April 2024 ₹ 100

Woman's era

LEADING **LADIES LIGHTING** THE PATH

The Lexicon Art
@Delhi Book Company,
M-12, Connaught Place, New Delhi - 110001
011-41618159 ● 9810160122 ● 9560358880
info@TheLexiconArt.com ● TheLexiconArt@gmail.com

THE LEXICON ART

April 2024 ₹ 100

Woman's era

YOUR RIGHT TO CHOOSE

MIND'S APPETITE FOR KNOWLEDGE

SECRETS TO A JOYFUL LIFE

RICHES OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

COMPLEXITIES OF CULTURAL BORROWING

THROUGH NOTTINGHAM'S CHARMS

CELEBRATING SELF-ACCEPTANCE

REDISCOVERING ENERGY AND PASSION

CULTIVATING THE VALUES OF CHARACTER

EXPLORING INTIMACY IN RELATIONSHIPS

COMPLEX WORLD OF HEALTHY EATING

EMBRACING INDEPENDENCE AND IDENTITY

DISCLAIMER: KHAALIS SPICES MEET THE FSSAI STANDARDS-TESTED & VERIFIED BY NABL ACCREDITED LABORATORY.

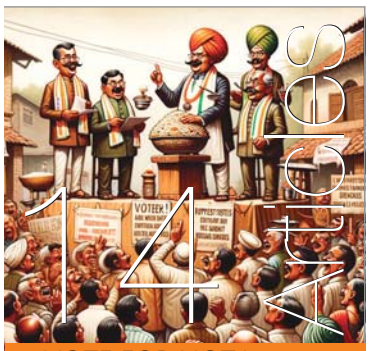
Hamdard KHAALIS MASALE

WITH THIS ISSUE, GET A

FREE

HAMDARD KHAALIS MASALA POUCH.

Woman's era
womansera.com
BUILDS HAPPY HOMES
April 2024
Vol 51, Issue No. 1148



14 VOTE FOR NOTA
BY PANYAM DATTA SARMAA

19 CULTIVATING INTELLECTUAL HUNGER
BY N ANANDAM

31 CHOOSE HAPPINESS
BY REEMA BANSAL

34 CASHING IN ON CULTURE
BY S RADHA PRATHI

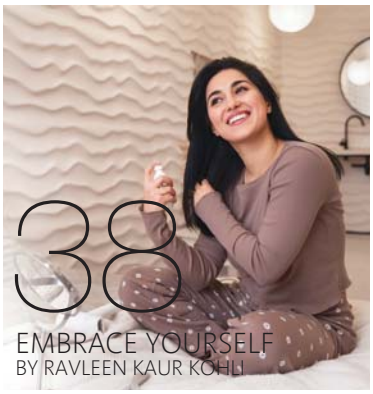
22 DR UPASANA ARORA

24 DR MANIMEKALAI MOHAN

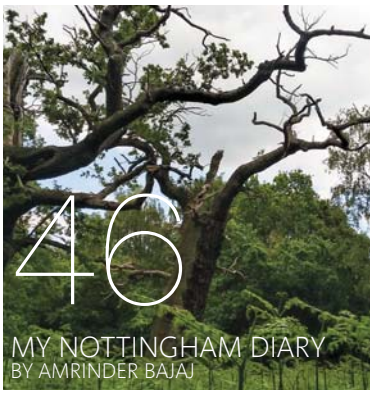
26 DR NEELAM MOHAN

28 PADMAJA REDDY

30 KAVITHA RAMACHANDRAGOWDA



38 EMBRACE YOURSELF
BY RAVLEEN KAUR KOHLI



46 MY NOTTINGHAM DIARY
BY AMRINDER BAJAJ

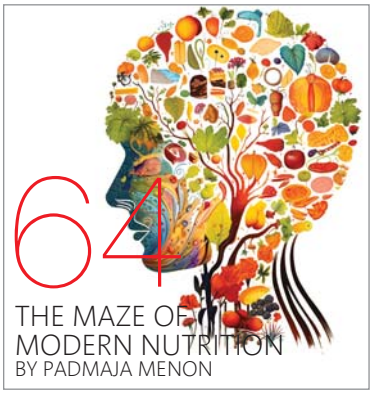
CULTURAL IMITATION
BY DR VEENA ADIGE
58

40 A TRIBUTE TO KAVITA CHAUDHURY
BY DEEPAK BHATIAK

98 ARADHAGA: STORIES WOVEN IN A THREAD
BY ENACTUS RAMJAS

102 DIMINISHING ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA
BY RITI PALIWAL

60 WOMEN'S SINGLEHOOD
BY SNEHASHISH ROY



64 THE MAZE OF MODERN NUTRITION
BY PADMAJA MENON

68 INSTILLING CORE VALUES
BY SARANYA IYER

40S ARE THE NEW TWENTIES
BY ANURADHA DEV
82

Cookery

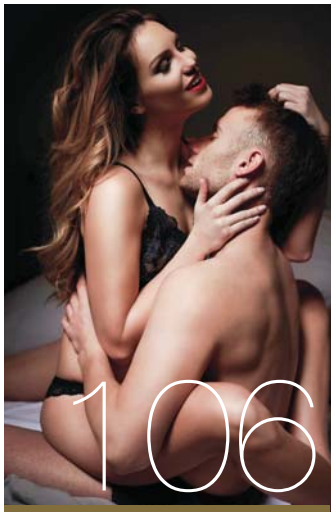
Eclectic Fusion Fest

- Chilli Jam Flavoured Dahi Bhallas
- Barki Samosas
- Steamed Corn And Peas Parcels
- Festive Tasty Chicken
- Coin Shahi Tukra

And Many More...

86

7 CINEPLEX



106 SEXUAL FREQUENCY
BY PURNIMA ATUL GOYAL

52 Fashion
SARTORIAL SPLENDOUR

21 LIFE (POEM)
63 CLASSIFIEDS
70 CAMPUS RUMPUS
81 HOW I SAVED MY MARRIAGE
84 YOUR BODY
97 NEIGHBOURS ALL
101 INLAWS OUTLAWS
112 HOW I WAS DUPED
114 AS YOU SAY

Features

72 NEWS IN PICTURE

Fiction

36 MY MOTHER'S TEACHINGS
BY COL R D SINGH

42 ARIV'S ROSTER
BY SARIKA KATTI

76 SUCCESS
BY KALPANA M NAGHNOOR

94 JUGAAD ON PAHAAD
BY SNIGDHA S JAUHARI

94 MAIDLESS MISADVENTURES
BY RENUKA MOHAN

Editor, Printer & Publisher
DIVESH NATH

Published on behalf of Delhi Printing & Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd.
Editor@WomansEra.com

Printed at:
B-23, Site-3, Industrial Area,
Meerut Road, Ghaziabad,
Uttar Pradesh - 201003

Founder: Vishwa Nath (1917-2002)

1. Contribution articles and stories
   write@womansera.com
2. For advertising and product promotion queries:
   advertising@womansera.com
3. To participate in features:
   features@womansera.com
4. Opinion on articles:
   letters@womansera.com
5. Subscriptions and others:
   admin@womansera.com

OFFICES
Mumbai: 1704, Lodha Supremus,
Dr E Moses Marg, Worli Naka,
Worli, Geeta Talkies Building,
Mumbai-400018
Phone: 09810160122

EDITORIAL, ADVERTISEMENT & PUBLICATION OFFICE
Delhi Press Building,
E-3, Rani Jhansi Marg,
Jhandewala Estate, New Delhi-110 055.
Phone: 011-47377777.

