging from INR 20,000 to INR 20,00,000, Keertana strategically manages the advantages and limitations of each product in its portfolio. Our ambitious plan is to double the branches within the next two years and grow the Assets by five times. This is Keertana's commitment to expanding its market reach and making its services more accessible to a wider audience.

What is your leadership philosophy, and how do you ensure that it is reflected throughout your organization?

I am a firm believer in excellence, emphasizing that everything we undertake should be executed with exceptional quality. Ethics and high integrity are paramount values in my leadership approach. By embodying these principles and fostering a culture of excellence, I aim to create a work environment where leadership is synonymous with integrity and the relentless pursuit of excellence.

Spoken like a true leader, we say!



BETWEEN THE SHEETS

Let's talk about sex, baby. Let's talk about you, me and every little thing we want to explore in the *boudoir*. By **Sharon D'Silva**

Picture this: You're lost in the heat of the moment, when suddenly you realise a tiny adjustment could take you soaring to new heights of pleasure. Should you stay silent and resign yourself to unfulfilled fantasies, or should you bravely steer the ship toward pleasure island? Hint: the answer is definitely the latter.

Given the historical stigma around 'the deed', discussing your desires – even simply acknowledging what you

enjoy – can feel overwhelming. Many women find it easier to drop hints or skirt around the topic altogether. In today's world, where sex is the main character everywhere from

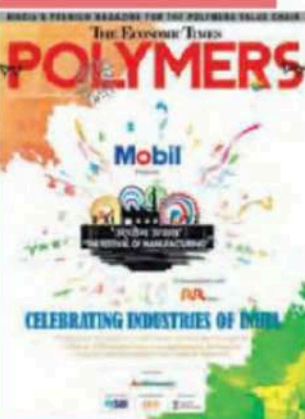
**THE BEST WAY
TO UNCOVER WHAT
TRULY EXCITES YOU
IS BY TUNING INTO YOUR
OWN BODY AND DESIRES**

billboards to entertainment, there's still an undercurrent of anxiety and shame surrounding open dialogue about pleasure. But trust us: it's a conversation worth having. After all, why settle for less when it comes to something so intimate?

In a service to women across the country, especially those yet to encounter that rare breed of psychic lover, we're listing a few tips on how you can initiate the big conversation and actually follow through. Get ready to take notes!

1 GET OUT OF YOUR SEXUAL SHELL

There's an entire world of turn-ons and turn-offs out there, and the best way to uncover what truly excites you is by tuning into your own body and desires. Start by listing your thoughts, interests, fantasies, and kinks, and give yourself the freedom to explore them in a safe and controlled environment. ➤



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Make learning the art of self-pleasure a priority – it will help you stay present and connected to your own experience.

→ **Ask yourself:** How do you like to be touched? Which parts of your body do you enjoy the most? What pace feels right for you? Let go of preconceived notions about what you ‘should’ enjoy and focus on discovering what you genuinely like.

2 GO FOR POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT ALL THE WAY

When your partner does something you like, make sure they know exactly how much you appreciate it. If you want to make a suggestion, start with the positives rather than dwelling on what isn’t quite right. For example, say, “I really love how you kiss my neck. Could you keep doing that?” instead of framing it as, “Why don’t you do this?” Think of yourself and your partner as a team, working towards attaining the same goal – achieving the best level of intimacy possible.

STRONG SEXUAL COMMUNICATION IS THE CORNERSTONE OF A HAPPIER AND HEALTHIER SEX LIFE

3 SHOW AND TELL

When it comes to communicating your desires, clarity is key. You know your body better than anyone else does. If articulating what you want feels challenging, demonstrate it instead, making sure to guide your partner as you reveal yourself to them. When they hit the right notes and bring you to the brink of ecstasy, express your love either through sounds of pleasure or simple statements such as “Yes, exactly like that!” or “A little slower please!”

4 TIME IT RIGHT

Often, the most daunting aspect of this conversation is getting started, so it’s crucial not to spring it on your partner. Instead, choose

a time when both of you are relaxed and have the energy to engage in a meaningful discussion. If your partner isn’t receptive initially, don’t just brush it off. Respect their feelings and revisit the topic later when they’re more open to meeting you halfway.

5 GIVE BACK

Once your partner has ensured you feel heard and seen, it’s important to reciprocate with equal enthusiasm. Check in with them about their desires and interests in the bedroom and make a genuine effort to fulfil them. A two-way conversation brings with it a mutual desire for exploration, making it a win-win situation for both of you. Remember, strong sexual communication is the cornerstone of a happier, healthier, and more satisfying sex life for both partners.

So, the next time you’re pondering a late-night conversation, keep these tips in mind before diving in. Once you release the pressure to get it absolutely perfect, you’ll likely find you have much more to share than you anticipated. You can thank us later! **E**

TOWARDS NEWER HEIGHTS

FROM MISS INDIA PARTICIPANT TO A MODEL AND A DYNAMIC ENTREPRENEUR, **TANYA MISHRA'S** JOURNEY IS ONE OF DETERMINATION AND PERSEVERANCE

Former IWAA Miss India finalist, Tanya Mishra's journey in the Indian entertainment industry is a testament to her unwavering determination and relentless hard work. Starting her career as a model in 2019, Tanya quickly made a name for herself in the fashion world. Tanya participated in the prestigious Miss India contest and stood 5th in finals. Her participation marked a significant milestone in her career, opening doors to numerous opportunities in the entertainment, advertising and modelling industry.

She soon became a sought-after model, gracing campaigns for Hindustan Petroleum, one of India's leading corporations. Her association with Hindustan Petroleum grew stronger, and she was eventually named their Brand Ambassador, a role that further solidified her presence in the industry.

Her talent and dedication have also been evident in the music industry, where she has featured in several music videos with popular artists like Jubin Nautiyal, Anand Raj Anand, Zaved Ali and Sahid Mallya including the hit song "Haar Gaya Dil." Her striking presence and natural talent propelled her into the spotlight, leading

her to Mumbai, the heart of India's entertainment and advertisement industry.

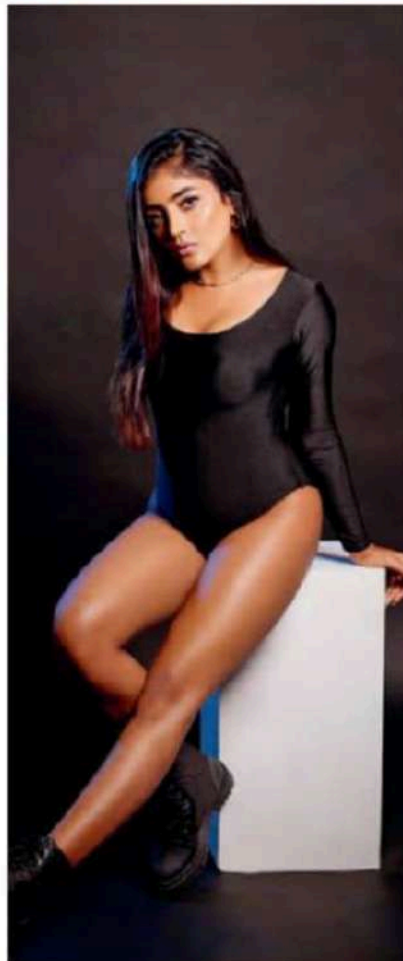
Tanya's ambition didn't stop at modelling.

In 2023, she made a successful transition to acting, debuting in the Bollywood movie "Ghaznavi." Her performance in the film was widely praised, showcasing her versatility and acting prowess. Building on this success, she went on to act in the series "Chidiya Udd," produced by Harman Baweja Productions. Currently, Tanya is on her mission to work with some of the renowned film production houses

both in Bollywood and Hollywood industry.

In pursuit to realise her creative dream to new heights, Tanya established her own production house Vidnet Media Production in 2023 aiming to launch and feature new talents in music industry. Her vision and leadership are driving the production house towards innovative projects which includes movie production and music albums that promise to captivate audiences.

Tanya Mishra's journey from a budding model to a recognized actress and a promising producer is inspiring. She has proven herself to be an achiever and an independent woman who has carved her niche in the competitive world of Indian entertainment through sheer hard work and determination. As she continues to break barriers and set new standards, there is no doubt that Tanya will scale even greater heights of success in the future.





Own Your **BLISS**

Ladies, it's time to put yourself at the top of your to-do list – literally!

In a world where multitasking and juggling responsibilities is the norm, it's easy to let self-care (and no, we're not talking about just face masks and bubble baths) slide to the bottom of the to-do list. In India, societal norms have long relegated pleasure to a whispered secret, confined within the walls of privacy rather than celebrated openly. However, in 2024, the tables have turned. The key to enriching your intimate life, whether solo or coupled, lies in embracing self-intimacy!

Dive into these empowering ways of enhancing your self-pleasure journey...

Know Your Body

Self-intimacy is like a VIP pass

to finding those sweet points that turn simple touches into pleasure. Plus, it's the ultimate way to relieve stress, explore boundaries, and indulge in those little moments of joy throughout your day.

Tap Into The Magic Of Touch

Your hands are your most personal tools of pleasure – be curious, be adventurous and, remember, it's all about understanding and appreciating how your body responds.

Seek Sensory Sensations

Silk scarves, soft feathers, or even a warm bath can heighten your senses and lead to a more intense and satisfying experience. Just imagine the possibilities!

Get Cosy With Your Tech Friends

Not all heroes wear capes – some buzz, some pulse, and some are just there to make your day (or night). All you need to do is find the one for you.

Escape Into Fantasy

Arousal starts in the mind, and a little inspiration – steamy literature, audio erotica or merely your most romantic daydream – can go a long way.

Make It Mindful

Why settle for a quick orgasm when you can spend hours savouring every sensation along the way? It's all about being fully present and engaged in the moment. **F**



Labour of *Love*

There's more to a fashion brand than the designer at its helm. From the *karigars* who embroider in the ateliers, the artisans who continue to weave heritage fabrics on the loom, and the factory workers who piece together clothes and accessories by hand, fashion's supply chain is complex and, very often, unfair to all but those at the top. However, not all is gloom and doom. We've talked to five designers who are empowering their workers with fair working conditions, remuneration, and, more importantly, respect.

By Ashwini Arun Kumar



Anita Dongre

CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER – HOUSE OF ANITA DONGRE

In 1995, designer Anita Dongre and her sister Meena Sehra started a womenswear label with just two sewing machines in their bedroom balcony. That label went on to become The House of Anita Dongre fashion conglomerate, a Mecca for modern Indian women who look to the brand for their wardrobe needs – from bridal wear to everyday clothing. Anita has been quick to establish herself as one of the most successful female designers in the country, and it's a position she doesn't take lightly. She has used it to empower women artisans from lower socio-economic groups via her association with SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association). "Nine years ago,

we travelled to the heart of Gujarat to meet the women of SEWA and returned having offered the commitment to give them work without displacing them, and to preserve their craft," shares Anita, whose shared passion for economic self-reliance propelled this collaboration. An association with the brand has helped these women achieve financial independence and given them an opportunity to showcase their *karigari* to the world via Anita Dongre creations that have both global appeal and a worldwide audience. Anita believes that this has resulted in an increased respect for the women in their households, better educational opportunities for their children, and an overall improvement

in the quality of life of their families. "As designers, we have a responsibility to modernise and integrate our crafts and ensure their continued existence," believes Anita, urging more designers to use their platform to empower artisans. With regard to her own association with SEWA, she is looking forward to sending more work their way. "We aim to reach more women artisans and to provide them with sustainable livelihoods so we can empower them to achieve economic independence," she explains. For her, the effects of helping women go beyond an individual. "The ripple effect of this positively impacts the entire community," says Anita. Her work with the artisan cluster in Gujarat is proof.



Vaishali Shadangule

FOUNDER – VAISHALI S

In the 20 years since Vaishali Shadangule founded her eponymous label, her goal has been to elevate India's indigenous weaves to a global stage and, with them, the weavers themselves. "The artisans need more recognition, better working conditions and a larger share of the value chain," asserts the designer for whom the welfare of her *karigars* is a significant aspect of her label's sustainable identity. "The artisans are a part of my research system, actively contributing to developing new blends and fabrics with me," Vaishali reveals. In the past,

she's shared how working closely with weaver clusters in remote villages from across the country has helped develop her now trademark gossamer luminous fabric, achieved by blending metallic yarn with pashmina, merino wool or silk threads. Involving them in creating at a fabric level has empowered them and "bettered their creativity and satisfaction," she adds. Vaishali's artisans-first approach to fashion has also given the younger generation in these weaving clusters, once willing to trade their family's occupation for anything that paid better, the incentive to carry forward their craft. She observes that, with many

countries across the world losing their craftspeople, India is one of the few that still has this living asset. "I feel lucky to be able to show India's strength at a time when global luxury means handiwork," she says. For Vaishali, the goal is simple – to keep exploring old weaving techniques, develop techniques to modernise them, and continue providing sufficient work to the craft clusters that she already works with. "It is more than just protecting these weaves," she avers. "It's about leveraging their strength to bring them to a global stage. To make them mainstream – like we did with Chanderi." >



Shivam Punjya

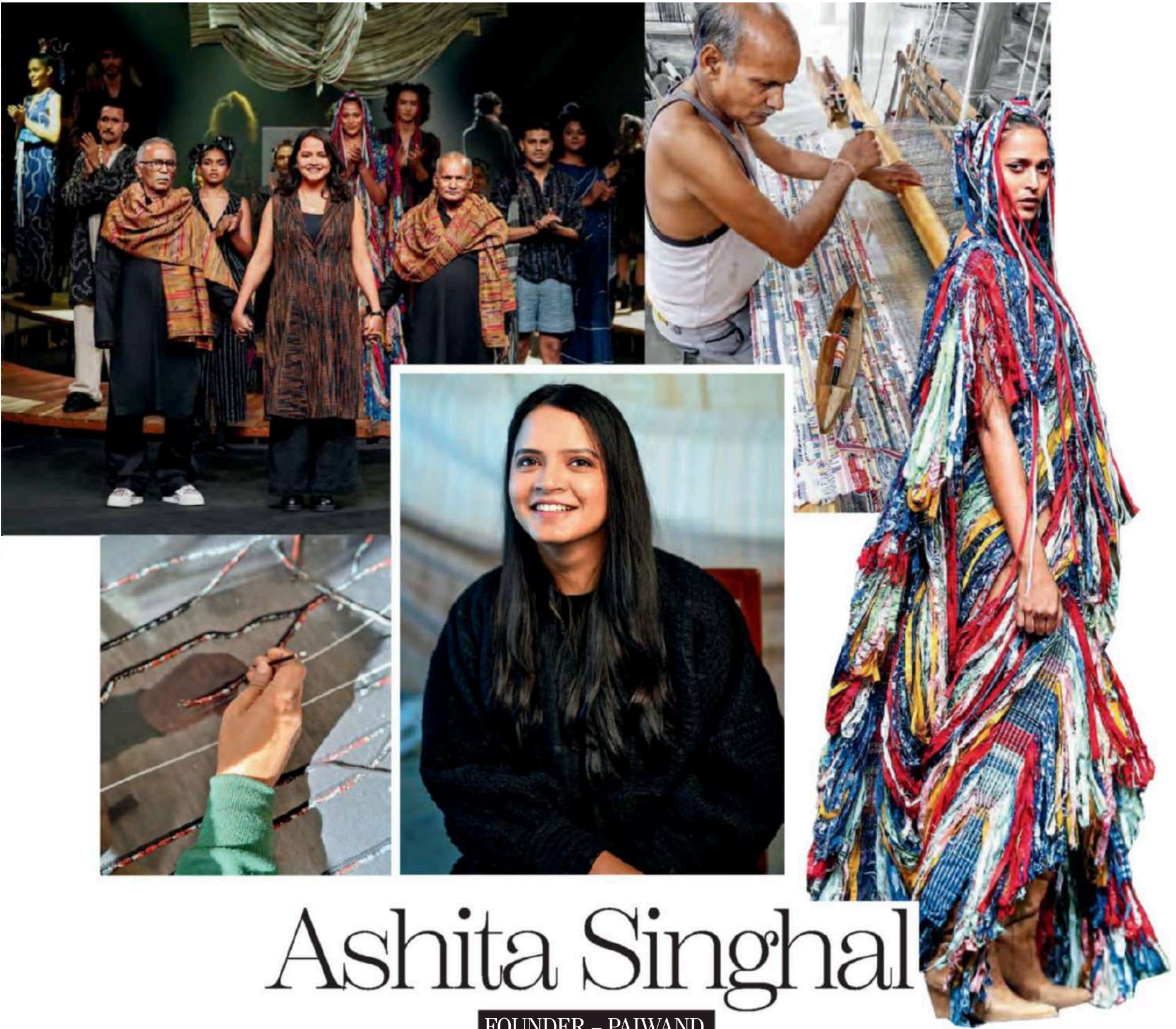
FOUNDER AND CREATIVE DIRECTOR – behno

With a brand called 'behno' – Hindi for 'sisters' – there was little Shivam Punjya could do to conceal the feminist intentions of his luxury handbags label. He knew, however, that it would take more than just ideals to bring about change to the level of the shop floor where the bags would be pieced together. "We did our research, held focus groups, and met with artisans to understand what they experienced in our industry," shares Shivam, who also holds a Masters degree in Global Health from Duke University in the US.

Their findings highlighted that, in a factory setting, work was traditionally assigned based on gender and not qualification – an issue that they addressed with a hyper focus. "We worked toward instating line leaders on factory floors who were often female artisans." Today, behno has partner factories across the country that either champion women-centric practices or are in the process of aligning themselves to the brand's manifesto The behno Standard – a compendium of principles that ensure fair wages, humane working conditions, and a high standard of workmanship. "I believe that change – including for women – only

happens when people are open to recognising that there is room for improvement and are committed to being better," says Shivam. According to him, "change is when people come together to address systems that must be bettered to eventually become a perfect factory." Currently, for Shivam, it's crucial to cut through the marketing white noise that fills the industry and bring total transparency to his supply chain so his customers can really see the work the artisans do. "It's unfortunate that there are not enough seats at the table for artisans or garment workers in our industry. At behno, we need to ensure we're hearing everyone."

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY SHIVAM PUNJYA



Ashita Singhal

FOUNDER – PAIWAND

For the customary bow taken by designers at the end of every runway show, Ashita Singhal, founder of the Delhi-based sustainable label Paiwand, brought along two of her many trusted partners – the weavers who make her clothes. As they stood on the podium and answered questions on the complicated weaving techniques using textile waste that go into making Paiwand's clothes, they brought the focus firmly on the label's two most important practices: its revivalist philosophy and giving artisans their due credit.

'Paiwand lagana' – a popular Hindi idiom that means 'patch up' – became the inspiration for Ashita's brand, and, incidentally, an idea to bridge the gap that exists between the fashion industry and its weaving community. "During my fashion education, I learned about the existence of a weaving cluster in Delhi, but, when I visited them, I saw that their looms were in shambles," Ashita recalls. "Many weavers had had to leave their family tradition and work other jobs such as driving an auto rickshaw, because weaving paid them as little as ₹50 a day." Ashita – also in the same city – felt she was in a position to help. "It became clear

to me that I could provide employment to the weaving community from the beginning of my label." Paiwand started in 2018 with just two weavers; today, that number has grown to 10. Additionally, they also frequently work with the larger weaving community to create Paiwand's edgy, completely upcycled pieces. "I'm often surprised at what my weavers can create with some encouragement and space to experiment; this association has helped me learn about the wonders of the loom," shares the designer, who wants weaving to be "a viable employment opportunity for generations to come." **F**

Grand Bal
Jardin Fleuri
DIOR
price on request



Star Studded

Watches have been steadily replacing hand jewellery and, now, they're also looking the part. Jewel-toned time pieces are a shining example of accessories worth investing in



Miss Victoria Emerald
Green Timepiece
**BACKES & STRAUSS
X GEMFIELDS**
price on request

Fria Women Mother
Of Pearl Square Dial
Analog Watch
TIMEX
₹9,495



Timeless Classic
Diamond Watch
PASCAL
₹16,500



Lady Féerie Or
Rose Watch
**VAN CLEEF &
ARPELS**
price on request



PRX Automatic
Stainless
Steel Watch
TISSOT
₹65,500



Brilliant Watch
JACOB & CO
price on request

Modern Marvels

A steady shift in the aesthetic of *minakari*, one of the most important Indian heritage craft techniques, is ensuring its longevity. As enamelling gets a more contemporary look, we're picking our favourites



1.
Kaleido Drop Earrings
ANEKA
price on request

2.
Believe Double Scapular
Necklace
MARIE LICHTENBERG
price on request



3.
Palma Clover
Earrings
AZGA
₹6,450

4.
Memory Pendant
MOI
price on request



6.
Ares Ring
MINA JAIPUR
₹2,700



5.
Ada Ring
MELISSA KAYE
price on request



8.
Juicy Mini
Love Locket
MISHO
₹6,695



7.
Glow Turquoise Chunky Cuff
ISHARYA
₹9,999

BOTTEGA VENETA



SHIVAN & NARRESH

Top
JACQUEMUS
₹17,400



Swimsuit
MARKS & SPENCER
₹3,499



BODYWISE

Outfits that enhance shape are empowering and exciting. Take pleasure in wearing clothes that celebrate the female form **F**



ALEXANDER
MCQUEEN



431-88

Pencil skirt
A FEW RAHUL MISHRA
₹22,900



Crystal mesh top
MANGO
₹7,490

Heels
THE ATTICO
price on request



FEMINA

BEAUTY

THE BEAUTY EDIT

Bright makeup picks, textured buns, and a touching anecdote from a makeup guru await you

BEAUTY feature

INDIE HEROES

It's time to add these Indian brands to your
beauty shelf. By Karen Alfonso



LA MIOR

If there's a makeup brand that's delivering on innovation, it would be La Mior. Its latest offering is the Glow-Burst encapsulated foundation that has pigment micro-droplets suspended in an ultra hydrating skincare base. Skinification of makeup, yes, please! Pick from the peptide-glaze lip tints, light-as-air concealers, and lipsticks.