Title WOMAN'S ERA registered with Government of India as trade mark.

Copy sale, subscription, all advertisers and writers can send mail to:

Woman's Era
Delhi Press
E-3, Rani Jhansi Marg,
Jhandewala Estate, New Delhi-110055.
INDIA

www.womansera.com

Woman's Era Print Subscription Plans

Current Issue
₹ 100
with effect from August 2020.
Shiping by Indian Postal Services.

2 year - 24 Issues
₹ 2400
Shiping by Indian Postal Services.
Services by courier Assured delivery plus
Add ₹ 720 for delivery by courier.

1 year - 12 Issues
₹ 1200
Shiping by Indian Postal Services.
Services by courier Assured delivery plus
Add ₹ 360 for delivery by courier.

3 year - 36 Issues
₹ 3600
Shiping by Indian Postal Services.
Services by courier Assured delivery plus
Add ₹ 1080 for delivery by courier.

Cheques in the name of Delhi Printing & Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd.
Posted to Delhi Press Building, E-3, Jhandewala Estate, New Delhi-110 055.

The names of characters used in all fiction and semi-fiction articles are fictitious.

Copyright Notice
© Delhi Printing & Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd.
New Delhi-110 055. India.

ISSN 0971-1503

No article, story, photo or any other matter can be reproduced from this magazine without written permission.
This copy is sold on the condition that jurisdiction for all disputes concerning sale, subscription and published matter will be forums/tribunals at Delhi.

Self-addressed stamped envelopes must be enclosed with all manuscripts, otherwise the rejected material will not be returned. No responsibility is assumed for material submitted for publication.

Woman's era

EDITORIAL

The Fate of Opposition

As the bugle sounds for India's general elections, a curious prelude unfolds: a procession of opposition leaders finds themselves either behind bars or under the radar of government agencies rather than on the campaign trail. The spotlight turns to Arvind Kejriwal, Delhi's Chief Minister, arrested over allegations of graft in a liquor policy drama. His party, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), cries foul, claiming a politically motivated smear campaign, while the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) washes its hands of any interference.

The Gandhis of Congress are already facing scrutiny in a money laundering probe, while Manish Sisodia, AAP's second-in-command, shares Kejriwal's fate in the same case. Hemant Soren, former Jharkhand Chief Minister, and K. Kavitha, a Telangana legislator, finds themselves ensnared in financial crime investigations. Bhupesh Baghel, Chhattisgarh's former Chief Minister, faces graft charges, and Abhishek Banerjee and Lalu Prasad Yadav are also named in separate cases. As these leaders trade the campaign stage for a courtroom, the timing raises eyebrows. Is this a genuine crackdown on corruption, or a strategic move to sideline opposition voices?

The Grand Masquerade

In the political theatre of India, the Electoral Bond scheme emerged as a glittering act of transparency and reform. However, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) emerged as the ringmaster, bagging a lion's share of Rs 6,986.5 crore in donations. The scheme's anonymity clause turned political donations into a masquerade ball, with donors hidden behind invisible cloaks. The renowned economist Parakala Prabhakar, in a surprising plot twist, declared this spectacle not just the biggest scam in India, but a global blockbuster of financial skulduggery.

The Supreme Court, acting as the ultimate showstopper, pulled the rug from under the scheme's feet, striking it down and unmasking the anonymous benefactors. The revelation that 41 companies under investigation had poured Rs 2,471 crore into the BJP's treasure chest through electoral bonds added a spicy twist to the plot. The timing of these donations, closely following raids by investigating agencies, turned the scheme into a political thriller, with accusations of "legalised corruption" flying like popcorn in a movie theatre.

The opposition parties, playing the role of the critics, lambasted the electoral bonds as a tool for whitewashing black money, while the BJP defended it as a bulwark against the return of unaccounted wealth in politics. The Electoral Bond scheme still remains a contentious character, a symbol of the complexities and contradictions that dance through the corridors of power in the world's largest democracy.

Is The Split Imminent..?

Any organisation which grows bigger than what it is supposed to be, has to split. Be it family, companies, countries or political parties. In the old days of the Congress as it became more powerful and laden with money along with stalwart netas, it had split. There was a larger fraction and some smaller ones. Without getting into details, BJP stands at a similar position as of now. The revelation of Rs 7000 odd crores of electoral bonds reveal that the grassroot worker or smaller neta within the organisation does not know where all the money is being deployed by the party. And all the publicity for only a few people does not cost that much money. Hence there ought to be some resentment within cadre for accountability and for control. After the general elections 2024, where it is imminent that BJP will win, a split may happen within fractions led by the RSS and the other(s). The huge political pre-poll drama that is unfolding at the moment of taking political prisoners by the state investigation agencies could also be a threatening point being made by the top bosses in the BJP to their peers, to stay at bay. People and leaders following the media closely may have noticed that all of a sudden publicity of PM Modi has taken a pause after a series of chief ministers' arrests and that of some politically challenging opposition leaders. As nothing remains the same, and on top of the world all the time, and with the opposition literally behind the bars, an enemy within cultivated by the situation may erupt.

editor@womansera.com

CINEPLEX

Janhvi Kapoor Playfully Scolds Varun Dhawan Over Untied Shoelaces!

Varun Dhawan, known for his charm, received a playful scolding from Janhvi Kapoor on Instagram. Janhvi noticed Varun's untied shoelaces in his stylish photos and commented, "Tie ur laces," sparking friendly banter. Their camaraderie from *Bawaal* extends off-screen, with Varun busy filming *Baby John* and *Citadel: Honey Bunny.* He also shared the joy of Natasha Dalal's pregnancy, expressing gratitude for fans' love.

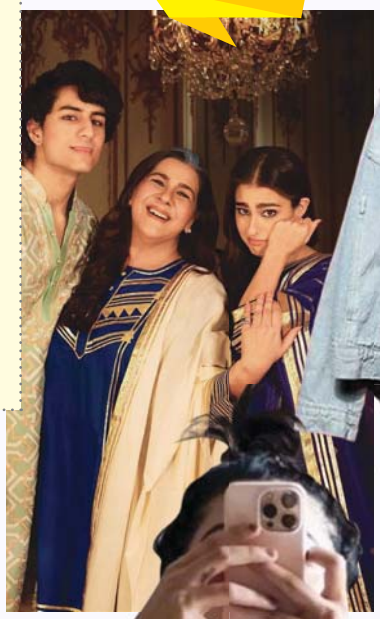
Triptii Dimri Enjoys Shopping With Rumoured BF, Sam Merchant

Triptii Dimri, the rising star of Sandeep Reddy Vanga's *Animal,* was recently spotted shopping with rumoured boyfriend Sam Merchant. The paparazzi caught the couple leaving a mart, with Triptii looking stunning in black pants and a green T-shirt, and Sam in white jeans and a pink T-shirt. Despite the surprise of being photographed, their relationship remains unconfirmed. Triptii's next project is *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3*.

FROM BOLLYWOOD...

Sara Ali Khan On Brother Ibrahim's Bollywood Debut: 'Should Stick To His Values'

Sara Ali Khan wishes her brother, Ibrahim Khan, a successful Bollywood debut but emphasizes that he should maintain his values. Sara, not wanting to set an example for him, believes he is smart and will find his own path. Raised with similar values by their mother, Amrita Singh, Sara trusts Ibrahim's maturity and talent to navigate his career independently, highlighting a refreshing departure from nepotism.



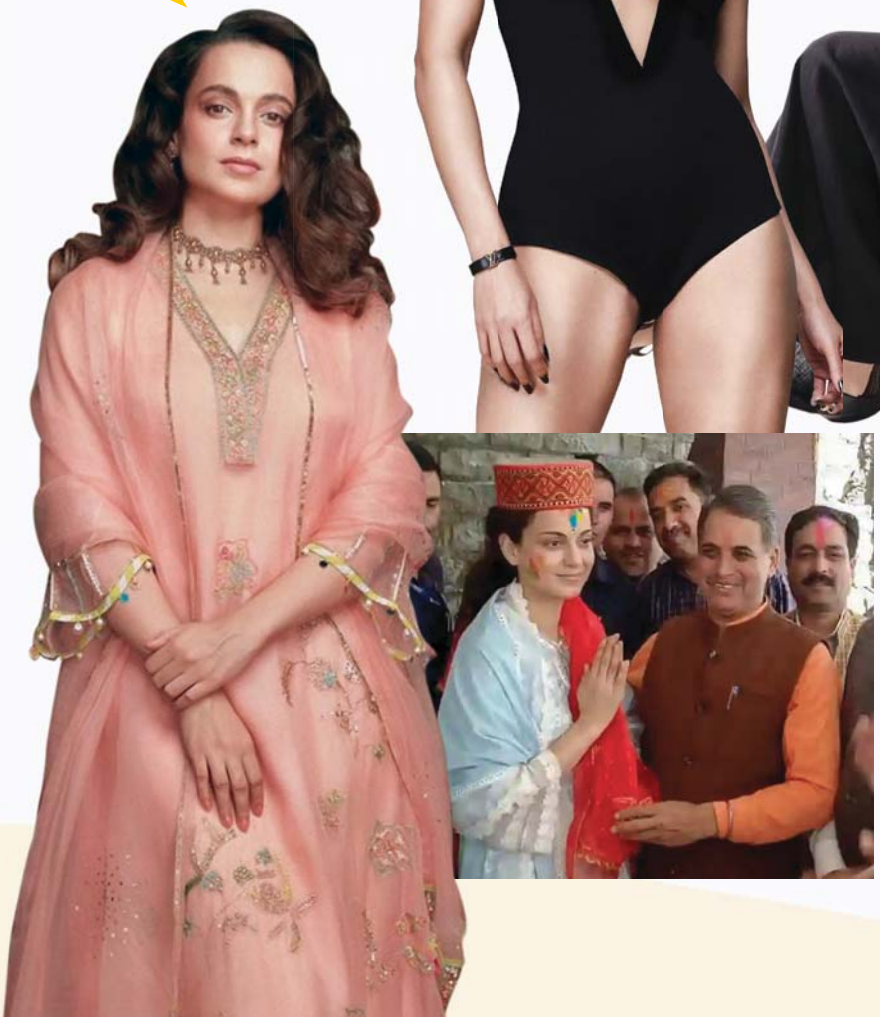
Rashmika Mandanna's Fitness Push: 'You'll Be Seeing More Of These Workouts'

Rashmika Mandanna, known for her talent and charm, recently shared her intense workout routine to motivate fans. Despite her busy schedule, including filming for *Pushpa: The Rule,* she prioritises fitness. Rashmika's workout video on Instagram conveyed a message of consistency and determination, inspiring fans worldwide. With a lineup of exciting projects, including *Kubera,* Rashmika's journey in the entertainment world continues to promise success.

Samantha Ruth Prabhu's Bold Photoshoot Goes Viralt

Samantha Ruth Prabhu stunned fans with a bold photoshoot, showcasing her glamorous avatar in an open jacket. After recovering from illness, Samantha is gearing up for a sensational comeback, evident in her bold and captivating photos that have taken social media by storm. Her upcoming web series *Citadel* on Amazon Prime is highly anticipated, adding to the excitement surrounding her return.

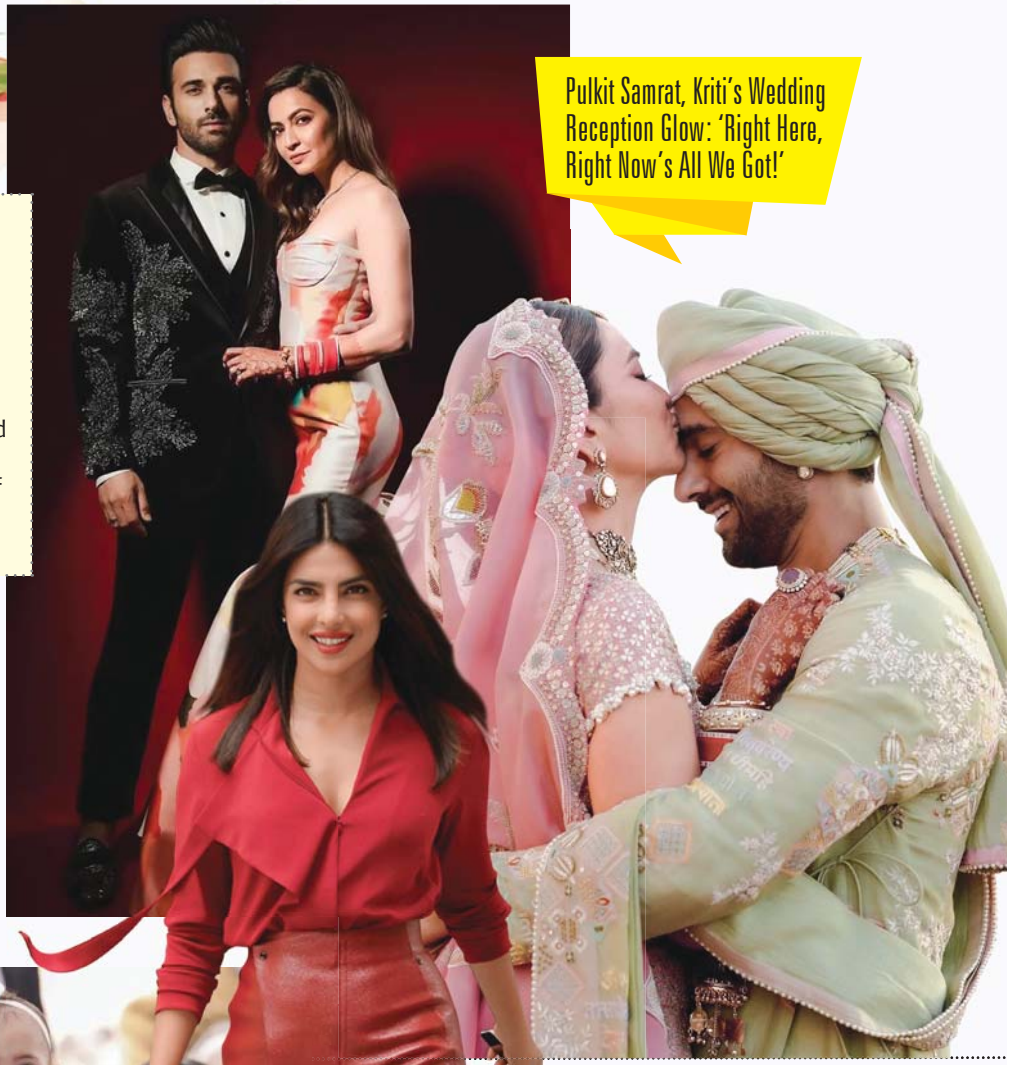
Kangana Ranaut Joins BJP, Eyes Mandi Lok Sabha Seat: 'I Feel Honoured . . .'