GUSH BEAUTY

When it comes to packaging innovation, Gush is clearly leading the pack. It is India's very first stackable makeup brand – the stackable palette and lipstick pen are extremely travel-friendly and offer great bang for your buck.



DIAM BEAUTY

We love when makeup has skincare benefits – Diam Beauty's offerings are packed with aloe vera, peptides and hyaluronic acid. The Glass Tint Balm and All Over You Multi-Stick have gone viral on Instagram among the Indian beauty community, and we can see why.

EH MAAYA

A hair-care brand that celebrates your mane's real texture? Eh Maaya caters to straight, wavy, and curly hair textures with curated lines. It offers gentle, well-balanced formulations that help you have a great hair day – every day! ➤



SKINQ

Founded by celebrity dermatologist Dr Chytra Anand, SkinQ's offerings are made specifically for brown women. The brand's offerings go through intensive clinical trials, and tackle specific concerns as diverse as hyperpigmentation and acne to anti-ageing and hydration.



SOMMER BEAUTY

Chennai-based brand Sommer Beauty's key product line is its Huesicles – a range of multi-purpose tints made specifically for Indian women. The formulations have a whipped mousse texture and feel weightless on the skin. And the pigments can withstand humidity and sweat – much needed in our climate!



QI AYURVEDA

What happens when cutting-edge Swiss technology meets Ayurveda? It results in Qi Ayurveda, a hair-care brand that relies on distilled Ayurvedic oils with Swiss-certified actives to rejuvenate the hair and keep it healthy.

AKIND

Mira Kapoor's skincare line packs a punch with cleansers, moisturisers, sunscreen, and serums. The skin line is divided into categories that focus on repairing, balancing, and defending your skin barrier. The products are all pocket-friendly, and work on a range of skin types and ages.



HYPHEN

Co-founded by Kriti Sanon, Hyphen's line – with its bright neon packaging and affordable price point – is aimed at the Gen-Z consumer. Offerings include lip balm, sunscreen and retinol serums. Currently, everyone is coveting the limited-edition birthday lip balms that come in yum flavours such as vanilla and marshmallow.



SUHI & SEGO

This is a brand you will spot in every skin influencer's #shelfie. Suhi & Sego, founded by sisters Sejal and Ishaani Goyal, combines their grandmother's *nuskas* with modern skincare technology. It offers a range of body care and face products that are gentle yet effective. Sustainability is also a key ethos of the brand; expect glass packaging, and refillable options available for the body wash.



DAB TO FAB

The skin's microbiome is an essential component of healthy, radiant skin – and Dab to Fab is a brand that specifically caters to this aspect. Currently, it has two offerings – a cleanser and a moisturiser, which calms and balances the skin's pH levels. **F**



GLOSS OVER IT!

Ananya Panday's blush and glossy lip combo is the look to wear this season. By Karen Alfonso



Ananya Panday



Too Faced
Cloud Crush
Blush



Charlotte Tilbury
PLUMPGASM
Lip Gloss



L'Oréal Paris
Panorama Mascara



e.l.f. Precision Liquid Liner



Max Factor
Facefinity All
Day Flawless
3 In 1 Vegan
Foundation



Moira
Complete
Facial
Primer



Anastasia Beverly Hills Lip Liner



Huda Beauty Faux Filter Lip Gloss

- 3 Dab a little concealer on spots that need coverage and tap into your skin.
- 4 Brush your brows upwards with a brow spoolie, and fill in any gaps with a brow pencil.
- 5 Apply a light sweep of pink eyeshadow on your eyelids. With a thin felt-tip liner, make a thin winged line until the end of the lid, and line the lower eye with *kajal* for added definition.

ALWAYS TAP OFF EXCESS PRODUCT FROM YOUR BRUSH BEFORE APPLICATION

- 6 For va-va voom lashes, curl your lashes and then apply multiple coats of mascara.
- 7 Take a large fluffy brush and swirl it in a bright pink powder blush. Tap off the excess, then sweep it from your lower cheek all the way up to your brow bone. If you're looking to heighten the intensity of your blush, layer on a cream blush first, and then a powder one.
- 8 For defined lips, line your lips with a lip liner that is closest to your lip shade. Fill in with a plumping lip gloss.
- 9 Finally, spray on a finishing mist to ensure that your makeup stays in place.

We stan Ananya Panday – after all, she's served us some great fashion and beauty moments. This time around, she's sporting two of the hottest beauty looks RN – glossy lips and Sabrina Carpenter-esque bold blush. Here's how you can get this look...

GET THE LOOK

- 1 Always start with clean skin. Once you've cleansed, prep your skin with a rich, emollient moisturiser.
- 2 Using a foundation brush, gently buff a lightweight foundation onto your skin.

LEADING MAN

As YSL Beauty's makeup line makes its way into India, **TOM PECHEUX**, Global Beauty Director – Yves Saint Laurent Beauty, talks to Karen Alfonso about makeup and more

In the fashion and beauty world, Tom Pecheux is not just revered, he's worshipped. In a career spanning over three decades, he has served as Artistic Director for Japanese beauty brand Shiseido and with Estée Lauder before his current role as Global Beauty Director for YSL Beauty. In the early noughties, when the Internet put the spotlight on makeup artists, Tom's work stood out. He made models look like themselves, but better.

Tom's foray into makeup was not intentional; growing up, he wanted to become a pastry chef. "I saw my mother cook for my four siblings, my dad and me, and I thought that was an incredible gift," he recollects. Tom soon moved from his home town in rural France, to Paris to hone his skills, but he grew disillusioned with the way chefs operated. "Everything was happening behind the scenes; the chefs didn't want to share anything with the patrons who would come to eat," he recalls. "I was very disappointed that I had no feedback," he adds. It was a chance encounter with a girl who was studying to be a makeup artist that made Tom realise that there was actually a career in makeup artistry. "I didn't even know that was an actual job; I was shocked. When you plant a seed in your mind, it grows, and this one grew very quickly. I quit my job and I enrolled in makeup school. It was completely new to me – I didn't even know what lipstick was, what concealer or foundation was."

Tom soon realised he had found his calling. "I am totally in love with makeup, and in love with what it can do," he enthuses. "The result of colour, the result of some texture or a bit of





mascara or concealer is amazing. You can transform a woman who is in a bad mood into the Cinderella who went to the ball. With just a little makeup, you turn a woman, not into a Disney princess, but into a beauty. That's the secret of a good makeup product – it does not make you look beautiful, it makes you *feel* beautiful."

As someone who works with different mediums – films, runway, celebrities, and campaigns – Tom looks up to designer Yves Saint Laurent. "Mr Laurent kept an open mind about people, countries, religions. He was not just inspired by it all, but also respectful." He himself seeks inspiration in travel and keeps an open mind too, but he is also quick to point out that his success is all a team effort. "I love to share – and I love to work with a team; I love to pick other people's brains," he adds with a chuckle.

Tom has had a career that spans over three decades, and has worked on such luminaries as Madonna, supermodel Kate Moss and the late Princess Diana. He shares an anecdote about working with the late princess that still gives him goosebumps to this day. "I was working

**"THAT'S THE
SECRET OF
A GOOD MAKEUP
PRODUCT –
IT DOES NOT
MAKE YOU LOOK
BEAUTIFUL,
IT MAKES YOU
FEEL BEAUTIFUL"**



in London, and I was called to work on a charity cover with Princess Diana," he recalls. "At the shoot, we were told that the protocol was to address her as 'Ma'am', but, as a native French speaker, I was struggling with that, because it almost felt like I was calling her 'mother' – 'ma'am' is so close to 'Maman' in French. As she sat in my chair, she said, 'Tom, I know your work, I know you make all those women so beautiful; make me as beautiful as them.' I was so touched, but I told her how I was struggling with calling her 'Ma'am'. She looked at me and said, 'Absolutely not! Call me Diana'. And that shoot just turned out spectacular, we had so much fun shooting it with (photographer) Mario Testino."

Elaborating on his current role with YSL Beauty, Tom says "As a French makeup artist who never dreamed of reaching so high, I feel comfortable and happy to be here. I help develop colour – I am not a chemist but I can recognise good texture. I want to create colours that suit everyone and also honour Mr Saint Laurent." **F**

BRIGHTEN YOUR LIFE!

The weather might be dreary, but these beauty staples are bound to bring some cheer. By **Karen Alfonso**

From a swipe of bold red lipstick to cheeky pink blush, these products are an easy way to perk up your day!



BALANCE IT WELL
If you're going with a bright eye, stick to a muted lip so it doesn't veer into clown territory.



LAYER IT ON

If you're looking to make a colour more vibrant, add a bit of concealer as the base and then apply your lipstick or eyeshadow. **F**

PHOTOGRAPHS: ERIKOS ANDREOU

HOT RIGHT NOW

All things fresh and fun in the beauty space

SKIN SAVIOUR

If you're looking for a serum that regulates sebum, reduces dark spots and soothes inflammation, the new **Re'equil Skin Clarifying Serum 1%** might fit the bill. It has encapsulated salicylic acid (BHA) and granactive ACNE – which is a bioactive peptide that contains 15 naturally-occurring amino acids, botanicals, and acne-fighting ingredients that help zap pimples and improve the skin's texture.

Price: ₹495

Available from: Reequil.com

VANILLA SKY

If you love the original, this iteration is bound to make you even happier. The new **Burberry Goddess Intense** is an aromatic, woody fragrance that features a quartet of vanillas – including the new smoky vanilla wood and patchouli – that makes for a unique composition.

Price: ₹11,300

Available from: Sephora

MAKE ME BLUSH

Oh, don't we love the convenience of a stick blush? The new **Pat McGrath LABS' Divine Blush Legendary Glow Colour Balm** is packed with squalane, passion fruit extract and shea butter, hydrates the skin, and deposits a gorgeous wash of colour. And it's available in five shades that suit every complexion.

Price: ₹2,900

Available from: Nykaa.com

HOT STUFF

Everyone wants to have a great hair day, and now Dyson can make it happen every day. The new **Airstrait** will blow dry your hair and straighten it at the same time. The product has 'wet' and 'dry' styling modes, and a 'cool' mode to set the style. It has no hot plates, relying on heat to style the hair – resulting in a damage-free mane.

Price: ₹45,900

Available from: Dyson.in

COLOUR ME HAPPY

If you love getting a mani, O.P.I has launched a limited edition **In My Era** collection that features 12 bold colours that celebrate everyone's unique self-expression. With bright hues such as cheery yellows, cobalt blues and bold reds, there's something for everyone.

Price: ₹850

Available from: Nykaa.com





AS RIGHT AS RAIN

As most of the country thrills to the romance of the monsoon, bring on the corn – and elevate it with this easy recipe.

BBQ Corn On The Cob

INGREDIENTS

4 corn cobs
1 to 2 tsp olive oil
50 g butter, softened
½ tsp smoked paprika
1 red chilli, finely chopped
25 g walnuts, finely chopped
Salt to taste
Pepper to taste
1 tbsp chopped coriander

METHOD

1. Rub the corn cobs with a little olive oil and place on a BBQ or griddle pan.
2. Cook for 15 to 20 minutes, turning occasionally until slightly charred.
3. Meanwhile, mix the butter, smoked paprika, red chilli and walnuts in a bowl and season.

4. Place the corn on a large sheet of foil, spread the walnut chilli butter over, and wrap up the foil to seal. Place back on the BBQ or griddle pan for five minutes or until the butter has melted.
5. Unwrap the corn and sprinkle the chopped coriander over it. Serve warm.

MADE FOR THE MONSOON

These easy but impressive recipes from **Chef Sneha Singhi** (@snehasinghi1) make for delicious rainy-day treats

GARLIC PARMESAN FRIES

4 large potatoes

1 tbsp salt

1 tbsp chopped
parsley

2 tbsp grated
parmesan

Oil for frying

**For the garlic
crumb:**

1 tbsp butter

2 tbsp minced
garlic

1 tbsp chopped
parsley



**Calorie
count:**
292 calories
(per serving)

SERVES: FOUR > PREP TIME: 10 minutes > COOKING TIME: 30 minutes

1. Peel and cut the potatoes into thick fries. Wash them in ice-cold water.
2. Bring water to a boil with the salt. Add the fries and boil for exactly 10 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, prepare the garlic crumb: melt the butter in a small pan and add the garlic. Cook for two minutes. Add the parsley, mix well, and take off the flame. Keep warm.
4. Remove the fries from the boiling water after 10 minutes, drain and set aside.
5. Heat the oil and double fry the fries to get them extra crispy. Remove from the oil and drain.
6. Sprinkle with salt, the sautéed garlic crumb, parsley and Parmesan. Toss gently and serve hot.

TIP: YOU CAN STORE THESE FRIES IN THE FREEZER FOR UPTO THREE MONTHS IN AN AIRTIGHT BAG AFTER THE FIRST FRYING.

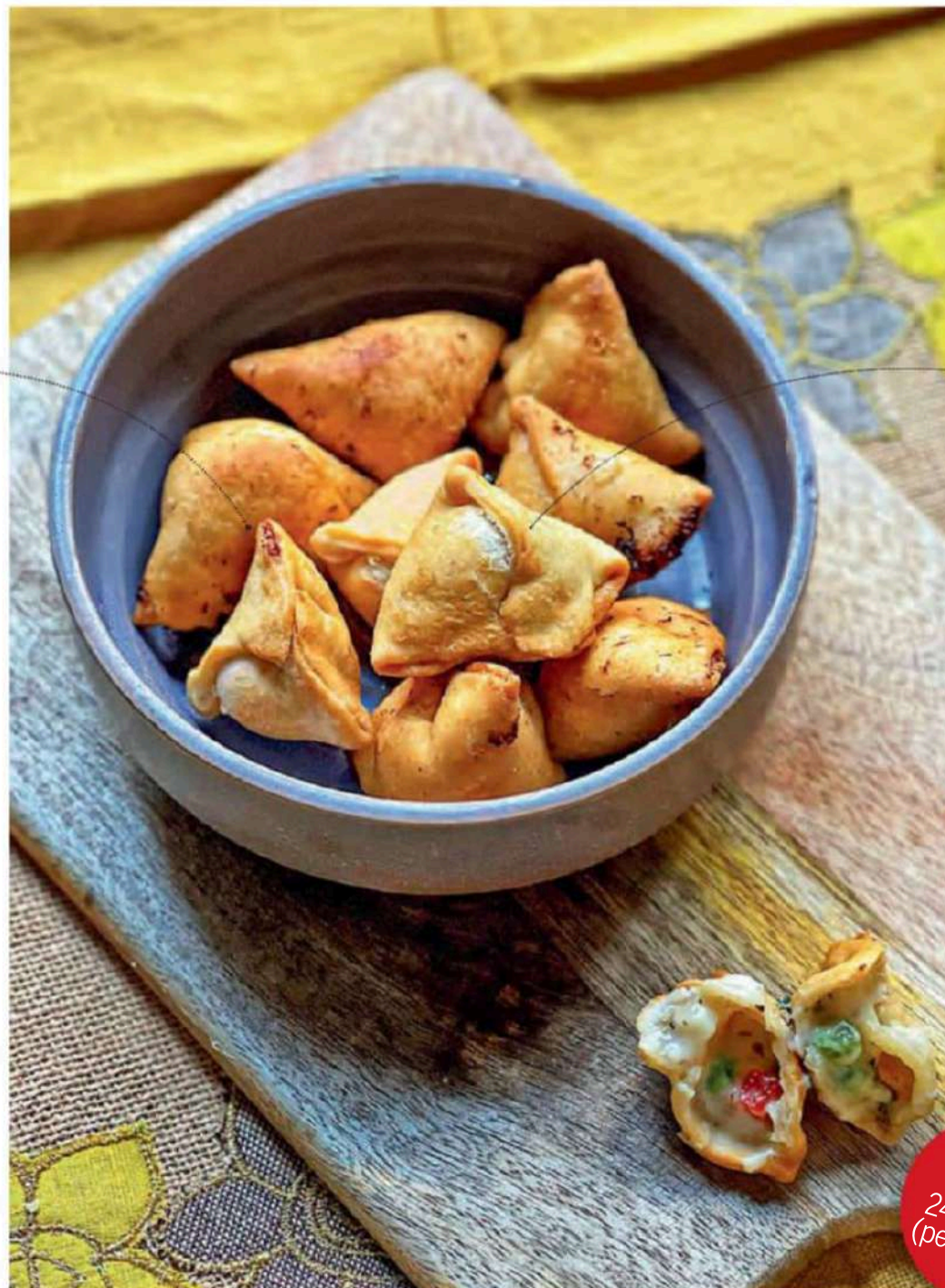
GRATIN **SAMOSA**

Oil for frying

For the *samosa* dough:
2 cups flour
4 tbsp oil
Salt
½ cup water + more if needed

For the gratin filling:
2 tbsp butter
3 tbsp flour

½ cup milk
¼ cup cream
1 cup boiled vegetables (peas, carrots, corn)
2 tbsp parsley (optional)
1 tbsp oregano (or use basil)
¼ cup grated processed cheese
Salt to taste
½ tsp pepper



Calorie count:
249 calories (per serving)

MAKES: 8 *samosas* > **PREP TIME:** 20 minutes + resting time > **COOKING TIME:** 20 minutes

1. To prepare the *samosa* dough, mix the flour, oil, salt and the half cup of water well together. Knead to a stiff dough, adding more water if needed. Cover with a wet cloth and set aside to rest for 20 to 30 minutes.
2. To prepare the gratin filling, heat the butter, add the flour, and cook for 30 to 40 seconds.
3. Add the milk and cream, and cook, stirring constantly, until the sauce is thick and has no lumps.
4. Add the boiled vegetables, parsley, oregano, cheese, salt and pepper, and cook, stirring, until the cheese melts. Set aside to cool.
5. Divide the rested *samosa* dough into four portions. Roll each portion out into an oval and cut it into half. Apply water to the edges of the dough, shape into a cone, and then fill with the gratin filling. Seal well with a little water to form a *samosa*. Repeat with the remaining dough and filling.
6. Heat the oil for frying on a low flame and fry the *samosas* until golden brown. >

TIP: YOU CAN ALSO USE BROCCOLI, POTATOES, PINEAPPLE AND BELL PEPPERS IN THE GRATIN FILLING.

EGGLESS CHOCOLATE CHIP BREAD PUDDING



8 slices bread
½ cup chocolate
chips (divided
usage)
Butter for greasing

For the pudding mixture:

1 cup hot milk
2 tbsp custard
powder
¼ cup sugar
½ tsp cinnamon
powder

**Calorie
count:**
266 calories
(per serving)

MAKES: Four > **PREP TIME:** 10 minutes + preheating > **COOKING TIME:** 30 minutes

1. Preheat the oven to 180° C. Grease an 8-inch baking tray with butter.
2. Cut the bread slices into quarters, and place them in the greased baking tray, making sure they are densely packed in.
Add quarter cup chocolate chips, pushing them into the small gaps.
3. Mix together the pudding mixture and stir until the sugar dissolves.
4. Drizzle over the bread in the baking tray.
5. Top with the remaining chocolate chips.
6. Bake in the preheated oven at 180° C for 30 minutes with both the top and bottom heat on.
7. Remove from the oven and serve hot.

TIP:

SERVE THIS CHOCOLATE CHIP BREAD PUDDING HOT WITH VANILLA ICE CREAM. YOU CAN SUBSTITUTE THE MILK WITH ANY NUT MILK, AND THE SUGAR WITH ONE-FOURTH CUP HONEY OR FIVE TABLESPOONS JAGGERY.

CHOCOLATE MUD PIE



1 cup flour
1¼ cup brown sugar
1/3 cup cocoa powder
½ tsp coffee powder
1½ tsp baking powder
½ tsp baking soda

1 cup milk
1/4 cup oil
1½ tsp vanilla essence
½ cup chocolate chips
For the ganache:
1 cup grated dark chocolate
1½ cups fresh cream

Calorie count:
673 calories
(per serving)

SERVES: 6 > PREP TIME: 10 minutes + preheating > COOKING TIME: 35 minutes

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C.
2. Mix together all the ingredients for the cake to a smooth batter, and transfer to a 6-inch baking dish.
3. Bake the cake in the preheated oven for 25 minutes.
You can also cook it in an airfryer for 25 minutes at 180° C,
and in a microwave on High for four minutes.
Keep in mind that a mud pie is supposed to be a little uncooked at the bottom –
that's what makes it so gooey – so do not overbake it.
4. Cut the mud pie into cubes in the baking dish – this is to help the ganache get to every part of the cake.
5. To prepare the chocolate ganache, cook the dark chocolate and cream
in a double boiler until the chocolate melts (see tips).
6. Pour the hot ganache over the cake. **F**

TIP: YOU CAN ALSO MELT THE CHOCOLATE AND CREAM FOR THE GANACHE IN A MICROWAVE AT 30-SECOND INTERVALS, STIRRING IN BETWEEN, UNTIL THE CHOCOLATE MELTS.
SERVE THE MUD PIE WITH ICE CREAM.

Easy Ways to Bring India Home

August is a great month in which to review how we can bring our great country into our most intimate spaces. **Pratyusha Reddy** and **Dhatri Dabbara**, founders of **Studio Dvara**, have tips to guide you

Driven by economic growth, technological advancements, global influences, and a renewed appreciation for indigenous craftsmanship, India's design landscape is continually evolving to reflect a blend of tradition and modernity. Here's how you can tap into this dynamic...



PHOTOGRAPH: BEYOND DESIGNS





PHOTOGRAPH: STONE ART



PHOTOGRAPH: TUSKER KATHA



PHOTOGRAPH: STUDIO DVARA

DESIGN FOR THE SENSES

Design your space with sensory elements in mind to enhance its atmosphere, comfort, and functionality. 'Sensory play' in interior design involves engaging the five senses – sight, touch, smell, sound, and taste – to create a holistic and immersive experience in a space.

Here are examples of how you can use sensory play to bring India into a space:

Sight: Use vibrant colours and traditional patterns in textiles and wall treatments. Incorporate traditional Indian arts and crafts.

Touch: Use handwoven fabrics such as silk, cotton, and khadi for upholstery, cushions, and drapes. Incorporate carved wooden furniture and decor pieces to add tactile richness.

Smell: Use traditional Indian scents such as sandalwood, jasmine, and marigold through incense, essential oils, or fresh flowers. Incorporate a small garden or indoor plants such as holy basil (*tulsi*) for natural fragrance.

Sound: Integrate traditional Indian instruments or recordings of classical music for a soothing auditory experience.

Taste: Design functional and aesthetically-pleasing kitchen and dining areas that encourage family gatherings and culinary activities. Display traditional Indian spices and herbs in decorative containers.

CHOOSE MADE-IN-INDIA PRODUCTS

Using homegrown Indian brands in interior design is a fantastic way to support local craftsmanship, ensure sustainability, and celebrate the rich cultural heritage of India.

GO LOCAL

Choose locally-sourced materials for floor, wall and ceiling treatments, such as natural stone, terracotta, reclaimed wood and handmade local tiles.

Embracing these evolving trends while staying true to local cultural and environmental contexts can help us create innovative, sustainable, and culturally-rich spaces that resonate with contemporary needs and preferences. **F**



PHOTOGRAPHS: STUDIO BY AGNI



ROMANCING THE RAINS

Primrose Monteiro-D'Souza got five travel enthusiasts to recommend monsoon destinations worth getting soaked in



Divyakshi Gupta

“THIS OFFBEAT HILL STATION IS CLEAN, FRESH AND REJUVENATING...”

CHIKHALDARA, MAHARASHTRA

Recommended by
Divyakshi Gupta

 @divsigupta

Chikhaldara comes alive in the monsoons with its spectacular, lush green views of the river and its rolling hills. This offbeat hill station is clean, fresh and rejuvenating.

Ideal for nature lovers, Chikhaldara surprised me in many ways. From the bear made with scrap metal parts that welcomed me to the hill station to the meticulously-planned forest garden with well-defined

trails, it is definitely more than its many viewpoints – but you should not miss the Panchbol Point, Mozari Point and Goraghat Point either!

Home to the ancient Bhim Kund, Chikhaldara finds mention in the *Mahabharata* as the place at which Bheema killed the villainous Keechaka in a fight and then threw him into the valley.

There are also various species of flora and fauna to be found in this region because of the proximity to Melghat Tiger Reserve. This is also the only coffee-growing region in Maharashtra.

History lovers can also visit Gavilgad Fort, a 14th-century fort built by the Gond kings and once a stronghold of the Maratha empire.

If you want to venture further on a day trip, visit Narnala Fort as well, which flourished under the Khilji dynasty. And, while you are in Chikhaldara, don't

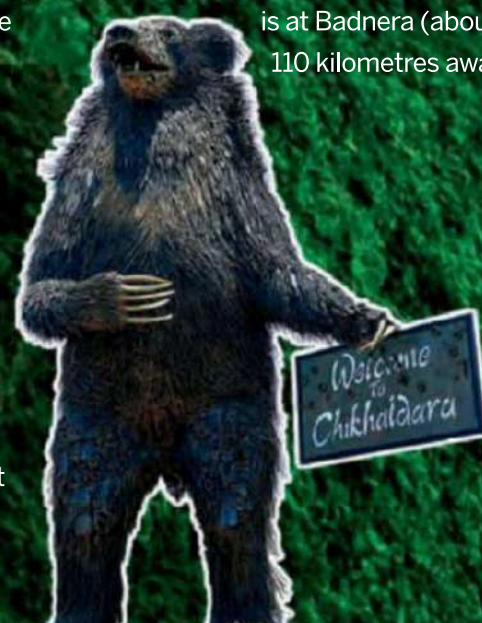
miss a local Maharashtrian meal at Gurdev Dhaba.

The MTDC Chikhaldara resort is a good budget-friendly option with clean, spacious rooms.

Getting There:

Chikhaldara is well connected to the cities of Paratwada, Amravati, Akola, Betul, Khandwa and Burhanpur by road. The nearest airport is Nagpur (229 kilometres via the Paratwada-Chandur Bazar-Katol route) and 231 kilometres via the Paratwada-Amravati-Kondhali route. MSRTC plies buses from Nagpur to Chikhaldara via Amravati-Paratwada.

The closest railway station is at Badnera (about 110 kilometres away). ➤





Rupali Dean

“ITS SERENE BEAUTY AND CONTRASTING LANDSCAPES OFFER A TRULY MESMERISING AND UNIQUE MONSOON EXPERIENCE”

BEKAL, KERALA

Recommended by
Rupali Dean

 @rupalidean

In Bekal, standing with the beach on one side and the river on the other, I was awestruck by the dual nature of water. In the monsoon, Kappil Beach exudes tranquillity even as the sea rages, contrasting with the placid Nombili River

nearby, hemmed by lush coconut trees. Witnessing this natural interplay felt almost miraculous.

Kerala's peaceful paradises especially come into their own during the rains and demand exploration; my first visit to the Kasaragod district revealed a landscape reminiscent of Mangalore but distinct in architecture and with abundant coconut trees. The Lalit Resort & Spa Bekal – where you are surrounded by lagoons and greenery and immersed in a peaceful silence broken only by exotic bird calls – is a good place to stay.

Getting There: The nearest airport is in Mangalore (64 kilometres away), and the



closest railway station in Kasaragod, about 16 kilometres away. Taxis and buses ply to get you to Bekal from the airport and station.



Shifa Merchant

“THIS FORT-PALACE IS SO ROMANTIC IN THE RAINS!”

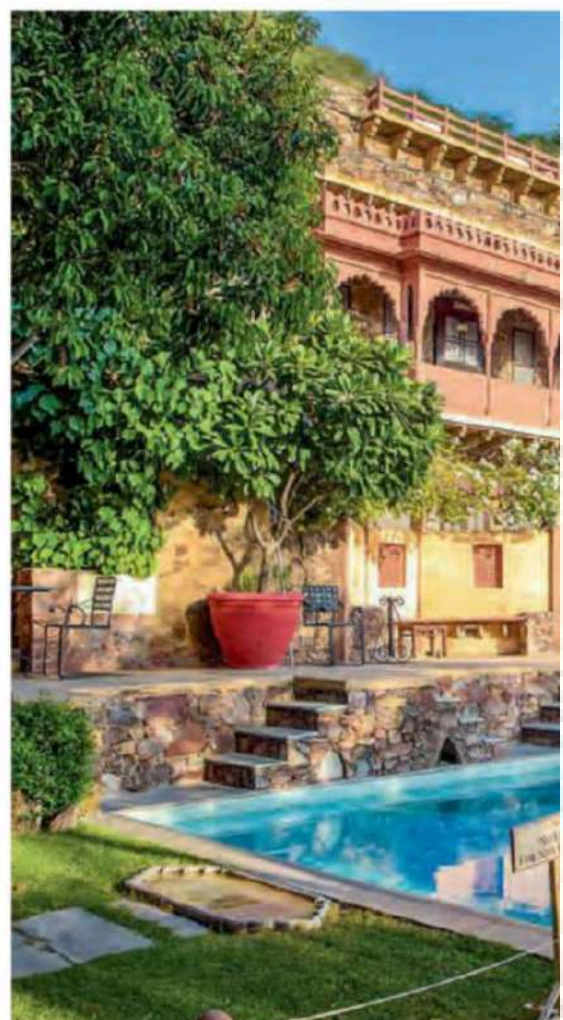
NEEMRANA, RAJASTHAN

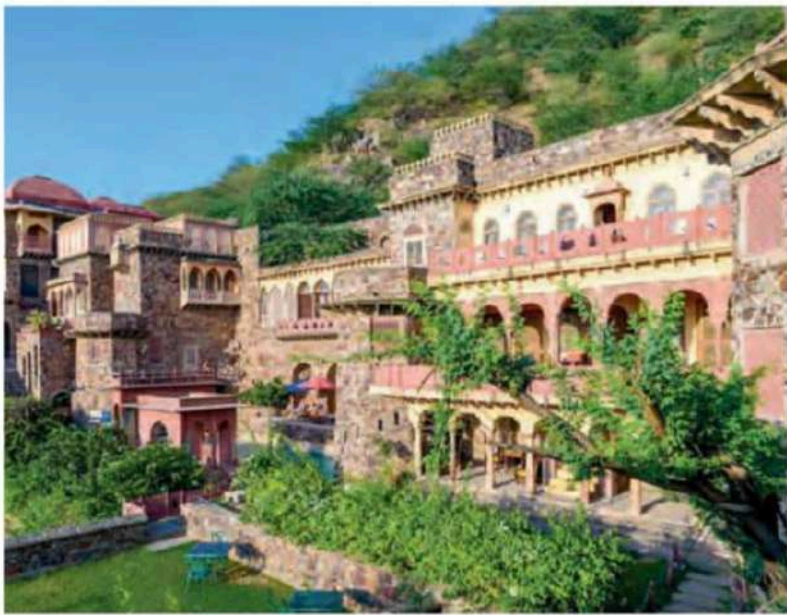
Recommended by
Shifa Merchant

 @sassyshifsays |

 @sassyshifsays

The majestic billion-year-old Aravalli Hills are so dreamy and straight out of a fairytale in the monsoon. It's no wonder so many Bollywood songs are shot here! Neemrana is a historical town in the Kot Behror district of Rajasthan, whose





medieval structures have stood the test of time. The walls of these structures change colour during the rains and glisten with every ray of the sun early in the morning – a unique visual and experience.

The monsoon is also a perfect time to escape the harshness of the Rajasthan sun and explore the town more easily. And the vintage car drive around the Aravalli Hills in the rainy season will hands down compete to be the most romantic drive you've ever experienced. Don't forget to stay

at the Neemrana Fort Palace, a medieval fort-palace over 550 years old, which is a premier heritage hotel in Rajasthan and a one-of-a-kind property, offering dreamy views over the countryside.

Getting There: Neemrana is near the Delhi-Jaipur Highway; you can get there by road from Delhi in two hours 20 minutes. The nearest airports are in Delhi and Jaipur (about two hours away), while the nearest railway station is Ateli Railway Station in Haryana (55 kilometres).

PHOTOGRAPHS: SHIFA MERCHANT, SHUTTERSTOCK



Radhika Nomllers

“IN THE MONSOON, THE SAHYADRI HAVE A DIFFERENT VIBE – GREEN, FOGGY, MOODY...”

KALAVANTIN DURG, MAHARASHTRA

Recommended by

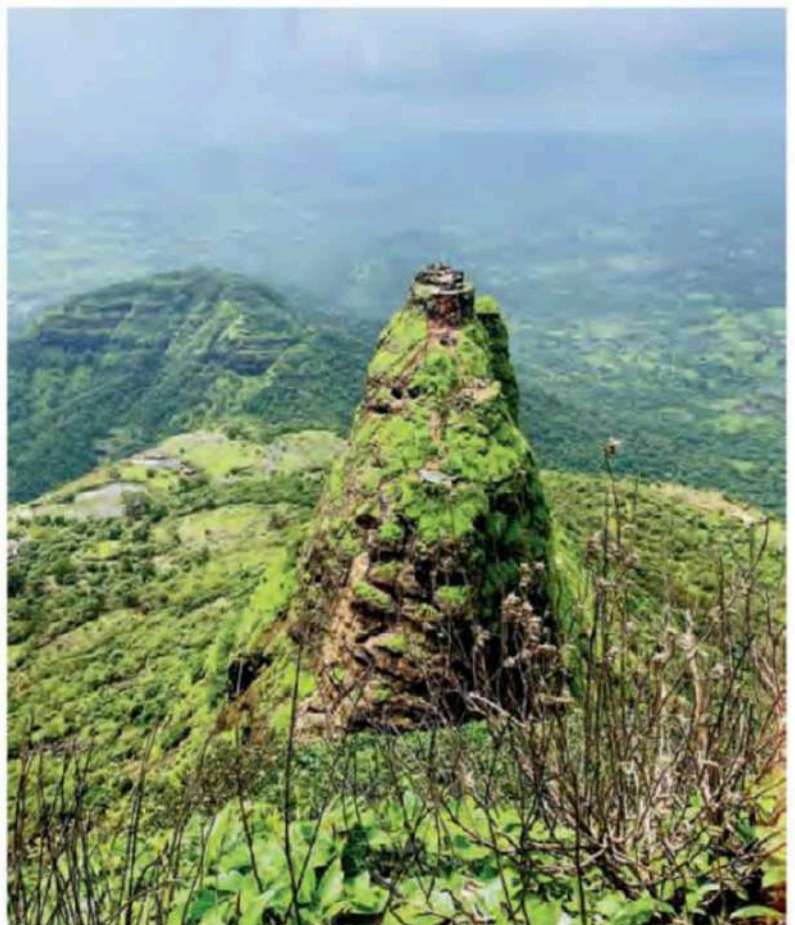
Radhika Nomllers

 @radhika_nomllers

The trek up to the Kalavantin fortress is not really ‘hidden’ for Mumbai trekkers, but, since I’m from Delhi, it was one of those little-known gems that I discovered last year.

The trek up to the fort is tagged as one of the most dangerous, but it's more a case of the steps and slopes being very steep and slippery with no supports – especially in the rains. This is not a trek for anyone with a fear of heights. If you can do it, it is totally the effort – in the monsoon, the entire region has a different vibe; the Sahyadris are so green, foggy, moody... And the weather is so nice – at other times of the year, the sun is very hot and you can get heat stroke. You totally understand why all the hikers from Mumbai love to climb in the Western Ghats around this time, pushing up until October. This hike will take about two hours one way.

Getting There: The nearest airport is in Mumbai, and you will need to get to the base at Thakurwadi Village. If you are hiring a car from Mumbai, book it for the whole day because you will not likely get transport back from the bottom of the mountain. ➤



PHOTOGRAPH: SHUTTERSTOCK



Ajmira Shaikh

“IT TRANSFORMS INTO A LUSH, PICTURESQUE RETREAT DURING THE MONSOON...”

PAVAGADH, GUJARAT

Recommended by

Ajmira Shaikh

@eattravellaugh



Pavagadh in Gujarat, part of the UNESCO World Heritage site of Champaner-Pavagadh Archaeological Park, transforms in the rains into a lush, picturesque retreat with vibrant greenery, mist-covered hills and stunning waterfalls. This is an exceptional hidden

destination, especially during the monsoon season. For anyone fascinated with history, Pavagadh-Champaner is perfect for a getaway. With its ancient forts, palaces, and the historic Mahakali Temple, it is steeped in rich cultural heritage and offers a deep dive into India's glorious past. During the monsoon, the scenic beauty of the mountains is enhanced as the landscape transforms

into a lush, green haven. This blend of natural beauty and historical significance makes it a great destination in the lap of Gujarat, providing a serene escape that enriches both the mind and soul. **Getting There:** The nearest airport is at Vadodara, the nearest railway station is Champaner station. Driving from Vadodara to Pavagadh takes approximately one hour 20 minutes. **F**



CRAFTING EXPERIENCES

KARREENA BULCHANDANI talks to
Ravina M Sachdev about shifting careers from
skincare to cuisine and establishing Mokai

Karreena Bulchandani spent her formative years in India and China and she thinks of them as invaluable learning experiences where she gained a deep understanding and appreciation for diverse food cultures. "Growing up, before moving to China in the fourth

grade, I was allowed to eat out once in seven days, and, looking back, that made me realise the value of eating out," she shares. Shortly after, in China, she was introduced to a whole new world of culinary delights. At that time, however, she had no aspirations to make her career in the industry. The plan was to

Even though she had studied skincare, it was food that brought her joy

focus on becoming a skincare therapist. She moved to Singapore to study skincare at the Aesthetics International Academy after her schooling and became a skincare therapist in 2018. "Not being able to find a suitable job, I decided to move to London, which was a change since I had only been living in Asia for the longest time. I was studying under the Oscar-winning makeup artist Cristine Blundell. I used to blog about food as well and that's when I realised my passion for food," she adds. She then realised that, even though she had studied skincare, it was food that brought her joy.

She moved back to Mumbai in 2022 and decided to establish her own restaurant. "I was keen on starting a cafe that was different from the European-style cafes, and it was quite challenging to find the right space," she recalls. When she found the location she was happy with in Bandra, plenty of people warned her about the unusual location. Luckily, her husband Mohit Bulchandani had experience with his brand Seeds of Life, and he helped her execute her plan. "Since I had no prior experience in interiors and branding, it was quite a task to explain my vision to our designers and build a brand deck to appoint people," she says. People constantly told her that her food wasn't going to please everyone, but she decided to follow her heart regardless.

Today, Mokai is known for its vibrant hand-painted wabi sabi wall and its interesting menu. Whether it's Hong Kong Street Style Wontons or Pandan Fruit Sando, the menu at Mokai draws inspiration from Karreena's travels and definitely stands out.

Now, it's been a year for Mokai, they are now a team of 50-plus people, and it's sold out on most days with people queuing up outside to get their hands on one of the matcha lattes and bowls.

BOOST YOUR BRAIN

Samiksha Bhowmik shares daily habits that could help boost your memory



It's no secret that improving your memory can significantly enhance your quality of life, productivity, and overall cognitive function. But the question arises: How does one boost one's memory? We've compiled a list of healthy daily habits that will help you do just that.

Stay Physically Active

The blood flow to the entire body, including the brain, is increased by physical activity. This helps keep your memory sharp. For most healthy adults, it is recommended to get at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise, such as brisk

walking, or 75 minutes of vigorous activity, such as jogging, per week.

Read A Lot

Reading regularly stimulates the brain, better cognitive

function, and improves memory retention. Reading a variety of materials, such as novels and scientific articles, sharpens your mind, increases your knowledge base, and



Staying in touch with your loved ones and simply engaging in social interaction can stimulate your brain and keep your memory sharp

develops your capacity for critical thinking. To keep your mind sharp and boost your memory, make reading a daily habit.

Get Quality Sleep

Peaceful sleep is necessary for memory consolidation. Get at least seven to nine hours of uninterrupted sleep every night. Create a consistent sleep schedule and a calming sleep environment. Make sure to avoid caffeine and electronics before bed – this will help you get quality sleep, which will keep your mind sharp.

Be Socially Connected

Depression and stress can contribute to memory loss. This can skyrocket if you live alone. Staying in touch with your loved ones and simply engaging in any social interaction can stimulate your brain and keep your memory sharp.

Eat A Healthy Diet

A diet rich in antioxidants, healthy fats, vitamins, and minerals provides essential nutrients for brain health. Blueberries, fatty fish, nuts, seeds, and leafy greens are particularly beneficial. Flaxseeds, edamame, and chia seeds are rich sources of omega-3 fatty acids, which are essential for memory and brain health.

It is vital to maintain cognitive function in life, especially as you age. These habits are simple enough to be incorporated into your daily routine and are sure to not just boost your memory but also maintain cognitive health. **E**

Advt.



The heart of
Incredible India

INDIA'S FIRST INTRA-STATE AIR SERVICE IN MADHYA PRADESH **PM SHRI PARYATAN VAYU SEVA** UNVEIL ENCHANTING DESTINATIONS OF STATE

Madhya Pradesh boasts scenic landscapes, magnificent history, UNESCO World Heritage Sites, spiritual destinations, thrilling adventures, diverse cultures, and archaeological marvels. Each captivating destination whispers its unique story, promising an unforgettable experience. The state's multifaceted beauty has enthralled travellers. In 2023, the state witnessed a phenomenal surge in tourist arrivals – a staggering 3 times increase compared to 2022! From 34.1 million in 2022, the number skyrocketed to a remarkable 112.1 million in 2023.

ENHANCING CONNECTIVITY FOR SEAMLESS EXPLORATION

Committed to enriching your Madhya Pradesh experience, the Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board takes another pioneering step – "PM Shri Paryatan Vayu Seva," India's first intra-state air service! This ground-breaking initiative marks a milestone in the tourism sector. This initiative will not only benefit tourism but also foster trade, healthcare, education, and cultural exchange.

YOUR GATEWAY TO AN UNFORGETTABLE JOURNEY

"PM Shri Paryatan Vayu Seva" reflects the state's commitment to providing a convenient and seamless travel experience. The Vayu seva connects eight cities: Bhopal, Ujjain, Khajuraho, Rewa, Indore, Gwalior, Jabalpur, and Singrauli. Booking your air journey is a breeze as dedicated counters are set up at Indore,

Bhopal, and Jabalpur airports. Additionally, you can access schedules, fares, and book tickets online at www.flyola.in.

"PM Shri Paryatan Vayu Seva" is a must-not-miss opportunity to explore more and experience more. Pocket-friendly fares ensure exploring Madhya Pradesh through intra-state flights is an accessible and enjoyable experience.