Kangana Ranaut, known for her fearless nature, has made a bold move into politics by joining BJP and announcing her candidacy for the Mandi Lok Sabha seat. Her decision has sparked intense buzz, given her outspokenness on various issues. Kangana's entry into politics marks a significant shift from her acting career, as she aims to represent her hometown and contribute to public service.

Pulkit Samrat, Kriti's Wedding Reception Glow: 'Right Here, Right Now's All We Got!'

Pulkit Samrat and Kriti Kharbanda shared stunning photos from their wedding reception, showcasing their radiant glow. The couple, known for their on-screen chemistry, looked mesmerising as they danced and posed together. Their wedding festivities have been a source of joy for fans, highlighting their love and happiness.



Priyanka Chopra Says Daughter Malti Marie Is Her Current 'Fashion Muse'

Priyanka Chopra affectionately referred to her daughter Malti Marie as her 'fashion muse,' expressing joy in dressing her up. The actress, currently in Mumbai for a brand event, admitted to being so engrossed in styling Malti that she forgets to dress herself. This marks Malti's second visit to India with her mother, highlighting the special bond between them and Priyanka's newfound source of fashion inspiration.

Fashion Highlights From Pinkvilla Award Gala

Celebrities like Sushmita Sen and Shilpa Shetty Kundra dazzled at the Pinkvilla Awards, setting the red carpet on fire. Sushmita stunned in a sleeveless gown with a thigh-high slit, defying age norms. Meanwhile, Shilpa turned heads in a daring peek-a-boo dress, accessorizing with a unique plastic accent. The event also showcased Shehnaaz Gill's ravishing red gown and Rani Mukerji's boss lady pantsuit, highlighting Bollywood's fashion diversity.

Vijay Varma Reveals His 'Fatal Attraction' Towards Kapoor Sisters; 'People Already Saw It'

Vijay Varma's upcoming film *Murder Mubarak* is set to showcase his acting prowess once again, following his impressive performances in *Darlings* and *Gully Boy.* In the Netflix movie *Jaane Jaan*, he stars alongside Kareena Kapoor, with whom he shares a deep admiration. Vijay also opens up about his close friendship with Karisma Kapoor, showcasing his versatility as an actor.

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR BABY HAS SENSITIVE SKIN?

Dr. Ranjan Kumar Pejaver

FRCP, FRCPCH(UK), FNNF, FIAP
Immediate Past President of National Neonatology Forum of India (NNF)
Past Chairperson of Neonatology Chapter of Indian Academy of Pediatrics (IAP)
Chief Neonatologist, People Tree at Meenakshi Hospitals, Bengaluru, India

New parents find it challenging to differentiate between what's normal for their baby and what indicates sensitive skin. A newborn's skin is much thinner than adult skin and keeps developing throughout the first year of their life. You must watch out for signs of dryness, red patches, skin tightness, irritation, and itchy and inflamed skin in your baby after giving a bath, on the application of lotion, after being dressed, or wrapped in a blanket. If these symptoms persist and do not resolve on their own, your baby may have sensitive skin.

What can you do? Identify and eliminate the triggers that cause reactions to your baby's sensitive skin. Choose baby care products specially formulated for sensitive skin that contain gentle and safe ingredients. The sole *mantra* to care for sensitive infant skin is "Less is More." Avoid bathing your baby too often, but cleanse regularly, especially in the areas of skin folds and crevices.

Bathe your baby in lukewarm water using a soap-free cleansing bar having a pH of 5.5. It helps to clean, nourish, and moisturize your baby's skin while enhancing its natural barrier function. Pat them dry with a towel after bath (do not rub) and moisturize appropriately, yet sparingly. Consult your pediatrician if your baby's condition worsens.

SINCE 1930

New

Himalaya Crème Cleansing Baby Bar

For newborns' sensitive skin

with **Coconut Milk Protein**

No Synthetic Colors

No Parabens

Suitable for sensitive skin

Mild and gentle

Softens and moisturizes skin

Himalaya Wellness Company
Makali, Bengaluru 562 162, India
www.himalayawellness.in

Scan here to shop

Tiger Shroff Refuses Disha Patani's Invitation To Sit Next To Her, Stirs Reactions From Netizens

A recent video from an awards ceremony shows Tiger Shroff seemingly ignoring an invitation from Disha Patani to sit beside her, sparking reactions online. Despite their past relationship, the pair has maintained an amicable connection. The incident has stirred curiosity among fans, with some speculating about the implications of Tiger's actions.

Kiara Advani Celebrates Holi with 'Homie' Sidharth Malhotra, Shares Loved-Up Pic

Kiara Advani and Sidharth Malhotra are embracing the spirit of Holi with joy, as evidenced by a heartwarming picture shared by Kiara. The photo captures the couple happily posing, their faces adorned with vibrant colours. Kiara's caption, "Holi with my Homie," reflects their close bond. Fans showered the couple with love, eagerly awaiting their next on-screen appearance after their successful collaboration in *Shershaah*.

IPL 2024 Opening Ceremony: Akshay Kumar, Sonu Nigam, AR Rahman Mesmerize Fans

The IPL 2024 Opening Ceremony in Chennai was a star-studded event with performances by Akshay Kumar, Sonu Nigam, and AR Rahman. Sonu Nigam's rendition of the National Anthem left the audience spellbound, with many fans expressing a desire for this version to be played in cinemas. The ceremony set the stage for an exciting season, promising more celebrity appearances and musical extravaganzas throughout the tournament.