Embark on a captivating journey through Madhya Pradesh with air service. Rewa beckons you to witness the awe-inspiring waterfalls, explore the majestic Rewa Fort and Govindgarh Palace, and delve into history at the ASI-protected Deur Kothar. Immerse in the spiritual aura of Ujjain, famed for the revered Mahakaleshwar Jyotirlinga Temple and the Mahakal Lok Corridor. Explore historical sites like Ram Ghat, Mangalnath Temple, Jantar Mantar, Harsiddhhi Temple, and Sandipani Ashram. Ascend the ramparts of the impregnable Gwalior Fort, a testament to bygone eras. Marvel at the architectural brilliance of Gujar Mahal, Jai Vilas Palace, and the tombs of Tansen and Ghaus Mohammed. Explore the Bateshwar Group of Temples, Padavli, and Mitaoli. Be captivated by the grandeur of the Rajwada, a royal palace. Stroll through the vibrant Lalbagh Place, seek blessings at Bada Ganpati Mandir, shop for treasures at Sarafa Bazaar, and savour delectable treats at Chappan Dukaan in Indore. Witness the architectural marvel of Madan Mahal Fort in Jabalpur and pay homage to the Rani Durgavati Memorial and Museum. Explore the natural wonders of Bhedaghat, a UNESCO tentative list site, and delve into mysticism at the Chaunsath Yogini

Temple. Be mesmerized by the world-famous Khajuraho Temples, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and marvel at India's unique artistic heritage. Explore the Adivart Museum, witness the diverse wildlife of Panna National Park, pay respects at the Tomb of Maharaj Chhatrashal, and be awestruck by the cascading Raneh Falls and the Bhimkund natural wonder



A DESTINATION FOR EVERY TRAVELER

Madhya Pradesh caters to all kinds of travellers. "PM Shri Paryatan Vayu Seva" simplifies exploring the entire state, allowing you to effortlessly craft your dream itinerary. "PM Shri Paryatan Vayu Seva," operated on a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) basis unlocks a world of possibilities for exploring Madhya Pradesh.

So, what are you waiting for? Book your tickets today and embark on an unforgettable adventure in the captivating heart of India!



OFFERING HOPE TO WOMEN SILENTLY SUFFERING FROM ENDOMETRIOSIS

Pioneering surgical techniques and dedication to patient care have made **Dr. Dipak Limbachiya**, an advanced gynaec laparoscopy and onco surgeon, a lifeline for countless women at Eva Women's Hospital

www.evawomenshospital.com

Pioneering surgical techniques and dedication to patient care have made Dr. Dipak Limbachiya, an advanced gynaec laparoscopy and onco surgeon, a lifeline for countless women

An increasing number of women, including many celebrities in India, are grappling with endometriosis - a condition where tissue similar to the lining of the uterus grows outside the uterus, leading to significant pain and potential infertility. Despite its prevalence, affecting around 10% of women and girls of reproductive age globally, awareness about the condition remains low. Many women suffer silently due to the taboo surrounding menstrual health.

SOCIETAL STIGMA ABOUT PERIODS

'Endometriosis' primarily manifests through pelvic pain, which is often linked to menstrual periods. For those affected, menstrual pain can be far more severe than usual. The condition also brings a host of other symptoms, including pain during sexual intercourse, bowel movements, or urination, heavy menstrual periods or bleeding between periods, and additional issues like abdominal bloating, nausea, fatigue, depression, anxiety, and infertility.

The societal stigma around menstruation exacerbates the suffering of women with endometriosis. Many endure the pain in silence, hesitant to seek medical help due to embarrassment or fear of being misunderstood. This reluctance to seek treatment leads to prolonged suffering and, in some cases, worsens the condition.

"Along with new surgical techniques to treat patients, our efforts are also aimed at raising awareness about endometriosis," says Dr. Limbachiya.

COMMITMENT TO INNOVATION AND CARE

A ray of hope has emerged for endometriosis patients in the form of Dr. Dipak Limbachiya, an advanced gynaec laparoscopy and onco surgeon, with more than 24 years of experience. At the core of Dr. Limbachiya's practice is innovation and patient care. He founded Eva Women's Hospital, a premier institution dedicated to women's health and wellness, in Ahmedabad. For more than two decades now, the hospital has been at the forefront of providing world-class care and treatment to patients.

"The challenge with endometriosis is that patients are simply not aware of the condition. Most patients attribute the extreme pain and other symptoms during their periods to the menstrual cycle. Patients avoid talking about their condition due to the taboo associated with periods. We have been focusing on raising awareness about endometriosis. It is heartening to see many celebrities who have suffered from endometriosis are openly speaking about it, which will lead to more women becoming aware of the condition," says Dr. Limbachiya, a

highly respected figure among the medical fraternity in the treatment of endometriosis and other complex gynaecological conditions.

MASTERING ADVANCED LAPAROSCOPIC TECHNIQUES

One of Dr. Limbachiya's significant contributions to gynaecological surgery is his introduction and perfection of advanced laparoscopic techniques. These minimally invasive procedures have revolutionised the treatment of complex conditions such as endometriosis. He recognised the transformative potential of these techniques early in his career and dedicated himself to mastering and advancing these techniques. His pursuit of excellence has cemented his reputation as a pioneer in the field, while his innovative surgical techniques have been widely adopted by the medical community.

Dr. Limbachiya's expertise in laparoscopic surgery is well-recognised. He was the first to introduce 'Laparoscopic Wertheim's hysterectomy' in Ahmedabad and conducted the second-largest series in laparoscopic Wertheim's hysterectomy. These milestones have transformed the field of gynaecological surgery. His proficiency in performing complex procedures, such as laparoscopic para-aortic lymphadenectomy, has further strengthened his reputation as a leader.

EXPANDING PATIENT CARE THROUGH EDUCATION, MENTORSHIP

Beyond his surgical practice, Dr. Limbachiya is committed to advancing the field of

medicine through education and mentorship. Since 2012, he has trained over 1,200 doctors in India and several other countries including Kuwait, the UAE, Siberia, Malaysia, the UK, Spain, and Bangladesh through comprehensive training programmes. These programmes, attended by doctors from prestigious hospitals, focus on the latest advancements in laparoscopic surgery. By equipping doctors with the knowledge and skills to deliver superior care, Dr. Limbachiya is ensuring the continued evolution and improvement of gynaecological surgery.

GROUNDBREAKING RESEARCH, NEW TECHNIQUES

Dr. Limbachiya's dedication to advancing medical knowledge also extends to his research endeavours. He has authored several groundbreaking research papers that have been published in prestigious national and international medical journals. His innovative techniques in the treatment of gynaecological malignancies and bowel endometriosis have received worldwide recognition.

One of his notable achievements is the development of a technique to prevent tumour spillage during surgeries for endometrial and early-stage cervical cancer using endo-staplers. This method has significantly improved surgical outcomes and patient safety, setting new benchmarks in the management

of gynaecological malignancies. His study "Surgico-pathological outcomes and survival in carcinoma body uterus: A retrospective analysis of cases managed by laparoscopic staging surgery in Indian Women," was the first such study from India and only the third from Asia, reaffirming his position as a trendsetter.

IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE

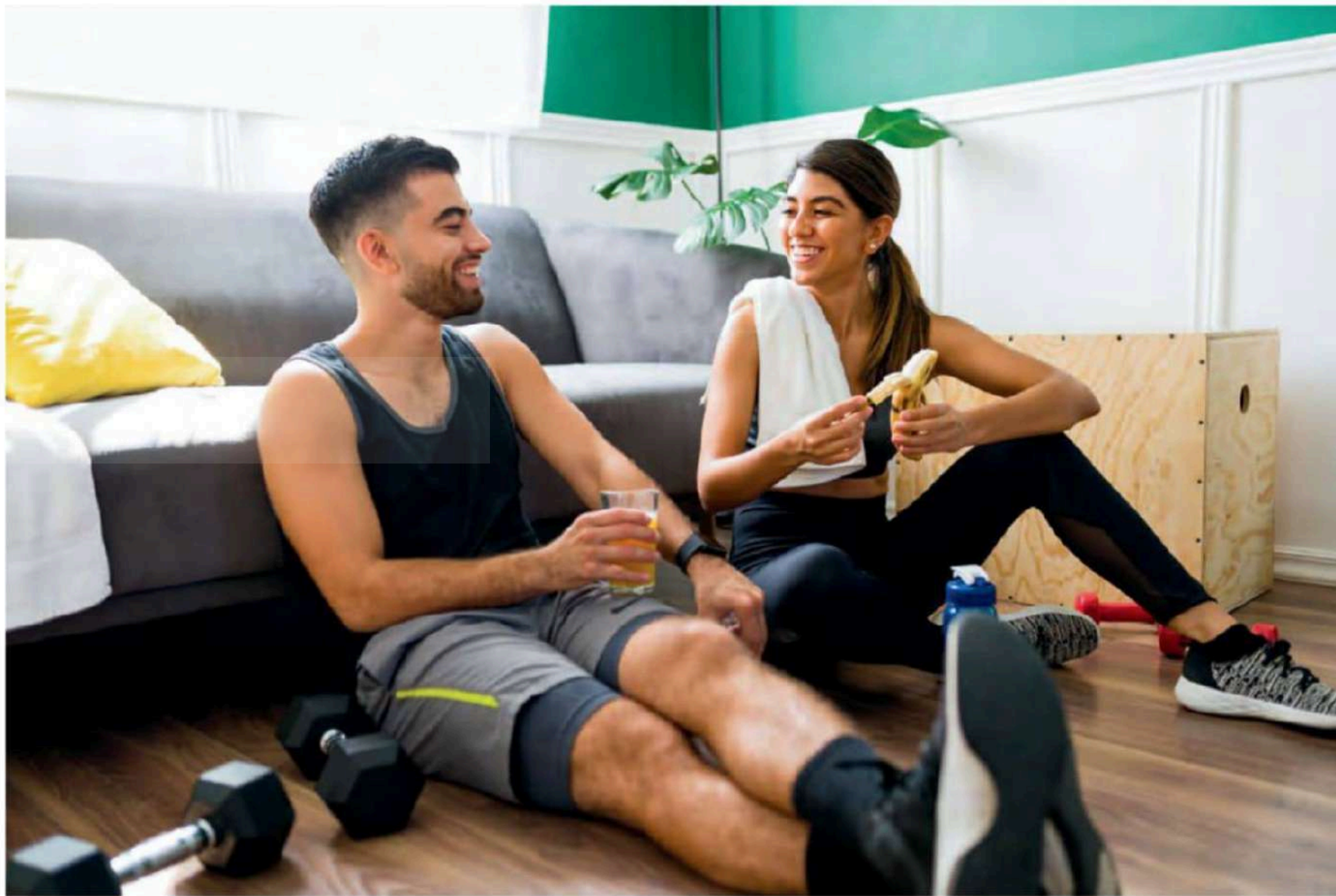
Under Dr. Limbachiya's leadership, Eva Women's Hospital has become a symbol of hope for women suffering from complex gynaecological conditions. The hospital's holistic approach combines cutting-edge medical procedures with personalised and compassionate care, ensuring that each patient receives the best possible treatment. Dr. Limbachiya's pioneering techniques in the treatment of gynaecological cancers and bowel endometriosis have not only saved lives but also significantly improved the quality of life for many women.

His exceptional contributions to gynaecological surgery have been recognised with numerous awards and accolades. His research has been published in esteemed journals, and his innovative surgical techniques have been widely adopted by the medical community. These recognitions reflect his expertise, dedication and impact on the field.

Dr. Limbachiya's work is a symbol of hope for women suffering from endometriosis and other gynaecological conditions. As a leader in this specialised field, Dr. Limbachiya continues to inspire and guide the next generation of surgeons, ensuring that the benefits of advanced laparoscopic techniques reach patients across the globe. His vision and contributions have made a lasting impact on women's health, offering hope and healing to those in need.

Dr. Limbachiya's pioneering techniques, coupled with his commitment to patient care and education, have transformed the lives of countless women.





FITNESS FLOPS? NO MORE!

Avoid these common mistakes before you hit the gym to get the most out of your workout. By **Samiksha Bhowmik**

Gym membership? Done. Workout Clothes? Hanging in the closet. Ready to build an active lifestyle? Definitely. But wait, are you really prepared for the gym? Your workout is only as good as your pre-workout prep. Failing to have a strategy in place or not following a proper routine can cause issues that you do not want. Here are a few things you must keep in mind to get the most out of your workout.

DON'T EAT TOO MUCH

A significant factor in pre-workout habits is nutrition. While you never want to go into a workout hungry, you also don't want to eat too much. Eating too much or too soon before working out can cause cramps,

indigestion, nausea, and acid reflux, in addition to generally decreasing performance. Get a snack an hour before your session with a good balance of carbs, fats, and protein – a good option is an apple with peanut butter.

While you never want to go into a workout hungry, you also don't want to eat too much. Eating too much before working out can cause cramps

DON'T GO ON AN EMPTY STOMACH

For your body to exercise effectively and efficiently, it needs a source of energy. If eating a heavy meal is bad, going for a workout on an empty stomach can be worse. Your body lacks fuel when the stomach is empty. Carbohydrates start up your body and then allow fats to take over and burn while they do so. Eating a fruit, a handful of nuts, or any complex carbohydrate 30 >

Living with stage 4 cancer – is it even possible?

The last 35 years has seen the most progress in the field of cancer treatment. Our understanding of how cancer develops, and which genes cause cancer, has enabled effective strategies to fight it. Cancer patients are living longer. Stage 4 cancers are

those which have spread beyond the organ they originate from, to other parts of the body, for e.g. bones,

lung, liver and brain. Previously these patients would live for less than a year with tremendous suffering. Today it is possible for many with stage 4 cancer to live for 5 and even 10 years with a good quality of life.

Mr. A S, 60 years old and a retired army brigadier, was diagnosed with lung cancer 5 years ago. He is a very active man who follows a strict fitness routine and a nonsmoker. By the time we saw him in the clinic, his tumor had spread to the opposite lung and to the glands in his neck. It was clearly stage 4 and surgery or radiation was not possible. We tested his tumor, and found an abnormal driver gene which was fueling the growth of the tumor. He was treated with an oral targeted therapy against this gene and continues to be on treatment 5 years later. The cancer has virtually disappeared and he travels all over the world with his wife who is a doctor, leading a near normal life.

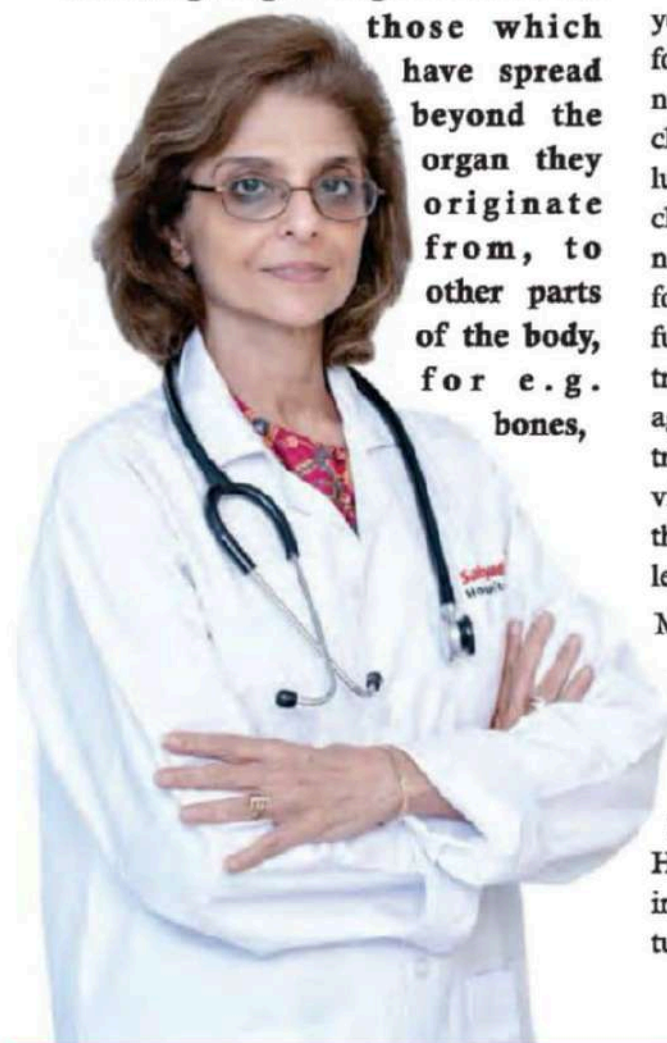
Mrs. D P is the wife of a health care Investor, and at 55 she was diagnosed with breast cancer which had spread to the bones. She has a type of breast cancer called Her2 positive breast cancer. We treated her with two antibodies against the Her2 positive gene. Antibodies are similar in structure to vaccines and target mainly tumor cells. 6 years later she continues to

remain well on this treatment.

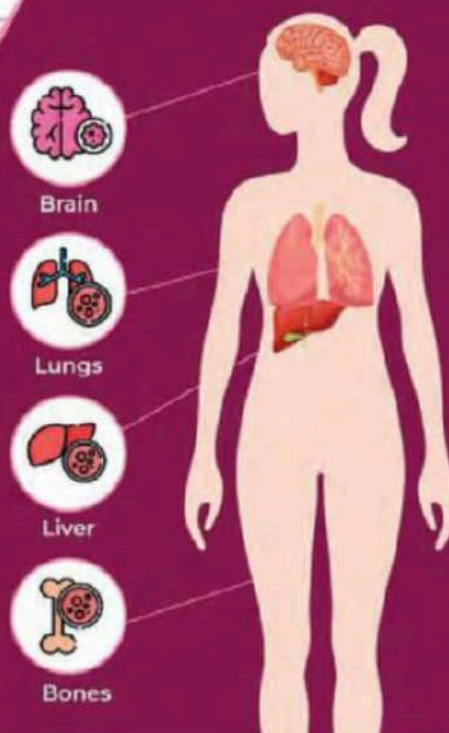
These injections are given under the skin. She is also able to visit with her son who lives in Germany every year and performs her daily routine.

Mrs. P D, was operated for cancer of the uterus 4 years ago in Goa. Within one year her disease came back with a vengeance and had spread to the lungs and brain. Her daughter brought her on a plane to us in Pune. At that time, she was on a wheelchair and on oxygen therapy, struggling to walk and breathe. We gave her radiation to the lung and brain for immediate relief of symptoms. On further testing we found that her tumor would be exceptionally responsive to Immunotherapy. She improved dramatically on Immunotherapy injections. This treatment basically reactivates our own immune system to fight the cancer cells very effectively. She now comes walking into my clinic and leads a good quality of life.

So, as you can see, stage 4 cancer does not have to be the end of the road. Not being overly optimistic, there are many cancer survivors living with cancer in advanced stages. While not cured of their disease, they are able to lead fulfilling lives. It is predicted that in the future, most advanced cancers will become like chronic ailments, requiring some treatment, but remaining in control.



**Living with
stage 4
cancer
– is it even
possible?**



Dr Shona Nag MD.

Director Oncology Services.
Sahyadri Hospital Hadapsar Pune
Contact at: 98900 11621

to 60 minutes before your workout should do the job.

DON'T GET TOO MUCH CAFFEINE

Excessive caffeine can lead to jitters, an increased heart rate, and anxiety, negatively impacting your workout. Excessive consumption also increases the risk of cramps and reduces endurance by contributing to dehydration. Limit your caffeine intake to a moderate amount, not more than one cup, and consume it 30 to 60 minutes before working out to avoid these problems. Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water and avoiding energy drinks with high caffeine content to maintain maximum performance and safety during your workout.

DON'T STATIC STRETCH!

Static stretches are those in which you stand, sit, or lie still and hold a single position for about 45

seconds. Contrary to popular belief, static stretching is one of the pre-workout habits you should avoid. Cold muscles are less elastic and, thus, more prone to injury. This suggests that static stretching can lead to a muscle pull, strain, or, in the worst case, a tear. Instead, opt for some light cardio to

warm your muscles up and prevent injury.

DON'T TRY NEW SUPPLEMENTS

It's not the best idea to experiment with new supplements or sports drinks right before working out. Try a small dose of a new pre-workout powder

Static stretching is one of the pre-workout habits you should avoid. Cold muscles are less elastic and more prone to injury



or sports drink first to ensure it agrees with your stomach before adding it to your pre-gym routine. If it doesn't, the middle of the workout is the worst time to find out.

DON'T SKIMP ON SLEEP

Inadequate sleep undermines physical performance by reducing energy, impairing concentration, and slowing reaction times. It slows down the recovery of muscles, which prevents exercise gains and raises the risk of injury. Try to get seven to nine hours of good sleep every night. Establishing a regular sleep schedule and creating a peaceful sleep environment – free from distractions – promotes restorative sleep. Making your sleep a priority helps you wake up feeling rejuvenated and prepared to give your best workout. **F**

GOLD STANDARD OF TREATMENT FOR BREAST CANCER SURGERY: ONCOPLASTIC & RECONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUES



Dr. Chaitanyanand B. Koppiker

Breast Cancer, Breast Oncoplastic and Reconstruction Surgeon
Medical Director, Orchids Breast Health in Association with
Jehangir Hospital and Prashanti Cancer Care Mission, Pune India

In India, many individuals seek treatment for breast cancer at advanced stages, often leading to the choice of mastectomy, the complete removal of the breast. While this procedure can be life-saving, it may also result in long-term complications, including emotional challenges, body asymmetry and a reduced quality of life. The gold standard treatment of breast cancer worldwide is not mastectomy; it is applying breast conservation, oncoplasty, and reconstruction techniques. At Orchids Breast Care Centre, we prioritise the overall well-being of our patients and have successfully achieved an 80% breast conservation rate. By incorporating oncoplastic techniques, we're able to remove the cancerous tissue while maintaining the natural shape of the breast. This approach not only enhances the safety of the treatment but also results in better aesthetic outcomes.