Katrina Kaif's Sweet Message for Arhaan Khan's Podcast Debut with Salman Khan

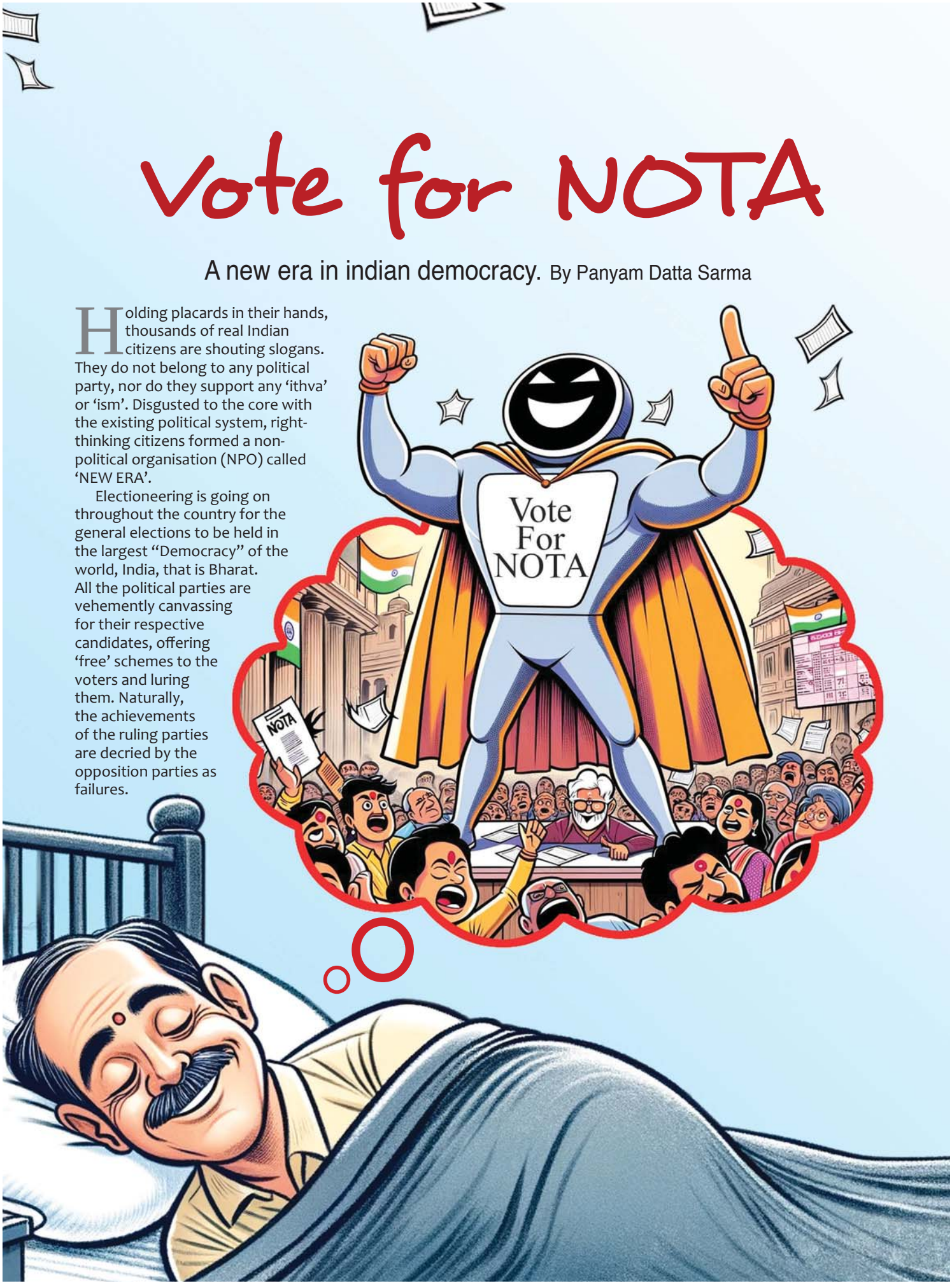
Katrina Kaif extended her best wishes to Arhaan Khan for his debut podcast, *Dumb Biryani*, featuring Salman Khan as a guest. The actress expressed her excitement, mentioning that she has known Arhaan since he was a baby, having been close to the Khan family for years. Despite their past relationship, Katrina and Salman maintain a strong bond, with Katrina considering his family as her own in Mumbai. We

Vote for NOTA

A new era in indian democracy. By Panyam Datta Sarma

Holding placards in their hands, thousands of real Indian citizens are shouting slogans. They do not belong to any political party, nor do they support any 'ithva' or 'ism'. Disgusted to the core with the existing political system, right-thinking citizens formed a non-political organisation (NPO) called 'NEW ERA'.

Electioneering is going on throughout the country for the general elections to be held in the largest "Democracy" of the world, India, that is Bharat. All the political parties are vehemently canvassing for their respective candidates, offering 'free' schemes to the voters and luring them. Naturally, the achievements of the ruling parties are decried by the opposition parties as failures.



Positive votes and anti-incumbency are predicted. Surveys by eminent media groups have become soothsayers, as per their respective political loyalties. 'Paid News' is also flourishing both in print and electronic media. The so-called political analysts too are cleverly projecting the victory of the political parties to which they are faithful.

Elections have been completed 'peacefully', as it is reported, but for a few untoward incidents here and there. In six phases, they were held, and the date of results has arrived. People are so excited, as to who will rule them for the next five years. Both the ruling and the opposition are claiming a "wonderful majority". "Clean sweep", 'cake walk', etc. Even the Third Front is very optimistic to come into power. Enthusiastic betting heroes have already staked thousands of crores of rupees the previous night. Height of frenzy!

It is a working day! Those who cannot withstand the temptation for results have evaded their official and business duties. Real Patriots!

In cities and district headquarters, some theatre managements have hung sign boards:

"Election results will be exhibited on the big screen from 8 am to 5 pm, people can watch the news - and reply to TV channels comfortably. The price of the ticket is only Rs. 1000/-! It includes breakfast, lunch, tea, and snacks". What an opportunity! All the theatres have become 'houseful' through advance booking.

The Opposition has already accused the ruling party of tampering with the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) as usual. The apex court, honouring the petitions filed by the opposition, has given a verdict in their favour that fifty per cent of the V.V. Pats should be counted. But, it said, five for each constituency can be enough to be compared with the votes cast in the EVMs.

THE OPPOSITION HAS ALREADY ACCUSED THE RULING PARTY OF TAMPERING WITH THE EVMS AS USUAL. THE APEX COURT, HONOURING THE PETITIONS FILED BY THE OPPOSITION, HAS GIVEN A VERDICT IN THEIR FAVOUR THAT FIFTY PER CENT OF THE V.V. PATS SHOULD BE COUNTED.

The counting of votes began at 8.00 am on the 23rd. After 10.00 am, the 'real' and 'clear' picture started coming out. The results started making the voters, rules, leaders, the media, and even the Election Commission awestruck.

"Breaking! Prime Minister Mahendra has faced defeat in the Varanasi constituency in U.P. 'NOTA' has gained a full majority there!"

All the news bulletins followed suit throughout the country, famous as well as notorious leaders had to taste utter defeat! Nearly 80 per cent of them are not even able to sustain their deposits!

The common man is watching results on his TV. His wife came to him with tea and asked,

"What is this 'NOTA', dear?"

The husband becomes serious. He feels happy for her ignorance, as many husbands do.

"Don't you know? You don't know anything except cooking. Let me explain." His face was beaming with pride. "'NOTA' means none of the above. The voter, by casting his vote to it, declares that he does not like any of the contestants on the ballot. Am I clear?"

"What does it imply when they say, 'NOTA has won! NOTA has got the majority?'" The wife was earnest in her query.

"It implies that, among the votes polled in that constituency, NOTA got the largest number of votes. You dunce! Can't you understand?"

The wife becomes perplexed and even suspicious, and she asks:

"When there is no such 'person' called NOTA, how can they...?"

The political genius has no answer for this. He simply bluffed her.

"Don't pester me with silly doubts. Your political awareness is not that mature. Let me watch the news. Go away."

Sathish Kumar in Bihar, Doluyadav's sons, Gajawathi and Nikhilesh Yadav in U.P., Gajagamini, a film star of yesteryear from Mumbai, and Samatha Mukherjee in West Bengal have fallen flat before the wave of NOTA.

Ajit Shaw has lost his deposit from Gandhinagar. In the two Telugu states of A.P. and Telangana, the candidates of Andhrababu Naidu and Madan Mohan Reddy, Mamasena leader Suman Sarvan have to face defeat, the meanest in their political careers. In Telangana, the

'COMPULSORY EDUCATION' CAME INTO FORCE. OLD-AGE PENSIONS WERE BEING PROVIDED ONLY TO ORPHANED OLD PEOPLE. IT WILL BE A PUNISHABLE CRIME IF THE AGED PARENTS ARE NOT LOOKED AFTER BY THEIR CHILDREN. RESERVATIONS WERE PROVIDED IN ALL FIELDS FOR WOMEN.

K.R.S. party leaders, including their supremo, are defeated by NOTA.

The interesting part of this is, people are celebrating the victory of NOTA everywhere! They are jubilant, shouting slogans in favour of it. It seems they are welcoming this change wholeheartedly.

By evening, in 540 constituencies, NOTA proved its mettle as the ultimate winner! In many places, its majority crossed 3 lakh voters!

All the leaders are shocked! They cannot blame the Election Commission. They cannot be accused of any conspiracy. They have "to keep quiet like a thief bitten by a scorpion! All of them distributed money in thousands, to 'buy' votes.

Some promised to deposit huge amounts into the bank accounts of voters directly. Some parties went a step further and promised that in the event of their coming into power, government employees would come to voters' houses, cook food, serve it, and even clean the utensils!

Voters received money from all parties. They attended all the election meetings and heard all the speeches. Their enthusiasm, cheering shouts, and applauding claps were the same in every meeting.

But in the history of independent India, for the first time, they have taken 'this' revolutionary decision, which has attracted attention worldwide, already.

The same evening, agitations started throughout the country, demanding that the defeated candidates shall be declared unfit to contest in future elections, as they have been 'rejected summarily' by the voters.

People demanded that selfless and patriotic intellectuals, academicians, honest retired civil servants, and personality development experts should come forward and form the 'people's government' under the auspices of the honourable President of India. Their age must be below fifty.

The next day, the President made an announcement. People should suggest three such names from each parliamentary constituency, and one of them will become the representative. A week is given to send the names.

That's the beginning! People entered the field. They selected three people who have been serving society selflessly, without aligning themselves with any political party. They too, doing away with their typical intellectual apathy, gave their consent. The President of India got the lists and prepared the final list

MyHamdardStore.com

SCAN TO SHOP

Pesh hai

Hamdard

TRUSTED SINCE 1906

Hamdard® #KHAALIS MASALE

Khaalis zaayqa..
Shahi andaz mein

Chef Kunal Kapur

*KHAALIS HAI, TABHI TOH KHAAS HAI!

Also Available in:

Korma Masala, Butter Chicken Masala, Tandoori Masala, Nihari Masala, Biryani Masala, Rajma Masala, Kitchen King Masala, Pav Bhaji Masala

DISCLAIMER: *KHAALIS SPICES MEET THE FSSAI STANDARDS. TESTED & VERIFIED BY NABL ACCREDITED LABORATORY.

#HAMDARD KHAALIS IS ONLY A BRAND NAME AND DOES NOT REPRESENT ITS TRUE NATURE

Images are for representational purpose only.

INNOCEAN-004/24 A

Share your experience, Call us: **1800 1800 600** or Write us at: **info@hamdard.com** or Visit us at: **www.hamdard.com** **Hamdard Laboratories India (Food Division),** Registered & Consumer Care Office: Hamdard Manzil, Lal Kuan, Delhi - 110 006, India

Follow us:

of people's representatives in the parliament.

Within a week, the real government of the people was formed. There were no such designations as Prime Minister, cabinet minister, etc. Every portfolio will be handled by the representative, who is a protagonist in the field concerned. The new government was named "People's Alliance". Soon all the unconstructive, meaningless welfare measures, which have made people lazy and inert, were dissolved, to restore the value of the 'working spirit'.

The Constitution of India was amended afresh. "Right to acquire Work" was included in the fundamental rights of citizens. From agriculture to industries, the 'People's Alliance' took the responsibility to provide work to all.

'Unemployment allowances' were cancelled; schemes like 'transferring thousands of rupees into parents' accounts if they send their children to schools' were canceled. 'Compulsory Education' came into force. Old-age pensions were being provided only to orphaned old people. It will be a punishable crime if the aged parents are not looked after by their children.Reservations were provided in all fields for women. 30 per cent of the people's representatives were women. For the downtrodden, the reservation facility applies only once, at the entry level. There will be no reservation for them in promotions! If a person gets a government job through reservation, his family members cannot avail of reservations.

'People's Alliance' started punishing even those who offered bribes as well as those who received them.

CROP INSURANCE WAS PROVIDED TO PEASANTS. THE MINIMUM SUPPORT PRICE FOR EACH CROP WAS DECIDED, AS PER THE STANDARD OF MODERN LIVING.

THE GOVERNMENT CONSTRUCTED COLD STORAGE WAREHOUSES ON A MASSIVE SCALE TO ENABLE THE FARMERS TO 'PRESERVE' THEIR 'YIELD'.

Crop insurance was provided to peasants. The minimum support price for each crop was decided, as per the standard of living of the present day. The government constructed cold storage warehouses on a massive scale to enable the farmers to 'preserve' their 'yield'. In all the market yards, shelters were arranged to prevent the yield from perishing by rains.

Government hospitals and educational institutions became comparatively better. The government started controlling the 'intellectual exodus' of those who study in India with the government's money and migrate to foreign countries for jobs.

The entire world was observing these desirable changes. Later, even in the elections held in some countries, people followed the Indian model, giving a majority to NOTA!

A common civil code came into force. The word 'minorities' was deleted from the Constitution. All are Indian citizens only.

People's Alliance decided to build a free super-specialty hospital, with all modern amenities, in the controversial Ram Janmabhoomi / Babri Masjid site, solving the dispute. No special status will be provided to any state.

The government banned telecasting international and national cricket test matches on TV for hours together. However, highlights of the match for 30 minutes may be permitted. People's representatives will be in power only for 2 years; their salaries too will be on par with government employees.

"NOTA! You are great! Long live NOTA! What a good change! This is the real democracy!"