WHAT IS ONCOPLASTIC BREAST SURGERY?

Oncoplastic breast surgery combines breast tumor removal with plastic surgery techniques to restore the normal shape of the breast using the patient's own body tissue. When the patient wakes up post-surgery, they not only find the cancer gone but also see their breast reconstructed with better cosmesis. It has been proven that this approach enhances long-term survival, sexuality, body image, and overall well-being.

WHAT IS THE TYPICAL RECOVERY TIME AFTER BREAST CANCER SURGERY?

The recovery time after breast cancer surgery depends on the individual patient and the type of surgery performed. At our centre, patients typically go home

the same day or stay in the hospital for at most one night.

CAN SYMMETRICAL BREASTS BE ACHIEVED AFTER BREAST CONSERVATION SURGERY WHEN CANCER IS PRESENT IN ONLY ONE BREAST?

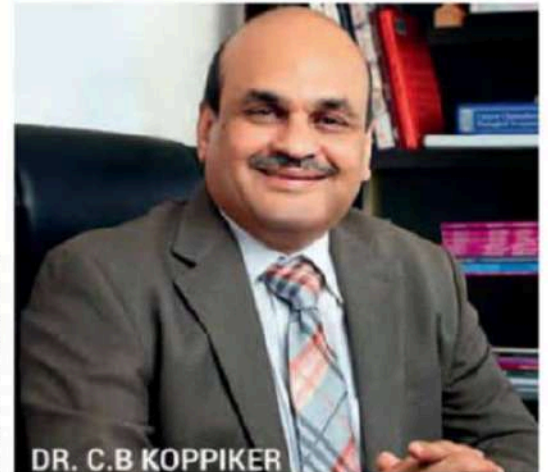
Oncoplastic Breast Surgery ensures adequate removal of the tumours with clear margins while reshaping the breast tissue for maintaining near-normal breast shape. When only one breast is treated for cancer, the other breast can be reduced in the same surgery to achieve symmetry. If, in some cases where mastectomy is the only option, it is always recommended to have a mastectomy with reconstruction. In cases wherein the entire breast tissue is removed (mastectomy), breast size and shape can be rebuilt using oncoplastic surgery techniques, which are referred to as breast reconstruction. With this, both breasts can stay the same size after breast cancer treatment.

WHAT PRECAUTIONS MUST BE UNDERTAKEN AFTER RECONSTRUCTION SURGERIES?

It is essential to follow post-operative instructions to ensure smooth recovery. At Orchids Breast Care Centre, patients receive detailed guidelines that include avoiding heavy lifting, refraining from vigorous exercises, taking medications and maintaining a balanced diet.

DO ONCOPLASTIC SURGERIES HAVE ANY SIDE EFFECTS?

Oncoplastic surgeries have fewer complications compared to mastectomy. Mastectomy results in significant side-effects such as body asymmetry, postural changes, emotional challenges such as



depression, decrease in self-esteem and overall reduced quality of life. Oncoplastic techniques minimize these issues and tend to enhance the patient's quality of life by providing more satisfying aesthetic outcomes.

TESTIMONIAL BY ONE OF OUR PATIENTS AT OUR CENTRE:

Mrs. Rohini Kale (Name changed for privacy)

When I relocated from Mumbai to Pune in 2022 and was diagnosed with breast cancer, not only was I in a state of major depression and anxiety, but was caught in a state of extreme uncertainty. I wondered whether I should return to Mumbai, a city I was so familiar with, having lived there for years. Ultimately, I decided to stay in Pune, and I am grateful for that decision every day. I have completed my chemotherapy, mastectomy, and breast reconstruction surgeries and am continuing my further treatment. The journey has been remarkably smooth, thanks to the exceptional care I received. Dr. Koppiker has been an incredible support from the beginning, demonstrating phenomenal knowledge and gentleness.

Orchid Breast Health by Jehangir Hospital and Prashanti Cancer Care Mission
32 Sassoon Road, Pune 411001

For appointments pls call

020 - 66811126/25656110

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/koppiker>

Linkedin: www.linkedin.com/in/dr-chaitanyanand-koppiker-12550a12



9 STEPS TO GREENER LIVING

Simple steps for a sustainable lifestyle. By **Prachi Rijhwani**

In a world where sustainability is not just a buzzword but a way of life, living green has become the mantra for many. Happily, adopting a sustainable lifestyle does not mean giving up all your creature comforts and living in a hut in the wilderness. Rather, it's about making small changes that add up to big impacts. So, grab your reusable water bottle, and let's look into living more sustainably.

1 **REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE**

This is truly the golden trio of sustainability. Start by reducing your consumption. Do you really need that fifth pair of shoes? Probably not. Next up, bring in reusing. Turn that old jam jar into a cute candle holder or use it to store your leftover pasta

sauce. And, finally, recycling. Sort your trash like a pro and give those bottles and cans a second chance at life.

2 **BYOB - BRING YOUR OWN BAG**

Say goodbye to single-use plastic bags and hello to your trusty reusable tote! Keep a couple stashed in your

car or by the door so you never forget them when you head out for groceries. You'll feel like a trendy eco-warrior as you strut through the supermarket.

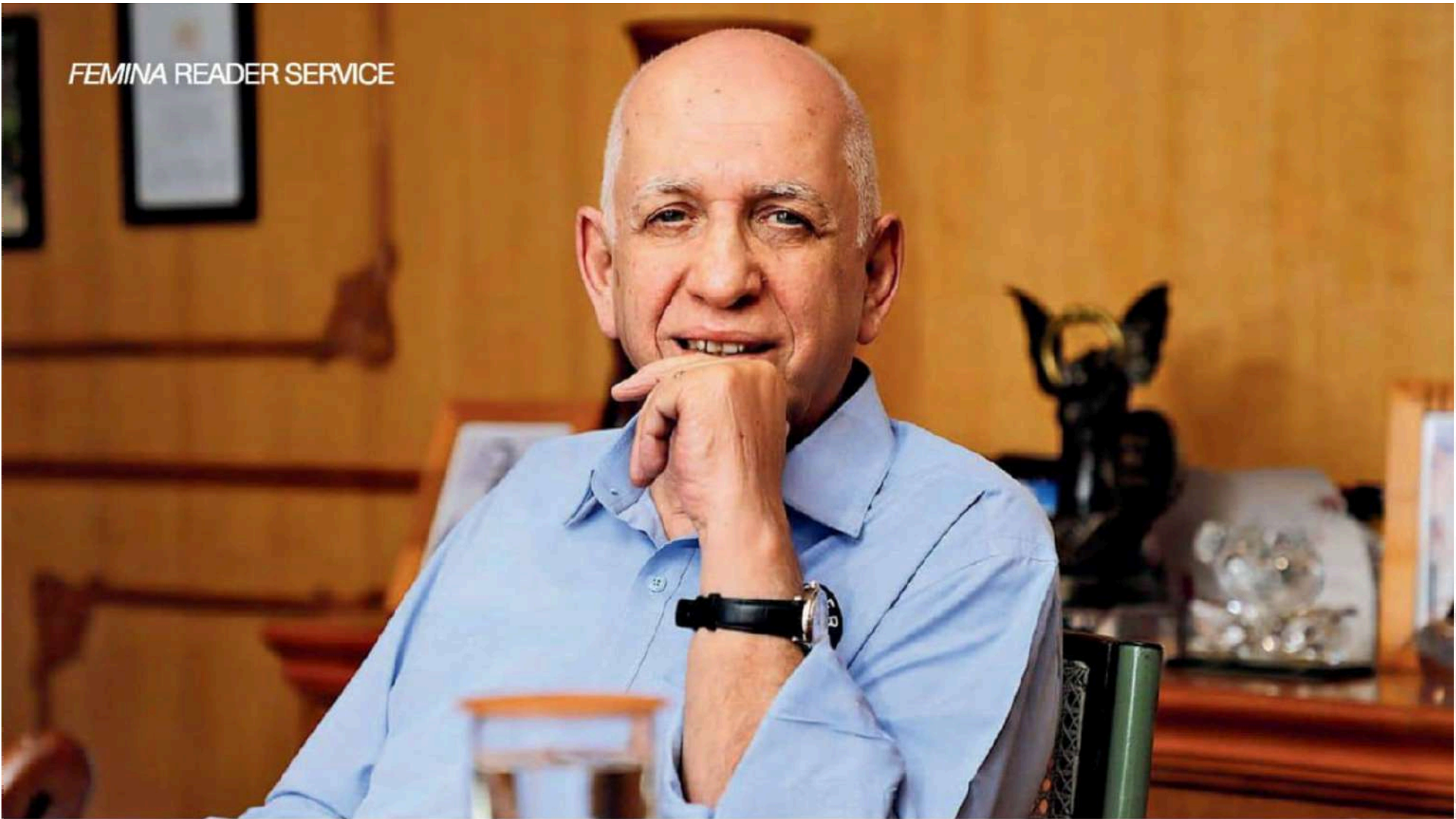
3 **CONSERVE ENERGY**

Turn off lights when you leave a room, unplug chargers when they're not in use, and swap out those energy-guzzling light bulbs for LEDs. Not only will you be saving the planet, but you'll also see the savings reflected in your electricity bill. Win-win!

4 **DITCH THE DISPOSABLE**

Say 'no' to single-use plastics such as disposable straws, cutlery, and coffee cups. Invest in reusable alternatives – you'll be >

Turn off lights when you leave a room, unplug chargers when they're not in use, and swap out those energy-guzzling light bulbs for LEDs



THE LEGACY OF FARROKH COOPER:

A JOURNEY OF VISION, INTEGRITY AND INNOVATION

In the bustling corridors of Cooper Corporation, the hum of machinery echoes the legacy of a family that has shaped India's industrial landscape. At the helm of this illustrious enterprise stands Mr. Farrokh Cooper, the Chairman & Managing Director, whose life and work embody tradition, innovation, and unwavering integrity. This year marks the centenary of Cooper Corporation's presence in India.

Born on January 13, 1945, Mr. Cooper's lineage boasts an impressive history. His paternal grandfather, Sir Dhunjisha B. Cooper, founded Cooper Engineering in Satara in 1922 and was the first Prime Minister of Bombay Presidency. Under Mr. Cooper's leadership, the company has grown immensely, launching innovative products and expanding its global reach.

Educated in London, Mr. Cooper graduated in agriculture from the College of Agriculture Pune in 1967. His

international education and agricultural background provided him with a unique perspective, blending traditional values with modern innovation. He shares his life with Maharookh Cooper, a fellow board member, and their daughter, Manisha, who joined the company after completing her Business Studies degree in Scotland.

Mr. Cooper's leadership is marked by a deep commitment to his employees and the community. The loyalty of Cooper's workforce is a testament to this, with three generations working within the company and more than 270 individuals boasting over 25 years of tenure. This dedication to people is reflected in the company's role as the largest employer in Satara, engaging over 3000 professionals.

Cooper Corporation has achieved significant milestones under Mr. Cooper's guidance. The company has

launched India's most cost-efficient, power-packed 3-cylinder gensets and established a technical collaboration with Ricardo UK for state-of-the-art engine designs. Their product range now includes high-quality engines and gensets, serving various sectors such as automotive, marine, and defense.

Beyond the corporate achievements, Mr. Cooper's story is one of resilience, innovation, and steadfast commitment to values. His vision and leadership have steered Cooper Corporation through significant growth and transformation, ensuring that the company not only thrives but also contributes to the community and the industry at large. As Cooper Corporation celebrates its centenary, it stands as a testament to Mr. Cooper's legacy of integrity and excellence, a legacy that will be remembered and celebrated for generations to come.



showing Mother Earth some love every time you sip your morning latte.

5 GREEN YOUR COMMUTE

If you can, ditch the car and opt for greener modes of transportation. Walk or bike for short trips, use public transport, or carpool with friends and coworkers. Not only will you be reducing your carbon footprint, but you might also discover some hidden gems in your neighbourhood along the way.

6 SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE BRANDS

Put your money where your values are – support

companies that prioritise sustainability. Look for eco-friendly products made from recycled materials and organic ingredients, and produced using ethical practices. Your wallet has the power to drive positive change!

7 GET BACK TO NATURE

Spend some quality time outdoors and reconnect with nature. Whether it's hiking through the mountains, picnicking in the park, or simply taking a stroll

through your local botanical gardens, immersing yourself in the great outdoors is a reminder of why it's worth protecting.

8 GROW YOUR GREEN THUMB

Start a little garden, even if it's just a few pots of herbs on your windowsill. Not only will you be reducing your carbon footprint by growing your own food, but you'll also get to enjoy the satisfaction of nurturing something from seed to plate.

9 SPREAD THE WORD

Share your passion for living green with friends, family, and anyone who will listen! Lead by example and inspire others to join you on your journey towards a more sustainable lifestyle.

Living green doesn't have to be complicated or overwhelming. By incorporating these simple steps into your daily routine, you'll be well on your way to reducing your environmental impact and living a happier, healthier life – for both you and the planet. So go ahead, and take that first step toward a greener future. Mother Earth will thank you for it! **F**

If you can, ditch the car and opt for greener modes of transportation. Walk for short trips, use public transport, or carpool with friends and coworkers

THE SATVIK CULINARY QUEEN

Sonal Barmecha

“When you love what you do, you can create a masterpiece.” believes **Sonal Barmecha** the creative force behind Sante Spa Cuisine

Sonal Barmecha, a committed fitness enthusiast, envisioned a space where people could indulge without guilt and was driven by a desire to redefine the concept of healthy eating. Santé Spa Cuisine is the culmination of this dream. With a steadfast belief in the power of food to heal and rejuvenate, Sonal envisioned a menu that would redefine culinary expectations.

Recognizing a void in the market for exceptional, yet health-centric dining, Barmecha saw an opportunity to create a haven that nurtured the mind, body, and soul. Instead of following trends, she created one. Santé Spa Cuisine wasn't just about serving food; it was about delivering an experience that catered to the sophisticated palate of the wellness-conscious consumer.

Sonal Barmecha's commitment to sustainability is evident in every aspect. Banana leaf straws, copper water glasses, and wooden food bowls



adorn the tables; Reflecting a deep respect for nature. She believed in harnessing the power of local produce, by incorporating ingredients like tapioca flour, activated charcoal, and multi-milletts into their dishes, they not only minimized the carbon footprint but also delivered an unparalleled taste experience.

Sonal Barmecha has in no time expanded the business from a small restaurant to a national chain located in multiple locations. Her focus on empowering women led to the creation of a franchise model. Barmecha believes in the importance of pursuing one's passions and making a positive impact on the world.

Nestled amidst the vibrant energy of Pune's Koregaon Park, this oasis offers an experience that is as nourishing for the body as it is delightful for the palate.

Sonal Barmecha's entrepreneurial spirit transformed a personal vision into a success. The intimate 40-seat beginnings of Santé Spa Cuisine marked the start of a culinary journey that would redefine the dining experience in multiple cities.



WATCH YOURSELF

You know you're growing and maturing when you notice these signs in your life. By **Prachi Rijhwani**

Growth and maturity: two words that can sometimes sound a bit heavy. Here's the thing: they don't have to. In fact, spotting the signs that you're growing and maturing can be quite a fun adventure. Think of it like finding a movie's 'Easter eggs'—these are small, delightful surprises that show just how far you've come. So, grab a comfy seat, maybe a cup of tea, and let's look into the signs that you're becoming the wonderfully mature person you're meant to be.

You're More Comfortable With Change

Remember when any little change felt like the end of the world? Now, you're more likely to say "Bring it on!" Whether it's a new job, moving to a different city, or just trying out a new hobby, change doesn't scare you any more; it excites you. This means you're growing. You're learning that change is just another word for opportunity.

You Prioritise Self-Care

Gone are the days when you would push yourself to the brink of exhaustion just to get everything done. You've learnt that taking care of yourself is just

as important as checking things off your to-do list. Whether it's through regular exercise, a skincare routine, or simply taking a break when you need it, you understand that you can't pour from an empty cup.

You Set Healthy Boundaries

This is a biggie! You've realised that saying 'no' isn't selfish; it's necessary. You no longer feel guilty about setting limits, whether it's with work, friends, or family. You understand that your time and energy are valuable, and you're more selective about how you spend them.

You're More Empathetic

Empathy is one of those traits that truly blossoms with maturity. You find yourself better able to put yourself in others' shoes. You listen more, judge less, and offer support without needing anything in return. It's a beautiful sign that you're growing emotionally and becoming more in tune with the people around you.

You're Less Reactive

Someone cuts you off in traffic and, instead of honking and cursing, you

take a deep breath and let it go. You realise that not everything needs a reaction and that peace is more valuable than being right. This calmness in the face of annoyance is a surefire sign of maturity.

You Value Quality Over Quantity

Whether it's with friendships, possessions, or experiences, you've learned that more isn't always better. You cherish the deep, meaningful relationships and let go of the ones that no longer serve you. Your closet might have fewer items, but they're ones you love and wear often. This shift in perspective is a clear indicator of personal growth.

You're Grateful For The Little Things

You find joy in simple pleasures. A beautiful sunset, a cup of good coffee, a kind word from a stranger – these small moments fill you with happiness and gratitude. You've learnt that it's the little things that make life truly wonderful. **F**

FASHION IN A NEW DIRECTION THROUGH DEGREE PROGRAM @ ATHARVA SCHOOL OF FASHION & ARTS

Tangerine: Sharpen your fashion skills with multi - dimensional learning at our own brand

In the realm of fashion and art, where creativity reigns supreme, Atharva School of Fashion & Arts stands tall as a beacon of innovation and empowerment. Nestled at the intersection of tradition and modernity, this esteemed institution has been shaping the future of the fashion industry for years, igniting passions, and fostering ground-breaking innovations. Mumbai is a destination for fashion trends and styles to aspiring fashion designers, as the global demand is expanding at a rapid rate.

Atharva is situated in the heart of Mumbai, a big educational hub with a marvellous infrastructure having a sprawling enclave of globalized education offering a spectrum of professional degree programme (B.A.in Fashion Designing) affiliated to University of Mumbai. Atharva School of Fashion & Arts stands out for its competitive advantage in terms of the quality of its fashion studies and its ultramodern facilities provides an outstanding professional training and infuses the necessary native skills, which are crucial for the

fashion business. Since its beginning, ASFA has been renowned for offering fashion fans a specialized education. Aesthetically designed, this Fashion School offers a stimulating and conducive environment for the all-round development of fashion students and facilitates them with fervid cross-functional learning under the visionary flagship of Mr. Sunil Rane.

The in-house clothing and accessory brand TANGERINE by ASFA has been well received and applauded at several fashion shows held at national as well as international levels, including Khadi Mahotsav in Mumbai. It is a fast-growing women's multi-channel fashion brand. Our vision is to create a name for ourselves with distinctive excellence in fashion design and technology and to make an impact with our brand. Tangerine is now collaborating with multinational outlets on a commercial level. This brand is to give students exposure to the commercial fashion industry in-house and help them to develop their own designs, styles & brand as an entrepreneur. Moreover,

Documentary Room is an added advantage where a great fashion film has the power to spark fantasy, reviving the history of fashion and confirming career aspirations. ASFA is well outfitted with the most recent technology to guarantee that the students have an unrivalled, top-tier platform on which to maximize their potential. A fashion research lab, PMGC lab, hi-tech sewing lab, exhibition gallery, and smart classrooms are just a few of the cutting-edge resources available.

The students are made aware of the latest trends in the fashion world and many of our students work with top level designers of the country. We welcome young minds to explore every possible opportunity at ASFA as we provide you the necessary guidance and direction towards channelizing your creativity in the best possible manner to discover the possibilities of a fusion between national & international fashion, its traditions & dynamic culture.

022-40294941
www.atharvafashion.com



FOR AN **ASIAN FIX**

Immerse yourself in Oriental flavours at **EIGHT**, Pune

Emerging as a destination for those who seek more than just a meal, Eight offers Pune's well-travelled diners a discerning culinary odyssey. The restaurant features an open section at the entrance with a stained wood railing defining the space and large faux stone walls with contemporary Asian-style seating. The bar extends from the open section into the indoor with custom-printed tiles with lotus motifs as its backdrop. A suspended rice paper hanging rack displays liquor. The sushi bar is at

the centre of the indoor area and divides the inside space into two sections. There are also large cloth canopies over the curved seating booths to define the spaces. The furniture and upholstery are contemporary Asian in style. Eight makes for a great spot to enjoy a meal with your loved ones after a long day of shopping at the mall.

What We Ate & Drank:

Inspired by the ancient lands of the Orient, Eight invites patrons to explore the flavours of Canton, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, and

Japan – a journey steeped in tradition, innovation, and culinary finesse.

We started with the Young Coconut Ceviche – tender coconut garnished with pine nuts, bell peppers, and corn. From the Bao section, we settled on the Cream Cheese and Mushroom, which came highly recommended by our server. It was hands down one of the best baos we've had in the city. The buns are filled with finely-chopped shiitake and button mushrooms cooked in a delicious cheese sauce, and served piping hot. The menu also offers a variety of soups, ramens, dimsums, and sushis,

which we skipped since we wanted to get to the small plates. For mains, we tried the Udon Noodles and the Thai Green Curry, which is served with jasmine rice.

We ended our meal with the Pandan Cheesecake, which came with a pandan reduction, and the Sticky Toffee Rum Pudding, which was served with vanilla ice cream; both the desserts were fabulous.