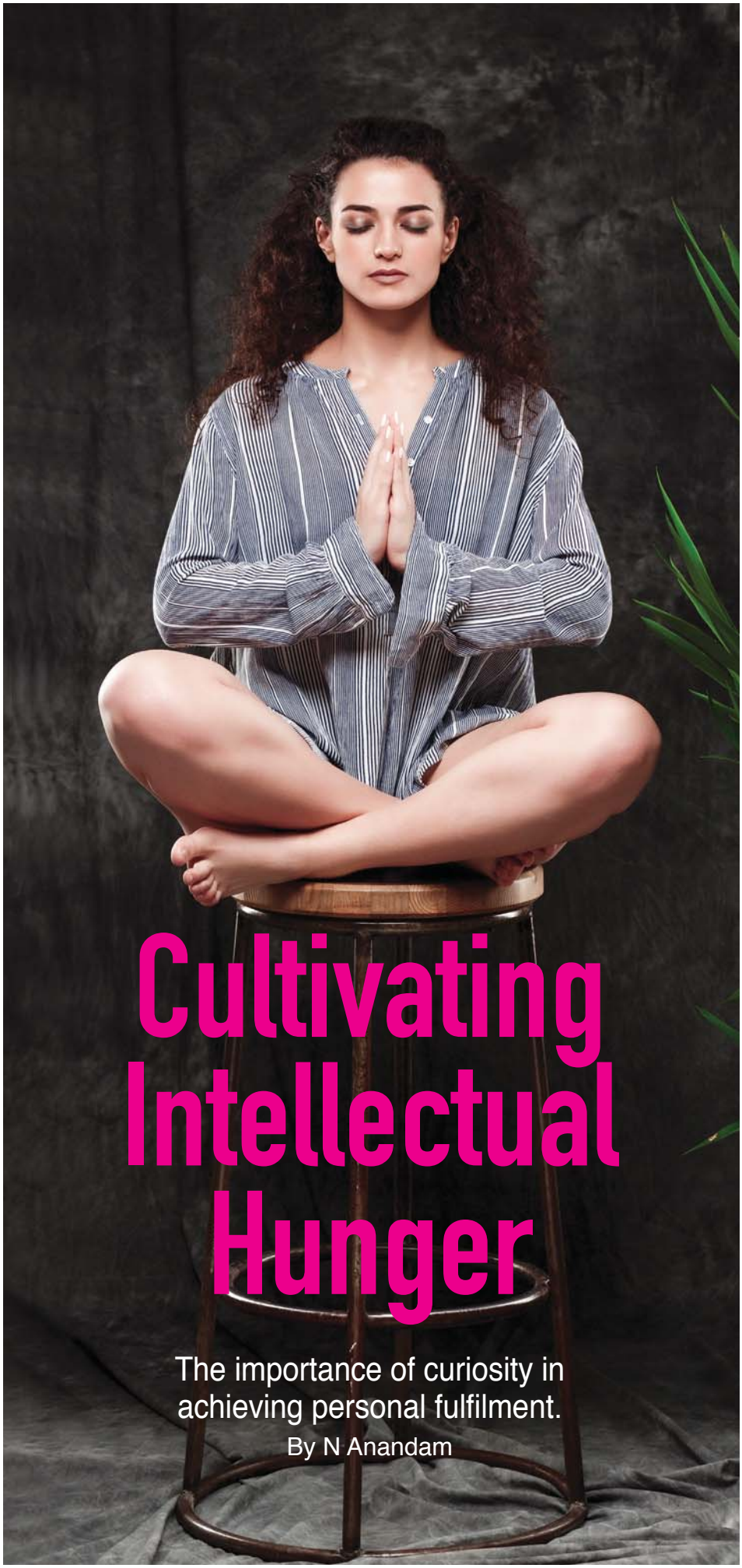
The common man is screaming with joy in his sleep. It is still very early in the morning. His wife comes into the bedroom, shakes him hard, and says,

"Why are you talking in your sleep, my dear? Come on, be awake!"

The common man comes to his senses and says,

"What a dream! A wonderful utopia!"

We



Cultivating Intellectual Hunger

The importance of curiosity in achieving personal fulfilment.

By N Anandam

Everyone has, at some time or another, pondered the meaning of life. This is one of the eternal questions of interest to all people. However, different people have different notions about the meaning of life. The presence of varied points of view is due to the different levels of knowledge among individuals.

Philosophy defines what life is. It states that keeping the spirit of inquiry alive in one's mind and acting based on reason is the meaning of life.

Philosophers consider living as a complete person the objective of life. They define a complete person as one who possesses the power of thought, willpower, and the power of the heart. The power of thought is the light of knowledge; willpower is the energy of the personality; and the power of the heart is love.

Philosophy serves as the theoretical foundation, while culture is the practical application. Individuals must assimilate and apply wise ideas, fostering a shift in cultural values toward reason-based thinking.

Crucially, a transformed mindset is pivotal, as the mind dictates actions. Enlightened thoughts lead to positive mental outlooks and virtuous deeds, culminating in happiness.

The teachings of many wise thinkers are valuable for leading a wise life. The ideas expressed by great thinkers such as Socrates, Aristotle, Plato, Buddha, and Confucius are good guides to leading a meaningful life.

They are revered because they do not preach fatalistic ideas in any manner. They don't mention anything about God and the afterlife. They don't teach anyone to pray and perform rituals to please an imaginary god.

Contrarily, they taught individuals to love their fellow human beings and treat them as equals. These ideas keep interhuman relationships cordial. Cooperation among the people for a common cause is better. The spirit of equality keeps the social structure and social system ideal for social unity and progress.

In addition, their teachings encourage individuals to think independently. They advise individuals to think critically, logically, and rationally to realise the truth. They highlight the importance of individuals' initiative, effort, and action.

In short, their teachings emphasise that every individual needs to be a thinking individual irrespective of one's position in society. It means that everyone should live with intellectual hunger.

Intellectual hunger, characterised by a thirst for knowledge and critical thinking, propels individuals toward learning, exploration, and creation. In the contemporary world, however, a significant portion lacks this intellectual drive, often due to the prevalence of fatalistic ideas.

Fatalistic notions, pervasive in varying degrees, stifle initiative and effort. They propagate the belief that life events and personal traits are predetermined, leading to mental and physical inactivity.

Philosophers assert that fatalistic ideas are extremely dangerous because they arrest individuals' initiative and efforts. In short, they make human beings inactive mentally and physically.

Ancient Greeks considered the idea of 'fate' as a blind force. They were not simply afraid of fate. They fought against fatalistic ideas. They spread the idea of human freedom and human power. By spreading human greatness, they could contain the evil effect of fatalistic ideas.

In India, the Hindu religion spreads fatalistic ideas. Hinduism preaches the Karma theory. It is nothing but a fatalistic theory. So, in India, more people are fatalistic and superstitious than in the rest of the world. The majority are not intellectually hungry. The majority live like imbeciles.

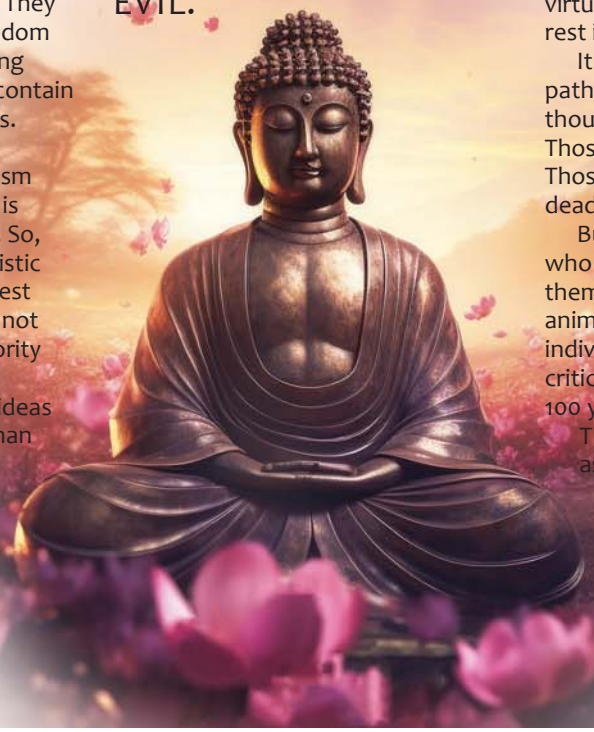
For the spread of fatalistic ideas and many superstitions in human society, god-centred religions are responsible. They give omnipotence status to an imaginary god. This idea itself is wrong. Gautama Buddha (563-483 BCE) taught that the concepts of god, hell, and heaven are human imaginations only. Giving importance to those speculations will do more harm than good.