Location: Shop S02, Aur Coffee, Phoenix Mall of the Millenium, Pune-Bangalore Highway, behind Sayaji Hotel, Shankar Kalat Nagar, Wakad

Price Points: ₹1,500 for two without alcohol

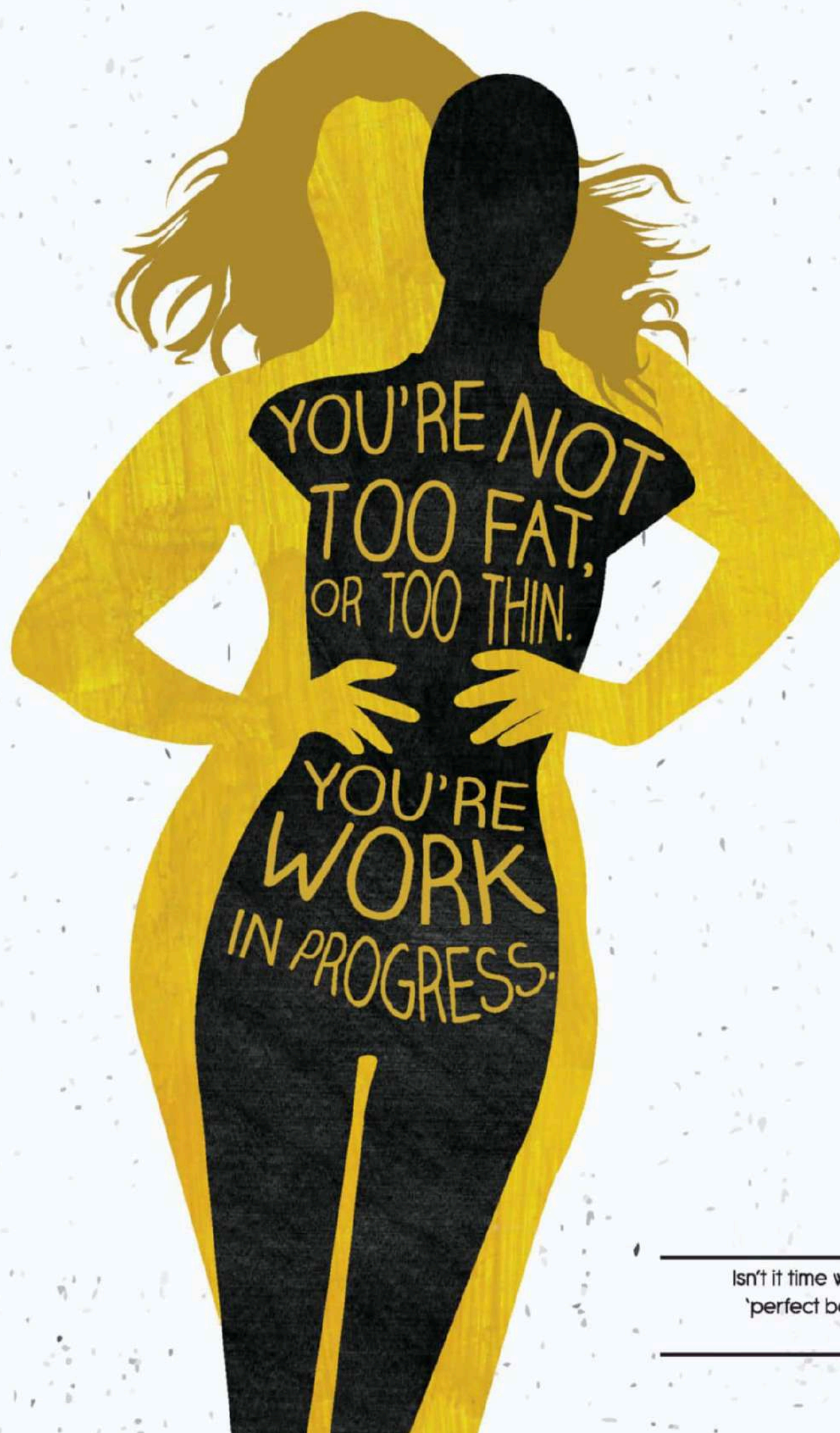
Timings: 11.30 AM to 11 PM 

By Ravina M Sachdev



FEMINA

BE UNSTOPPABLE



Isn't it time we did away with the
'perfect body' myth? Let's talk.
[@femina.in/fitness](https://www.femina.in/fitness)

Middle Eastern Magic

Embark on an exquisite culinary journey to the Middle East at **BAYROUTE** Powai

With multiple outlets in the city of Mumbai, Bayroute doesn't need an introduction. The restaurant has become known for its ancient recipes, authentic flavours, and family secrets that offer a culinary journey through the diverse and rich flavours of the Middle East.

The restaurant is divided into outdoor and indoor sections. The outdoor one features seating tables with canopies, and strategically-placed greenery. Once you step inside, you're transported to a different era thanks to the stunning Turkish art on the salmon-coloured walls, elaborate Moroccan prints on the sofas, the Arabian-style flooring, and the statement arches on the roof. It's casual but elegant and dreamy at the same time.

What We Ate & Drank: Bayroute features a new menu that takes you right from the Middle East up to the Mediterranean Sea. It includes classic Middle-Eastern and Mediterranean dishes from Egypt, Turkey, Morocco, Greece, Lebanon, and more, made with a signature

The restaurant is known for its ancient recipes, authentic flavours, and family secrets



finesse and expertise. The menu offers a curated selection of tantalising appetisers, delightful main courses and lip-smacking desserts that truly reflects the essence and vibrancy of the Middle Eastern and Mediterranean cuisines.

We started with the Roasted Tomato & Almond Hummus that comes topped with cherry tomatoes, caramelised garlic pods, and slivered almonds. We tried the Batata Harra next – this is a spicy Lebanese preparation of potatoes with garlic, pepper and fresh cilantro. Our server then recommended the Cottage Cheese Shawarma, which comes with fresh homemade khubz bread rolled with fries, garlic sauce, and pickled

veggies, and is served with garlic sauce and spicy schug. From the pide section, we had the Pide Zaffran, which comes loaded with saffron creme veggies, generously topped with herbs and cheese. Since the portions are quite big, we were full by the time we got to the mains, but we still ended up calling for the Koshari – traditional Egyptian rice with pasta and whole lentils, served with tomato sauce and fried onions, a must-have at Bayroute.

For dessert, we had the Baklava, which is served with Gulkand Ice Cream, and the Lotus Drama, a baked cheesecake served with Lotus biscuits and caramel sauce; both proved to be excellent choices to end our meal. And, of course, we ended the meal with a Turkish coffee – and you should too.

Location: Transocean House, Lake Boulevard Road, Hiranandani Business Park, Powai, Mumbai

Price Points: ₹2,000 for two (without alcohol)

Timings: 12 PM to 1.30 PM **F**

By Ravina M Sachdev



FEMINA

BE UNSTOPPABLE

Since when did sticking out like a
sore thumb become a bad thing?

Let's talk. [@femina.in/gossip](https://www.femina.in/gossip)

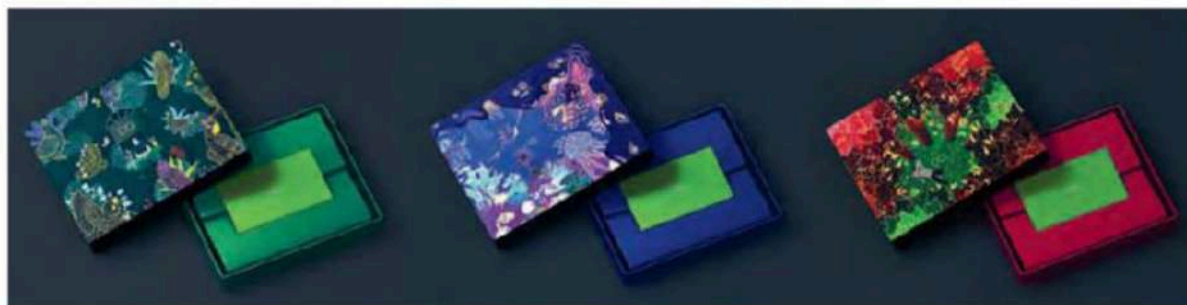


IT'S BETTER
TO BE HATED
BY EVERYONE,
THAN BE KNOWN
BY NO ONE.

HAMPERS TO HONOUR HEROES

What: Loopify's 2024 Signature Collection celebrating everyday environmental heroes

Loopify, India's largest zero-plastic store for gifting, has launched its 2024 Signature Collection, building upon their mission to eradicate plastic pollution by 2030. Each of the brand's annual collections is a testament to its dedication to both environmental consciousness and the joy of gifting. This year's signature collection continues Loopify's tradition of environmental activism, centring around the theme of celebrating ordinary individuals doing extraordinary things for environmental protection. Each hamper is named after and honours a particular environmental hero from a specific region in India. The heroes employ unique methods to safeguard their distinct landscapes, all working together to foster a cleaner, greener planet.



Here are some examples:

- Nesting Hero's Haven honours Gurpreet Singh, a teacher from Punjab who revived bird populations by building 30,000 mud nests. The hamper design features hand-drawn illustrations of birds by our in-house artists, paying tribute to his dedication.
- Ocean Guardian's Treasure salutes Aravind Tharunsri and

his daughter from Chennai, who have cleared 28,000 kilograms of plastic from the ocean. The hamper's design reflects the ocean's beauty with hues of blue and green, and incorporates elements that remind us of the plastic pollution threat.

- Crimson Canopy Tribute celebrates Abdul Ahad Khan, a Kashmiri labourer who planted

over 1,000 chinar trees. The hamper boasts a beautiful crimson design with hand-drawn chinari trees, honouring his contribution to Kashmir's landscape.

- Perfect for corporate and personal gifting, every product in these hampers is 100% plastic-free, chemical-free, cruelty-free, and handmade by local artisans across India. More importantly, each hamper goes beyond gifting to be a work of art and a conversation starter. Each hamper lid is designed to be repurposed as wall art.

Price: On request

Available from: loopify.world

Consciously Sophisticated!



What: The Desk To Dusk collection from Cosset Clothing

Cosset Clothing's Desk To Dusk collection is crafted from the finest linen blends and pure cotton poplin, embodying everyday luxury. From the ethereal allure of the Cookie Linen Coord Set in Matcha and Cocoa to the whimsical charm of the Popsicle Linen Dress in Rose Pink and Powder Blue, the collection has something for everyone. The brand believes in a small-batch production approach, staying true to its commitment of being planet-friendly. Coconut and pearl buttons adorn each garment, all part of its sustainable ethos.

Price: ₹3,600 onwards

Available from: cossetclothing.com

Summer Special!

What: The Summer Serenade collection from Armoire

Founded by a mother-daughter duo, Armoire embodies a vision of inclusivity and empowerment. Its latest collection offers co-ord sets perfect for nine-to-five looks, catering to diverse tastes with styles ranging from casualwear to elegant ensembles. Each piece offers easy sophistication in warm earthy tones as well as vibrant summer hues such as bright pinks, royal blues, and bold reds. The collection draws inspiration from delicate fabrics, and caters to women of all sizes, with custom sizing available at no extra cost.

Price: ₹2,999 onwards

Available from: shopatarmoire.com



Compiled by Kayal Arivalan

Ever since she was a young girl, Shilpa Dhingra was always clear about wanting to make her mark on the textile world. “Growing up in the setting of our family business Orient Craft, a pioneering garment design house established over 40 years ago, I envisioned taking over our family’s factory,” she recalls. “This dream was fuelled by my passion for the industry and my early involvement in product development at Orient Craft.” After completing her schooling at Convent of Jesus and Mary, Delhi, in 1993, she secured an internship with Tommy Hilfiger in 1995. “This experience exposed me to various facets of the fashion industry, including PR, textiles, retail, and manufacturing,” she reveals. After completing her nine-month internship, she went on to pursue her Bachelor’s degree in Manufacturing Management in Textile and Related Industries at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) in New York City in 1996. After graduating in 2000, she joined Access Code, a small LDP-based company in NYC.

Within two years, she realised she wanted to move back and focus on the family business. “I joined Orient Craft and played a crucial role in establishing and running the product development cell, which became a defining aspect of the company’s identity,” she shares. By 2020, it had witnessed remarkable growth and the team had expanded to 800 plus people.



FROM VISION TO SUCCESS

From her successes in the textile industry to founding Kanine India, **SHILPA DHINGRA** talks to **Ravina M Sachdev** about her journey

“The success of Orient Craft, with an annual turnover of 300 million USD until the pandemic, reflects our commitment to staying at the forefront of global fashion trends and delivering high-quality products to meet the diverse needs of our customers,” she adds.

Although Shilpa had

dedicated significant time to product development and design until then, she decided to foray into the pet fashion industry in 2020. “Having spent years in women’s wear, children’s clothing, and home furnishings, the shift towards promoting fashion and premium brands for pets felt like a natural and fulfilling

progression,” she elaborates. She researched the section for three years and worked on getting international brands to India before launching Kanine India in 2023. Kanine is a platform that hosts pet products from international brands including Boss, Tommy Hilfiger, and Trixie. “Looking ahead, my vision is to bring the very best in pet products within the scope of fashion, essentials, and wellness from across the globe to India,” she signs off.

“I joined Orient Craft and played a crucial role in establishing and running the product development”

GET YOUR FLIRT ON

Ravina M Sachdev decodes micro flirting and why it's best to test the waters before going all in



For some of us, flirting comes naturally. For the rest of us (this writer included), our skills are subpar at best. It's difficult making and maintaining eye contact or showing interest for different reasons – including being afraid of making a fool of ourselves. But guess what? Turns out, being average at attempting to get someone's attention is what's trending on the relationship bandwagon. There's even a name for it: micro-flirting. As the name suggests, the term is something like the little sister of big flirting – a more subtle way of establishing contact; dating foreplay, so to say.

“When done correctly, subtle flirting, rather than straight-up hitting on someone, works really well,” says Mumbai-based relationships coach Rishita Makhija. “Not acting desperate or giving in completely is a great way to get someone interested and reel them in.” Essentially, micro-flirting is about playing it cool and not acting too interested. It makes the other person wonder if you're interested in them or just being friendly. “However, there's a thin line between micro-flirting and playing too hard to get,” Rishita adds. “You don't want to scare them, just make the chase more interesting.”

Additionally, it works as a great way

to gauge someone's interest in you and to protect yourself from being rejected, as well as a great way to build your confidence in engaging with people.

No, simply walking up to someone and asking how they are does not count as micro-flirting!

Here's how to do it:

Work On Eye Contact

If maintaining eye contact is difficult for you, here's what you can do instead. Look at the person for three seconds, look away for a few seconds, and then back at them. The three-second technique works well to show your interest but isn't too direct either.

Get Closer

When you're talking to someone, lean in and stand closer to them. Additionally, use open body language and lightly touch their arm or shoulder to express interest.

Master Facial Signals

Smirking and winking are too direct. Instead, try giving genuine smiles and raising your eyebrows when interacting with them.

Be Playful

Playfully questioning their movie or song choices or even lightly roasting them for it can be a form of micro-flirting.

Engage In Conversation But Not Too Much

People who aren't good at flirting try to compensate by asking a zillion questions, which can make the other person feel like they're being interrogated. Whatever you do, avoid asking questions about their first dead pet or the toxic ex or their shortcomings. Instead, keep it light – ask them about where they're from and what they do, and allow them the chance to ask you questions too.

Rishita's advice: start with micro-flirting and, once you sense that the other person is interested and reciprocating, you can level up by offering to buy them a drink or asking them out. **F**



*Bridal Jewellery
Boutique*



KRISHNA KRISHNA LEGACY

BY

MADHAV JETHI



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CONTACT: ☎ 740-40-740-40

DIVERSIONS OF THE HEART

Distract yourself from your break-up.
Prachi Rijhwani lists healthy (and fun) ways to move on



Breaking up is hard, but moving on doesn't have to be a drag. Instead of drowning in heartache, why not channel your energy into activities that are fun and fulfilling, and might just lead you to new passions? Here are some exciting ways to refocus your attention and start a fresh chapter in your life.

REDISCOVER YOURSELF ON AN ADVENTURE

There's nothing like a change of scenery to help you gain perspective. Pack your bags and head to a new destination. Whether it's a solo trip to a nearby town or an exotic vacation, travelling can help you reconnect with yourself and see the world with fresh eyes.

DIVE INTO YOUR MOVIE LIST

Binge-watch your way to bliss! Remember all those movies you've been meaning to watch but never had the time for? Now's your chance! Create a cosy movie marathon set-up at home, grab some popcorn, and lose yourself in different worlds and stories. It's a perfect way to unwind and forget your worries.

COSY UP WITH A BOOK AND SOUP

There's something incredibly comforting about curling up with a captivating book and a bowl of hot soup. Pick up that novel you've always wanted to read or revisit an old favourite. The combination of

engaging literature and delicious soup can soothe your soul and help you relax.

SPEND TIME WITH YOUR LIFELONG BEST FRIENDS

Spend more time with your loved ones, whether it's having dinner together, playing games, or just chatting. Reconnecting with your family can remind you of the love and stability you have, making the healing process a little easier.

REIGNITE YOUR PASSIONS

Remember those hobbies you used to love or always wanted to try? Now's the perfect time to dive back in. Sign up for a class that interests you, whether it's music, dancing, cooking, or anything else that sparks joy. Reigniting your passions can bring a sense of fulfilment and excitement back into your life.

LEND A HELPING HAND

Volunteer for a cause! Helping others can be incredibly rewarding and a great way to shift your focus from your own problems. Find a cause that resonates with you and volunteer your time. Whether it's helping out at a local shelter, mentoring, or participating in community clean-ups, giving back can provide a sense of purpose and joy.

FIND PEACE IN SPIRITUALITY

Sometimes, a little spiritual reflection can help you heal. Whether it's meditation, yoga, or visiting a place of worship, tapping into spirituality can bring inner peace and clarity. It's a wonderful way to connect with your inner self and find balance.

SPRUCE UP YOUR LIVING SPACE

Refresh your space, refresh your mind. A clean and organised space can do wonders for your mood. Take some time to redecorate or reorganise your room or apartment. Whether it's decluttering your wardrobe or adding some new decor, a refreshed space can give you a fresh outlook on life. **F**

EIGHT TRAILBLAZERS REDEFINING SUCCESS

TALENTED INDIVIDUALS EMBARKING ON LIFE-CHANGING JOURNEYS

This article spotlights eight exceptional individuals who are revolutionizing their fields and transforming lives with their remarkable achievements and unyielding passion.

Passion Review discovers the inspiring stories of these trailblazers as they redefine what it means to succeed in today's world.

DR SOUBIR BHATT

Dr Soubir Bhatt is a Global Businessman, who is the Chairman of V&E Consulting Worldwide, Founder of V&E Swiss +++ Global Business Conglomerate, Advisory Board Member to 100 plus Companies Worldwide, Advisor to Government Of India's - NITI Aayog, Expert Panel Advisor to European Commission and Advisory Council Member at Harvard Business Review. Soubir holds American Ivy League Education and Indian Cultural Values, started his Career as Investment Banker from New York and towards completion of MD in Naturopathy Medicine and thereafter PhD/DM in Naturopathy & Ayurvedic Medicine. He has been featured on NYC Times Square, Wikipedia, WikiFlux and Google.

HARSHADA PATHARE

Harshada Pathare, an emerging author known for blending paranormal elements with romance and thrillers, has gained acclaim for her captivating storytelling. Her journey, marked by perseverance through numerous rejections, saw a breakthrough with "The Following," a gripping paranormal romance thriller. Pathare's work embodies resilience, courage, and human connection, resonating deeply

with readers. Actively engaging with her audience through social media and events, she fosters a strong community and exemplifies integrity, creativity, and empathy. Her distinct voice and ethical values position her as a significant influence in contemporary literature, inspiring others in the creative arts.

NEELU KUMAAR

Neelu Kumar, founder of NEEL'S DIVINE SOUL, is a Mumbai-based expert in Vedic Astrology, Numerology, Tarot Reading, and Vaastu Shastra. With a clientele spanning 10 countries, she has crafted over 10,000 planetary alignment charts incorporating numerological aspects. A graduate in Psychology, Neelu specializes in counseling, social, and cognitive psychology, focusing on human behavior and its impact. Her deep interest in Vedic sciences and Tarot cards complements her role as a life coach and mentor. She has transformed thousands of lives, bringing substantial changes through her holistic approach.

SALONI PANDA

Saloni Panda, @saloni.eats is a dynamic food and travel content creator. She has been a food show host on Times Now Food and Trel TV. Her remarkable achievements include multiple

national and international awards, alongside three prestigious entries into the Malaysia Book of Records and the World Book of Records UK. Embarking on her journey in 2017, Saloni has steadily garnered acclaim for her engaging Food and Travel content continuing to inspire and engage audiences globally. Her passion and dedication underscore her ascent as a prominent figure in the industry, poised for even greater accomplishments.

SHARON JOSEPH

Sharon Joseph, known as RJ Sharon, is an Indian English author, playback singer, lyricist, and radio jockey from Kerala. She sings in seven languages and writes lyrics in English and Hindi. Sharon's debut parapsychological thriller novel, "Terrors of Midnight," was released in December 2023 and published by Locksley Hall Publishing. The book, awarded the Rabindranath Tagore Literature Award, follows Hazel's struggle against deadly nightmares and premonitions. Sharon, a radio jockey at Sargakshetra 89.5 FM, is inspired by Korean dramas and aims to share fictional stories rooted in her fascination with parapsychology and paranormal experiences.

POOJA MALHOTRA

Pooja, influenced by her dietitian mother, pursued a career in nutrition. She holds a Master's in Food & Nutrition from Lady Irwin

College, specializing in Therapeutic Nutrition, and trained at AIIMS, New Delhi, graduating with a Gold Medal. Pooja has authored two popular nutrition books and has counseled thousands on achieving health goals through sustainable lifestyle changes. She handles various conditions, including pregnancy, hypothyroidism, PCOS, cancers, and childhood obesity. Recognized for her contributions, Pooja has conducted educational sessions in schools, clubs, and corporates. She firmly believes in the adage "You Are What You Eat."

MANISHA KOUSHIK

Manisha Koushik, a leading tarot expert, astrologer, & numerologist in India, has gained widespread recognition for her accurate predictions, ranging from World Cup match winners to pivotal business decisions. Her Sunday Tarot Column in the Hindustan Times is highly popular, & her viral videos on numerology have captivated social media audiences. Following in the footsteps of her father, renowned astrologer Dr. Prem Kumar Sharma, Manisha attributes her success to his mentorship & divine guidance. Her impactful readings have earned her prestigious awards, including the Black Swan Award for Excellence in Astrology & Numerology, the National Women Excellence Award 2020, & Asia's Top 100 Influential Women's Award 2023.

ARVEEN SETHI

Arveen Sethi is a dedicated yoga instructor specializing in Aerial yoga and founder of Levifly Aerial Yoga Studio in Gurgaon. She holds certifications in yoga and aerial yoga and started her journey during a challenging life phase. Meditation and yoga provided her with inner peace and resilience. Discovering aerial yoga was transformative, leading her to become a certified instructor in Bali. Arveen and her team promote mental and physical health at her studio. A proud mother of two, she values meaningful conversations and believes in pursuing dreams with determination. Her mantra: "If it makes you happy, it doesn't have to make sense to others."



Dr Soubir Bhatt



Harshada Pathare



Neelu Kumar



Saloni Panda



Sharon Joseph



Pooja Malhotra



Manisha Koushik



Arveen Sethi

READ BETWEEN THE TEXTS

Here's how to find out if you're in a textationship, and ways to navigate the situation. By **Ravina M Sachdev**



Remember the movie *You've Got Mail* where the two stars would constantly only exchange emails and have heart-to-hearts while at it? That's exactly what a textationship is – a relationship confined to texting and sending memes! Kathleen and Joe in the movie eventually ended up meeting at the climax of the film, but, in this dating trend, you don't really make plans to meet the person you claim to be in love with! Here

A textationship is a relationship confined to texting and sending memes! In this dating trend, you don't really make plans to meet the person you claim to be in love with!

are other signs that you're in a textationship...

YOU TEXT ALL DAY!

You text each other and update them about your day, about your life, and also vent about your best friend's boyfriend,

and get a high from it all. You most probably think it's a good sign that you have so much to communicate about on text, but are you even meeting IRL and actually going out? Talking really isn't the same as dating! ➤

TRANSFORMATIVE PATHS: MEET THE TOP 8 PERSONALITIES REVOLUTIONIZING THEIR LIVES AND FIELDS

This exclusive feature highlights eight remarkable individuals who are redefining success and innovation in their respective domains. **Passion Review** discovers how their unique approaches and unwavering dedication are setting new benchmarks and inspiring countless others to follow their transformative journeys.

MANOJ KUMAR SHARMA

Author Manoj Kumar Sharma has written a remarkable book on one of the most prevalent issue of women's life, Menopause a condition where female loses everything of her joy, happiness, glow and health. Along with this author has curated a gallery of pathetic fact of patriarchy and sufferings of female in it. With his long ahead impact he has embarked light upon the notion to break it as 'Naari hi naari ki shatru hai' no where woman supports another woman. Our society will always be thankful to such masterpieces and legends. His book, Me No Pause Me Play is reviewed, liked and preferred by mass section of the society as they all can feel it, relate it, enjoy it and learn from it.

NANDITA CHAKRABORTY

Nandita Chakraborty, a best-selling Indian-Australian author and disability advocate, was born in Kolkata and later moved to Melbourne. Initially pursuing fashion and banking, she shifted to writing after a traumatic brain injury in 2011. Her novellas "Meera Rising" and "Rosemary's Retribution" were finalists at the International Book Festival 2018. Her memoir "Dirty

Little Secrets" achieved notable success in India and Australia. She has won multiple awards, including the Global Stevie Awards and the Victorian Multicultural Award. Nandita writes for Melbourne's Indian newspapers and is pursuing a postgraduate degree in Film & TV.

SHWETA NAKRA

Dr. Shweta Nakra is a highly renowned Nutritionist, Dietitian, and wellness coach in Delhi. She holds certification in Diabetes management and provides assurance in effectively lowering high sugar levels to within a healthy range. Dr. Nakra has received numerous accolades for her exceptional work. In 2017, she was honored with the Best Dietitian & Healthcare Award, and in 2018, she earned the prestigious India's Healthcare Excellence Award. Her philosophy revolves around the belief that if we consider our bodies as temples with divinity within, we should treat them accordingly. Dr. Shweta Nakra emphasizes the importance of respecting our bodies and following our diets religiously. As the Best Dietitian in Rohini and Delhi NCR.

LUCKY

Lucky has been inspiring young minds in the education industry

for the last two decades.

Specialising in mentoring kids throughout their student and work life. She is an avid learner of life having a plethora of experience in conducting workshops. Her trainings specialise in Mindset Coaching, Life and Soft Skills Trainings for working professionals, chefs and school/ college students since 2002, she continues to empower others in creating their best lives. Her recent work Lucky's Life Book is a succinct peek in to her life journey and the forming of her winning mindset. It is the recipient of the International Impact Book Awards, Arizona USA and the Tagore Commemorative in India.

TANVEE SHETHIA

Tanvee Shethia, a passionate entrepreneur driven by impact. She says that entrepreneurship is not just about building businesses but also about creating ecosystems where innovation thrives and aspirations are realized. With 7 years in, founded her own business in the world of occultism and empowered more than 500 women to be financially independent and expanded the work in 7 countries by the age of 27! Her journey has been a testament to resilience and vision, to achieve milestones like winning the award for the best mentor in 2023. I'm committed to fostering a culture, aiming to inspire others to pursue their dreams fearlessly.

MIHIKA SHAH

Mihika Shah, founder of The Soul Kitchen (TSK), holds a BSc and MSc in Marketing from the University of Manchester. After working in radio and real estate, she launched TSK during the COVID-19 lockdown to spread joy through gourmet vegetarian food. Inspired by her late mother-in-law, Meena Shah, Mihika started with dips and expanded to diverse cuisines, including meals for Paryushan. Her son, Rivaan, and husband, Ronish, serve as the Chief Tasting Officers. TSK aims to be a one-stop shop for vegetarian delights made with love, celebrating each order as a personal accomplishment.

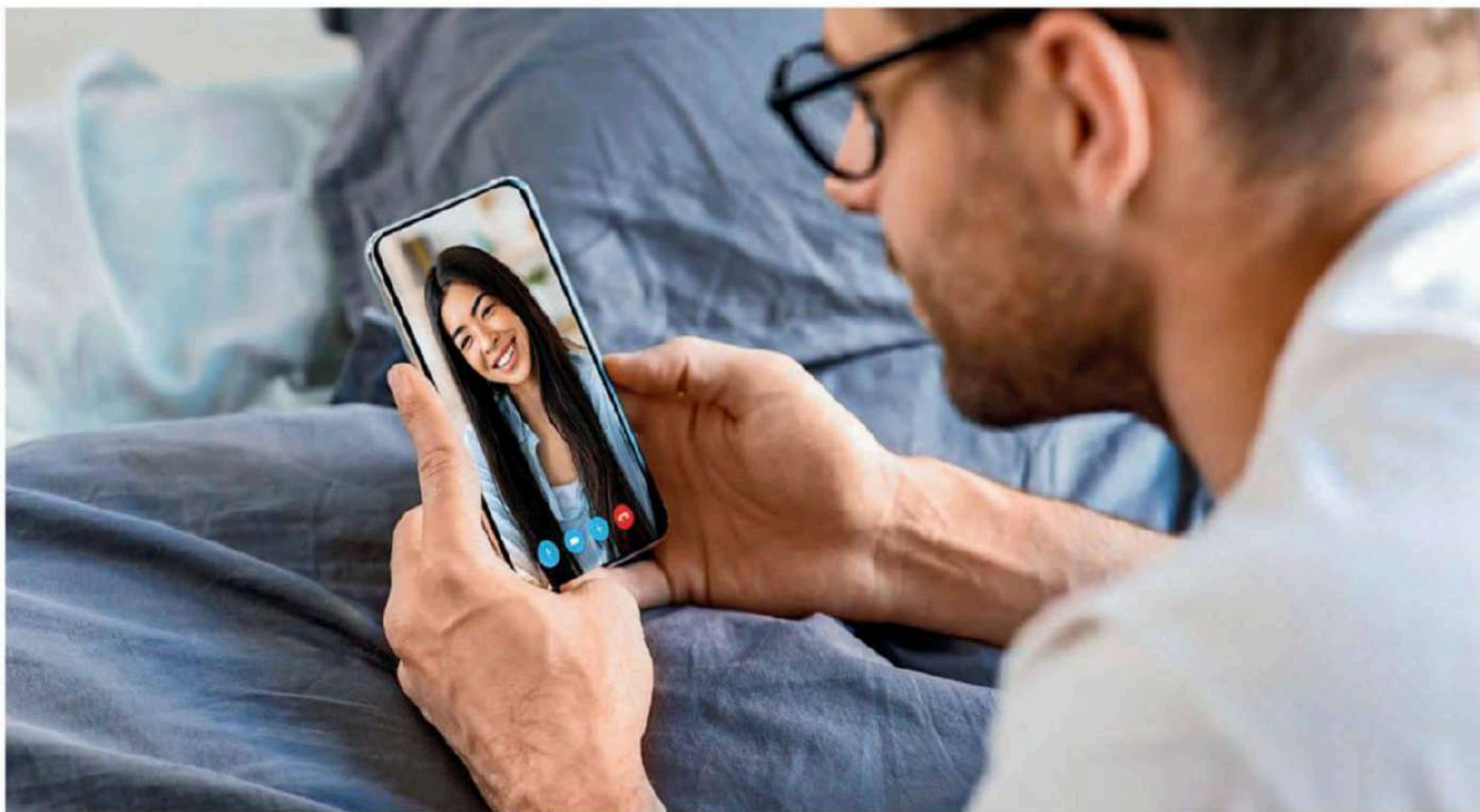
SHUBHAM PILLE

Shubham, the Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of Ukiyo Stays, is one of the most optimistic entrepreneurs you'll come across. By balancing his work and personal life and being present in every moment, he ensures to give his 100% in everything he does. From handling the team to being a wonderful host at his villas, he knows exactly what his guests and employees need and delivers it perfectly. Shubham's vision for his company is inspiring: he aims to make Ukiyo Stays user-friendly for both homeowners and guests, ensuring support and satisfaction for everyone who comes to him.

LAVINAA SHRISHRIMAL

Lavinaa Shrishrimal, MBA (University topper) from Pune is the visionary founder of lavinaa_Numerologist page on Instagram a pioneering consultancy that integrates numerology, graphology, business numerology, and vastu to empower individuals and organizations. With her extensive expertise and profound understanding of these ancient sciences, Lavinaa has established herself as a preeminent authority in the field. Dedicated to excellence and driven by passion, Lavinaa delivers personalized consultations that embody her commitment to empowering clients.





THEY NEVER ANSWER YOUR CALL

No matter the time of day, every time you've called them, they've ignored your call only to offer a lame excuse shortly after and continue a different conversation without actually calling you back. What the hell!

YOU DON'T MAKE PLANS TO MEET UP

Your virtual boyfriend stalls every time you bring up the topic of meeting them. Maybe you did hint at making plans to go on a date earlier, but the reply was dry and noncommittal, which is why you never brought it up again.

THEY'RE THERE... BUT NOT REALLY

Every time you hit the bars on a Saturday night with your girlfriends, you come back home and tell your virtual boyfriend all about it. When you get your nails done, you ask them to help you choose the colour. You're always including them in your

If your potential partner is not interested in spending time with you, it's a clear sign you need to invest your time and energy somewhere else

life and they're doing the same with you – you know about their routine, traumas, family history, and even their favourite movie character. But, while it feels like you're connecting and building something, you never really know what they're doing in the time periods between messages and who they're with.

YOU'RE NOT REALLY A PART OF THEIR LIFE

In traditional dating, you add your partner to every social media account you're active on, but it's different when you're only having a virtual relationship with them. They'll tend to not add you on Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn, and just reserve you for one part of their life: texting. The rest is off-limits.

HOW TO NAVIGATE A TEXTATIONSHIP

Meeting someone online, getting to know someone on texts for a week or so, and getting comfortable before seeing them IRL is different from being in a textationship and only exchanging texts forever. If the latter happens, ensure you nudge your partner a few times to meet up. If you sense they're keeping you hanging, it's best to end things. If your potential partner is not interested in spending time with you, it's a clear sign you need to invest your time and energy somewhere else. Long story short: if your attempts to turn the virtual relationship into a real one fail, start distancing yourself from the person by limiting the number of texts. **F**

CAPTURING THE OLYMPICS – THROUGH HER LENS

GITIKA TALUKDAR, the first and only female sports photojournalist from India to cover the Paris Olympics, spoke to **Kayal Arivalan**



Gitika Talukdar is a well-known name in sports journalism, covering some of the most prestigious global sporting events. Her portfolio boasts coverage of the Women's FIFA World Cup 2023 in Australia and New Zealand, the Qatar FIFA World Cup 2022, the FIFA Women's World Cup 2019 in France, the Russia FIFA World Cup 2018, the ICC Cricket World Cup 2019 in London, the Indian Premier League series, the Commonwealth Games, and the South Asian Games.

Born and brought up in Assam, Gitika earned her master's degree in Sports Management from Seoul National University; she also received a scholarship from the Ministry of Sports, Republic of South Korea, in 2020.

Her path to the Paris Olympics built on her experience covering >

“I am the first woman photographer from India and among very few in the world who have received direct accreditation from the International Olympic Committee”



the Tokyo Olympics 2020 amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite many media outlets opting out, she bravely covered the events, showcasing her commitment and resilience. This experience set the stage for her work in Paris. As we go to press, Gitika is covering the Olympic and Paralympic events at various venues. Her role as an accredited journalist-photographer is sure to inspire many women to pursue careers in this field.

Gitika says, "First of all, I would like to thank the International Olympic Committee (IOC) for granting me direct accreditation for the Paris Olympic Games 2024. I am the first woman photographer from India and among very few in the world who have received this direct accreditation this year from the International Olympic Committee. It is an honour; I am grateful to the IOC for their generous

"I have been getting a lot of love and respect from the people of India, especially from the people of Assam and the neighbouring states, through various social media platforms"

decision to provide me with press-by-name direct accreditation due to a dedicated allocation with a vision to promote women sports journalists and photographers from different countries as a mark of appreciation and encouragement towards their dedication in the field of sports."

Gitika's enthusiasm was evident as she prepared for Paris: "I received my accreditation card last week, and I am super excited. I have already set up my gear and other technical equipment. After the news got published in various newspapers and on social media platforms, I have been getting a lot of love and respect from the people of India, especially from

the people of Assam and the neighbouring states through various social media platforms. I have received greetings from the Chief Minister of Assam, Dr Himanta Biswa Sharma, who posted a very warm and motivating message in his Facebook post, which is really boosting my energy. The Union Minister of External Affairs for States, Pabitra Margherita, also posted and greeted me through social media."

Gitika has carefully planned her schedule to grab as many great shots of Indian athletes at the Olympics as possible. As always, she hopes to do "justice to my job and bring out the best of the best." **F**



Srimeyee Sarkar and Sriparna Sarkar

TURNING PASSION INTO A JOURNEY

RANGMILAP IS A DREAM REALISED BY TWO SISTERS, **SRIMEYEE SARKAR AND SRIPARNA SARKAR**

A HUMBLE BEGINNING

It's a dream dreamt by two sisters. While growing up as kids, we always discussed about venturing into projects together. Little did we know then, Universe conspires for you as you put forth. When the clock struck the right note in 2016, we just decided to plunge. Naive, humbled, and inexperienced, but backed by passion, zeal and enthusiasm, we left our white collared IT professional profile, and set out in a new journey, which had to be regarding fabrics, designs, and sarees as that was always our common point of intersection. Blending the desire of working with craftsmen at the ground most level with our dreams to soar high, thus Rangmilap was born.

THE PROMISE OF HANDWOVEN

Bridging the gap between the rich rural skills in our textiles and urban quest of adding a styling oomph factor in attire, this is where we come in. Working directly with weaver families running 50 looms in remote corners of Bengal, closely coordinating with almost 200 skilled karigar working on specialised designs and concepts curated on silks tussars and cottons, and brainstorming with printers executing the specially crafted



blocks and blends of colours on tussars and silks, we do it all ourself. Thriving to make unique catalogue, we make sure it adds value not only to urban wardrobe but to rural finance as well. In the tough times of pandemic, Rangmilap had started a daring project of migration of weavers, working in cotton and finding it hard to earn a basic living, to silk weaving. It was a huge risk, keeping in mind the uncertainty in the market, inflated price of silk yarn, and our inexperienced background. We can state proudly, we have been able to sail through the tough times with our extended weaver families.

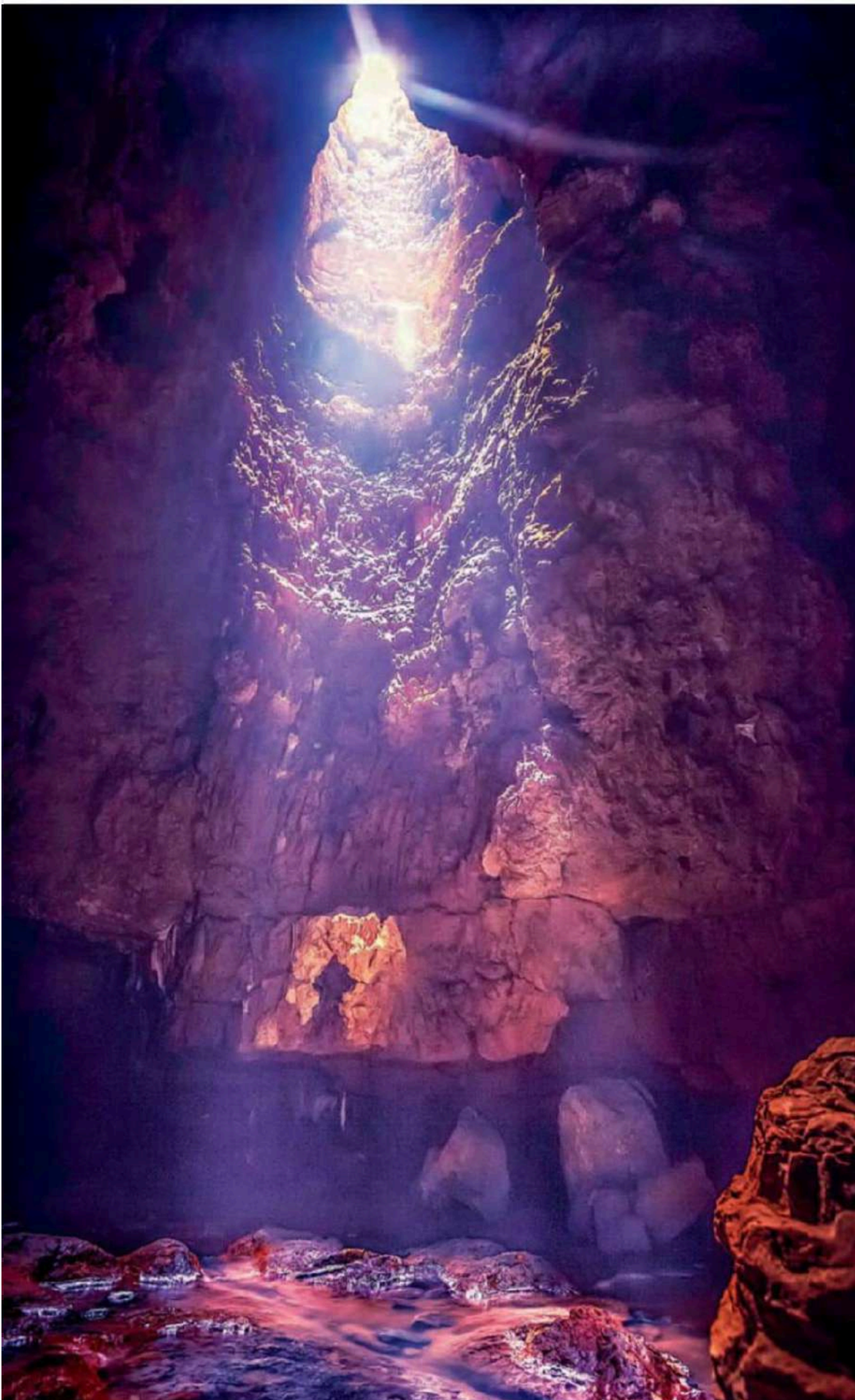
FUTURE VISION

A home grown brand with a humbled background visioned to mark a difference at national level, working tirelessly in rich tradition of Indian handloom and textiles, curating products which will satiate the needs of urban palette but with a difference, and being a hand holder between rural finesse and the urban style quotient.



MEGHALAYA'S MUST-VISIT

The famous MAWMLUH CAVE in Meghalaya has been recognised by UNESCO and is now one of a hundred IUGS Geological Sites



The Mawmluh Cave in Meghalaya has now been elevated. Krem Mawmluh – as it is locally called – has been selected by the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) as one of the first 100 IUGS Geological Sites in the world. It is also a UNESCO recognised site.

Krem Mawmluh is known for its stalagmite structures and other rock formations and is currently one of the most important visitor destinations in NorthEast India. At a length of 4,500 metres, it is also known to be one of the longest cave systems in the Indian subcontinent. Sited in Sohra in the East Khasi Hills District, it is easy to reach from the hill station of Shillong, about 60 kilometres away.

Mawmluh Cave was the first cave to be explored by a British official in 1844, and has gone on to become one of the region's major attractions. It is known to cocoon a pool within that is said to have been formed as a result of the convergence of five different rivers.

A SUBJECT OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY

Since these and other caves like it are located in Sohra – better known as Cherrapunji and one of the wettest places on Earth – scientists have been studying the stalagmites to help predict monsoon patterns and droughts. In particular, researchers from the United States of America have studied the cave for the past 50 years for the growth of the stalagmites, having found what they believe is an unusual connection between the amounts of winter rainfall in NorthEast India and the climatic conditions in the Pacific Ocean. State officials point out that the 10 longest caves in the country are all in Meghalaya.

It is worth noting that, because of its geological structure, the atmosphere within the cave might cause dizziness in some individuals, therefore it is advisable for those with acute respiratory conditions to avoid venturing too deep into Mawmluh Cave.

→ **Getting There:** Mawmluh Cave is well connected via road and rail. Local buses and taxis are easily available.

→ **Nearest Railway Station:** Guwahati Railway Station

→ **Nearest Airport:** Guwahati Airport 



Designer: Lalia Dattagupta

SANSKRITI KOLKATA:

A LEGACY OF FUSION CLOTHING, HANDCRAFTED SARIS, AND JEWELLERY

Sanskriti Kolkata is a distinguished brand in the realm of ethnic and fusion wear, specialising in handcrafted saris and jewellery. Established 29 years ago, the brand has carved a niche for itself in Kolkata and beyond, blending traditional craftsmanship with contemporary aesthetics.

BRAND PHILOSOPHY

Sanskriti Kolkata is built on the pillars of quality, heritage, and sustainability. The brand emphasises the importance of preserving traditional crafts and supporting local artisans. Ethical sourcing and eco-friendly practices are integral to their production process.

CUSTOMER BASE

With a diverse clientele that includes both young fashion enthusiasts and connoisseurs of traditional attire, Sanskriti Kolkata has a strong presence both online and offline. Their flagship store in Kolkata is a haven for sari lovers, while their online store caters to a global audience,



PRODUCT RANGE

Fusion Clothing:

Design Philosophy: Sanskriti Kolkata's fusion clothing is a perfect amalgamation of traditional Indian styles and modern silhouettes. The brand focuses on creating outfits that cater to the contemporary woman who values tradition but also seeks comfort and modernity.

Handcrafted Sarees:

Craftsmanship: The sarees at Sanskriti Kolkata are a testament to the skilled artisans who weave magic into every piece. The brand offers a diverse range of sarees from different states of India and then value addition is done to give it a designer look.

Men's Wear :

Ethnic collection comprising of block printed and kantha work dhotis alongwith traditional kurta and jackets is sure to mesmerize for every formal and occasional wear.

Jewelry:

Variety: Sanskriti Kolkata's handcrafted premium jewelry collection complements its clothing line perfectly. The contemporary pieces also make a fashion statement with fusion outfits.

offering the same level of personalised service and quality assurance.

Sanskriti Kolkata stands as a beacon of traditional Indian craftsmanship and contemporary design. With a legacy spanning 29 years, the brand continues to innovate while staying true to its roots, offering a unique blend of fusion clothing, handcrafted saris, and jewellery. As it looks to the future, Sanskriti Kolkata remains committed to celebrating and preserving India's rich textile and craft heritage.

"The collection is a celebration of craft and colour" says designer Lalia DATTAGUPTA of SANSKRITI on her latest collection on artisanal couture.

Encouraged by her almost three decades long experience, the look is contemporary, where Indian techniques, embroideries and textiles are used in a modern way. The perfect blend of timeless elegance with functional versatility.

2 C, Cornfeild Road, Ballygunge – 19

12 Jamir Lane Ballygunge – 19

☎: 9603042696

@: #sanskriti

f: #sanskriti



GIVE YOUR HOME A GREEN UPGRADE

What: Planters from Bonasila
Transform your indoor and outdoor spaces with Bonasila's new planters. Beat the heat by bringing the outdoors inside with this range of chic and lightweight indoor planters, perfect for adding a touch of nature to your home or office. For outdoor areas such as terraces and urban gardens, Bonasila offers

a collection of contemporary planters that will breathe life into your surroundings with vibrant colours and captivating designs. With a variety of sizes, styles, and colours to choose from, there's something for every aesthetic and spatial requirement.

Price: ₹3,000 onwards
Available from: bonasila.com

A JOURNEY STITCHED IN VIBRANCY

What: The summer collection from Onset Homes

Discover the essence of nature in Onset Homes's latest summer collection, curated in collaboration with Manovikas Kendra, an institution nurturing the artistic talents of differently-abled students in Kolkata. The Flair of Nature collection showcases vibrant designs inspired by flowers, leaves, and birds, translating them into statement soft

furnishings for your space. By sharing a portion of the profits with the students, Onset Homes aims to empower and encourage them to explore their artistic potential further. Each piece reflects the joy of the students as their art finds a place in your home, creating a meaningful connection between art, nature, and social responsibility.

Price: ₹900

Available from: onsethomes.com



LIGHT UP!

What: Adamas and Arbor decorative lighting from Tisva

Transform your home with Adamas and Arbor, Tisva's latest collection of decorative lighting. Each luminaire in this collection is crafted to infuse your space with sophistication and style. Inspired by diamonds, the Adamas Chandelier exudes luxury with its smoky black and white K9 crystals, creating mesmerising patterns of light and shadow.

The Adamas Wall Light boasts sleek cuts of K9 crystals that refract and disperse light, casting a radiant glow.

Expect versatile designs suitable for bedrooms, living rooms, and even bathrooms.

Price: Arbor: ₹8,999 onwards; Adamas: ₹14,990 onwards

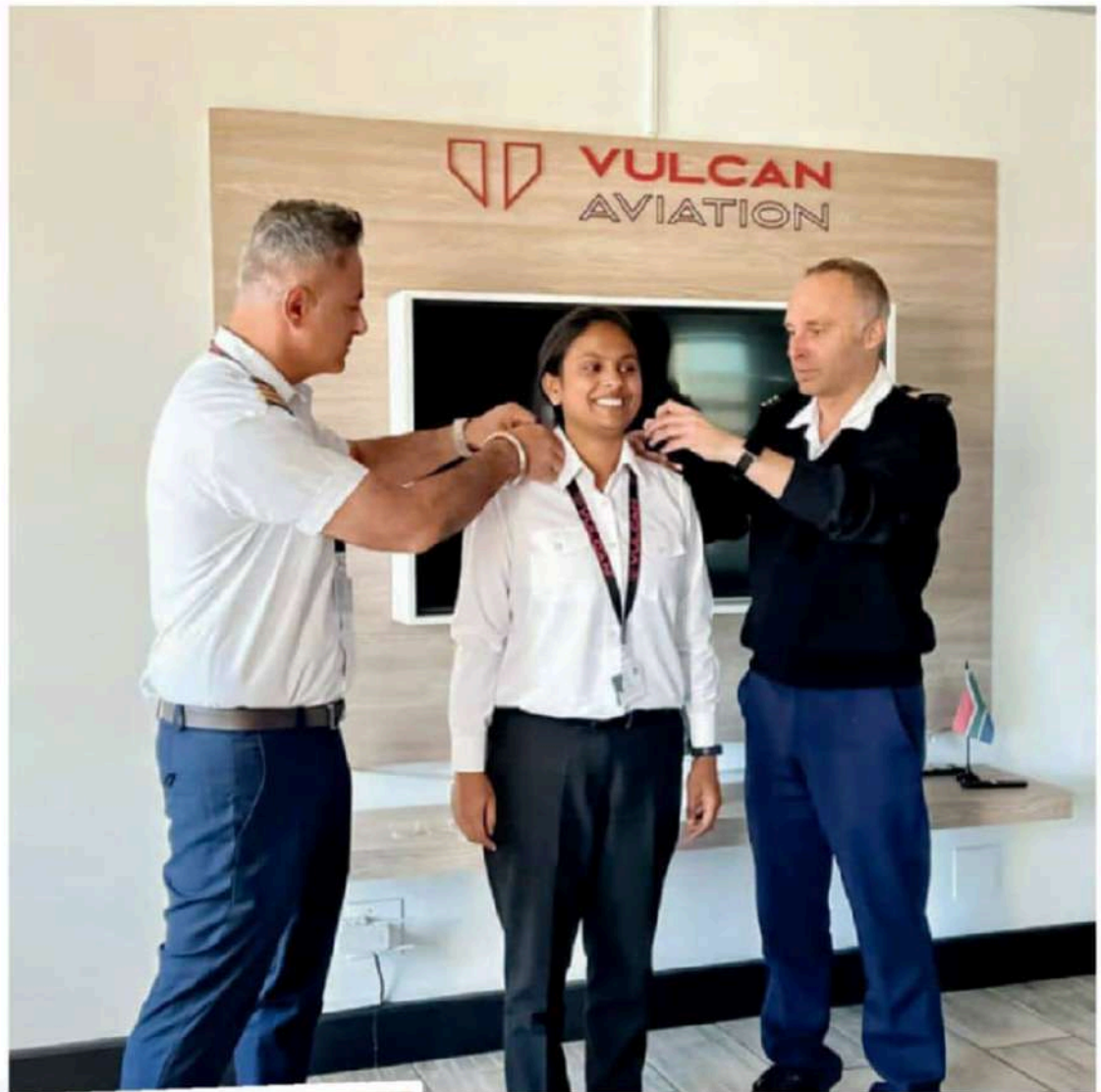
Available from: A, Ground Floor, Esteem Regency, Tisva Legacy Tech #6, Richmond Road, Shanthala Nagar, Ashok Nagar, Bengaluru

FLYING HIGH!

Kayal Arivalan profiles **MM JAYASHREE**, the first Badaga woman to earn a pilot licence

When she recently got her pilot licence, it was a moment of celebration and pride for MM Jayashree and her community from the Nilgiris district in Tamil Nadu. She is the first woman from the Badaga community to achieve this feat. Daughter of J Mani, a retired Village Administrative Officer from the village of Kurukathi near Kotagiri in Tamil Nadu, she pursued a degree in Computer Science and Engineering from Coimbatore and later joined the IT sector. But the pandemic changed something within young Jayashree – she decided she wanted to chase her childhood dream of becoming a pilot.

Jayashree's quest to soar through the skies led her to Johannesburg, South Africa. Her determination overcame initial reservations, even from her family. With each flight lesson and every written



The pandemic changed something within young Jayashree, and she decided to chase her childhood dream of becoming a pilot

exam, she steadily motivated herself towards her goal.

After six months of rigorous training, Jayashree recently returned home, having not only cleared eight written exams and two oral tests but also having completed an impressive 70 hours of flying. Her journey, however, doesn't end here. She is set on earning a commercial pilot licence next.

At the age of 27, Jayashree has not only shattered stereotypes but also given her community new aspirations and goals!



MONSOON MUST-HAVES FOR YOUR SKIN

Here's the skincare essentials guide you need to keep your skin healthy and glowing through the rains. By **Kayal Arivalan**

The monsoon brings with it a sense of relief from the scorching heat of summer, but it also introduces a unique set of challenges for your skin. The increased humidity, unexpected rain showers, and fluctuating temperatures can be challenging when it comes to skincare.

Dr Spoorthy Nagineni, MD DVL,
Consultant Dermatologist

with the Zennara Clinic, Hyderabad, recommends a comprehensive skincare regimen for the monsoon season, emphasising the importance of using specific products and

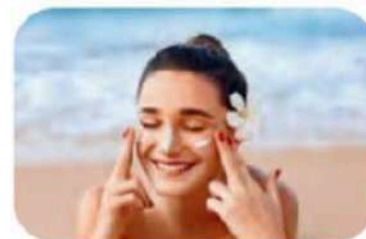
the consumption of certain foods to maintain healthy skin.

Here is an expert take on skincare essentials to keep your skin healthy and glowing throughout the rainy season.

*THOUGH THE SKY MIGHT BE
OVERCAST, **UVA RAYS CAN
PENETRATE AND CAUSE DAMAGE***

Sunscreen

Why? Protects the skin from UV damage



Even though the sky might be overcast, UVA rays can penetrate through the clouds and cause skin damage. It is crucial to ➤



– Dr. Kavitha Gautham

The Power of Touch

How Massages Benefit Infants

When carried out in the right manner, baby massages entail several benefits for the infant – from improved growth and development to better bonding with parents to helping with consistent sleep habits.

Baby massages are not a new phenomenon. They exist since ancient times, and many of us have surely seen our grandmothers massage infants with experienced fingers, in our homes. However, with shrinking families and increasingly hectic lifestyles, many families find it hard to keep up with such practices. It is important that we revive and follow the tradition of baby massages, as it provides a whole host of benefits for your little one.

Benefits of Baby Massages

There are several benefits to regular baby massages, which are mentioned below.

Better bonding: One of the most important benefits of massages is that it helps to release oxytocin, or the 'love

hormone', thereby deepening the bond between the parent and baby. It also provides a way for the parent to better understand the baby's cues.

Boosting weight gain: Regular massages also help to enhance healthy weight gain in growing infants

Improved overall well-being: Massages help to improve circulation, stimulate bowel movements, and alleviate colic. **Better sleep:** Massages promote a sense of calm relaxation, thereby augmenting the quality of sleep. When the newborn sleeps well, the mother also benefits from periods of relaxation.

Developmental benefits: Structured infant massages help to promote motor skills and body awareness, improved muscle tone, joint mobility, tactile stimulation, and better self-regulation.

Techniques of infant massage

Massages should be given in a calm, peaceful room with minimal distractions (soft music can be played). The temperature should be monitored to make sure it is suitable for the baby. The baby can be given a bath in lukewarm water before the massage. Organic coconut oil is a preferred option for the massages as it is easily absorbed. The massage should be centred on circumductive motion in trunk, and provided with gentle pressure and rhythmic touch.

Handle with care

For a safe massage experience, please follow the below-given guidelines:

- ◆ Get your paediatrician's opinion before starting a massage routine.
- ◆ Choose an appropriate surface that is comfortable for the baby.
- ◆ Always do a patch test on a small area of skin surface with the oil to be used. Continue use if no adverse reaction is seen.
- ◆ Gentle pressure should be applied, with smooth strokes, avoiding stimulus-causing tickling
- ◆ Don't massage over soft parts (such as anterior fontanelle or top part of the baby's head)
- ◆ Make sure that the baby is calm and alert during the massage. If the baby is crying or seems uncomfortable, don't force it.
- ◆ Avoid giving the baby a massage immediately after feeding. Also, wait for some time after the massage before feeding the baby. In both cases, a break of about 20 minutes should do.



BloomLife Hospital has launched a brand-new Art of Birthing Studio and Baby Aqua Spa at its healthcare centre in Ashok Nagar. Services include a full range of fun activities that help the baby's growth and development, and a complete set of postpartum services for mothers. For more information and to visit the facility, please reach out to us at

+91-7299911120 / +91-7401199423 for details.



BloomLife
HOSPITAL

Contact: 044-4000 0009 / +91-72999 11102/04/50
Velachery / Ashok Nagar

www.bloomlifehospital.com

@dr.kavithagautham and @bloomlifehospital

apply sunscreen with at least SPF 30 about 20 minutes before going outside. Reapplication every few hours is necessary, especially if you are exposed to rain or perspiration.

Moisturiser

Why? Keeps the skin hydrated without clogging pores



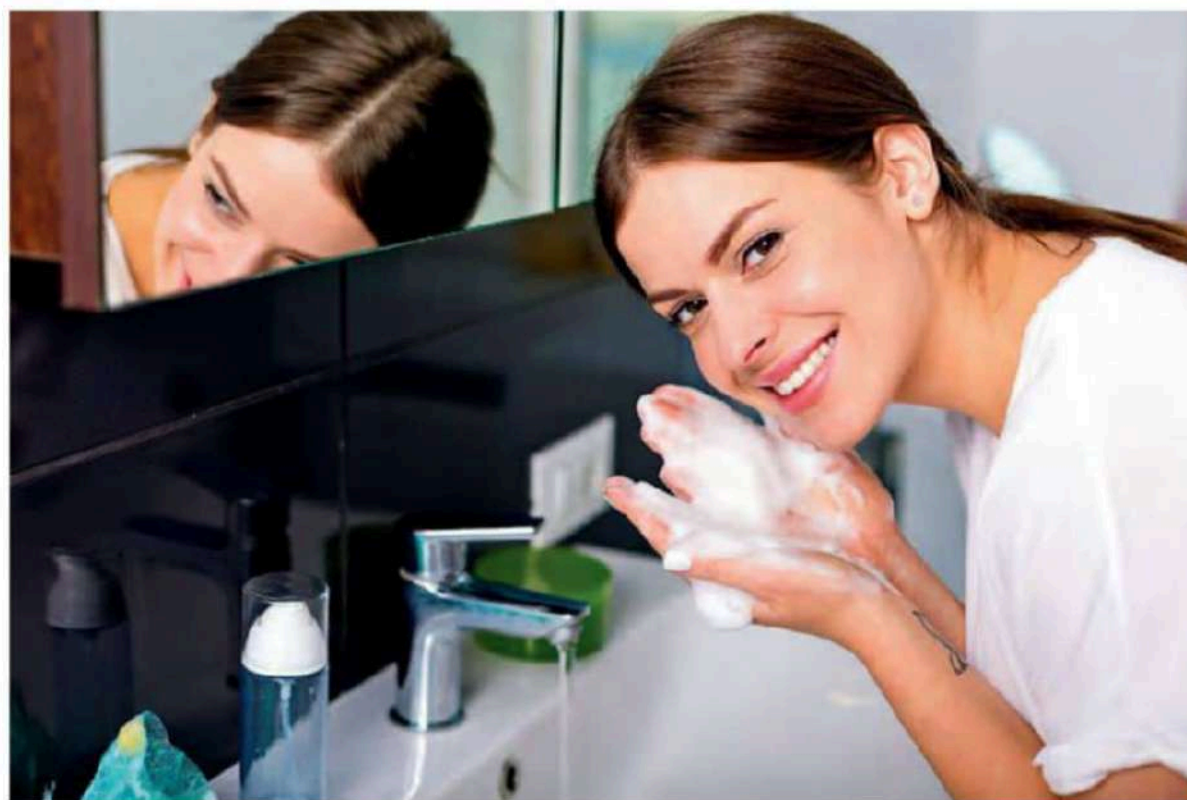
During the monsoon, humidity levels are high, but the skin can still get dehydrated. A lightweight, water-based moisturiser helps maintain hydration while preventing pores from becoming clogged, which is especially important for those with oily or acne-prone skin.

Cleanser

Why? Removes dirt, oil, and impurities



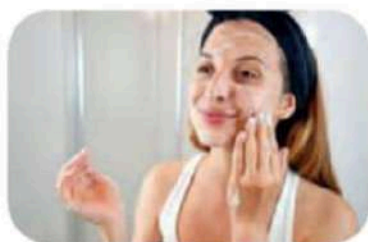
The choice of cleanser should be tailored to your skin type. For oily or acne-prone skin, a foaming cleanser or one containing salicylic acid can help control excess oil and prevent breakouts. For dry or sensitive skin, a gentle, pH-balanced cleanser is ideal to avoid irritation and maintain the skin's natural barrier.



EXFOLIATION HELPS KEEP THE SKIN SMOOTH **BUT SHOULD BE DONE SPARINGLY**

Exfoliator

Why? Removes dead skin cells and promotes cell turnover

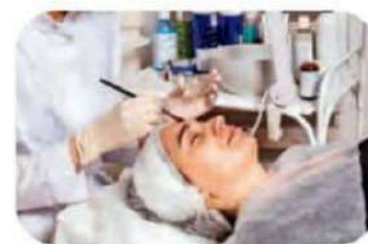


Exfoliation helps keep the skin smooth and clear but should be done sparingly. Using an exfoliator just once or twice a week prevents over-exfoliation, which can strip the skin of its natural oils and lead to dryness and irritation.

Gentle exfoliants such as those containing AHAs (alpha hydroxy acids) or BHAs (beta hydroxy acids) are effective.

Chemical Peels Or Hydration Treatments

Why? Enhance skin texture and hydration



Professional treatments such as chemical peels can help rejuvenate the skin by removing dead skin cells and promoting the growth of new, healthy cells. Hydration treatments, such as those using hyaluronic acid, can provide deep hydration, which is particularly beneficial during the monsoon when skin can feel both oily and dehydrated. **F**

CARE FOR YOUR SKIN INSIDE OUT

In addition to topical skincare, Dr Spoorthy emphasises the importance of a nutritious diet to support skin health

FRESH FRUITS

→ **Citrus Fruits:** Rich in vitamin C, these fruits boost collagen production, which helps keep the skin firm and bright. They also have antioxidant properties that protect the skin from the damage caused by free radicals.

HYDRATING VEGETABLES

→ **Cucumbers:** High in water content, cucumbers help keep the skin hydrated and fresh, which is crucial during the humid monsoon season.

→ **Tomatoes:** Rich in lycopene, a powerful antioxidant, tomatoes help protect the skin from UV damage and aid in maintaining a youthful appearance. Lycopene also has anti-inflammatory properties, which can help reduce skin irritation and redness

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