Rationalists assert that giving omnipotence to God indirectly spoils the mental outlook of individuals. Mainly, it destroys the idea that every individual is the master of their life. It maims the self-confidence of individuals. It inculcates only fatalistic ideas in the minds of individuals. That is why atheistic philosophies are better than theistic philosophies.

Blind faith in religious scriptures is another evil. Ignorant people assume that the scriptures contain the words of God. In reality, all religious scriptures are human creations only. Blind belief in religious scriptures makes individuals mentally inactive.

Belief in the existence of the 'soul' is another evil. This belief is dangerous since it is the source of the development of many superstitions and the priestly class. They make people superstitious and waste their valuable time and energy on prayers and rituals.

BLIND FAITH IN RELIGION IS ANOTHER EVIL. IGNORANT PEOPLE ASSUME THAT THE SCRIPTURES CONTAIN THE WORDS OF GOD. IN REALITY, ALL RELIGIOUS SCRIPTURES ARE HUMAN CREATIONS ONLY. BLIND BELIEF IN RELIGIOUS SCRIPTURES MAKES INDIVIDUALS MENTALLY INACTIVE. BELIEF IN THE EXISTENCE OF THE 'SOUL' IS ANOTHER EVIL.



Mental Outlook Of Individuals

Human-centred religions such as Jainism, Buddhism, and Confucianism are wiser than god-centred religions such as Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism. This is because atheistic religions give importance to improving the moral standard of individuals. They don't teach any shortcut way of life to reach heaven. They don't claim their teachings are divine. Buddha says that his message is open to anyone to question, test, and find what truth it contains. No other religion's founders have so fully thrown open their religion to such a challenge.

Buddhism appeals to individuals to rouse oneself from the life of sloth and indolence and follow the law of virtue. It asserts that the virtuous rest in bliss in this life and in the next.

It teaches that earnestness is the path of immortality (Nirvana), and thoughtlessness is the path of death. Those who are earnest do not die. Those who are thoughtless are as if dead already.

Buddha chides the individuals who refuse to think. He compares them with an ox. They live like animals. Categorically, he says that individuals living one day by doing critical thinking are better than living 100 years without contemplating.

These messages clearly assert that one should live with intellectual hunger.

Philosophers assert that it is an acquired character. Any individual can acquire

this character. Anyone can become curious and hungry intellectually. They also mention that culture, education, and parental guidance play an important role in inspiring individuals to acquire this attitude. However, cultural values have to be reason-based and not faith-based; education has to be knowledge-based and not religion-based; parental guidance has to be morally based and not sentiment-based. If we make such changes, they will motivate individuals to think and remain inquisitive.

Greek philosophers recommend Socrates' method of debate, the so-called dialectic, in which two men argue until together they arrive at the truth.

This sort of intellectual and open debate will make people inquisitive and intellectually hungry.

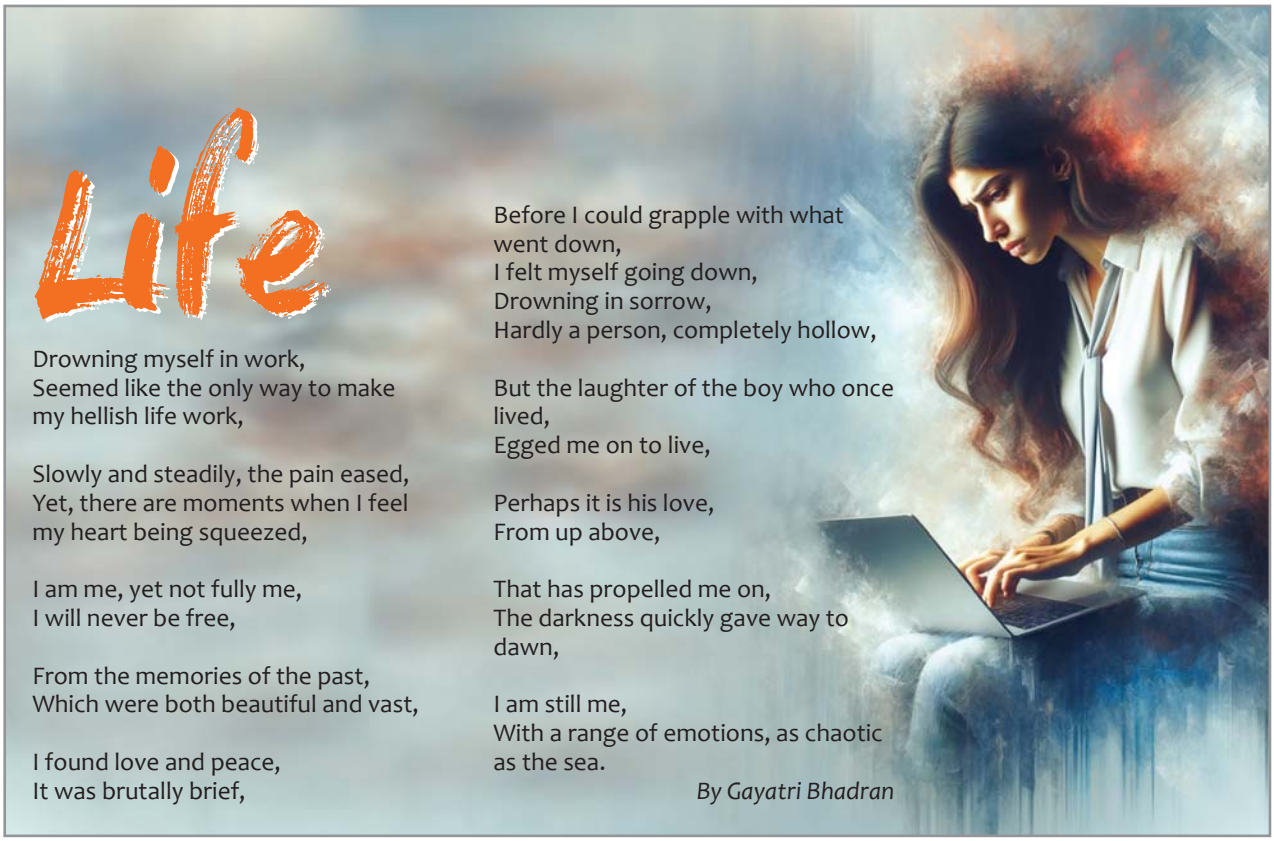
Gautama Buddha says that all miseries of humankind are due to selfish desires. The first desire is to give pleasure to the senses of the body. The second desire is to

continue to exist after the death of the body. The third desire is to accumulate wealth. He says that only by controlling these desires can one live a meaningful life.

Wisdom considers that intellectual laziness is a vice. Unlike other vices, such as injustice or cowardice, intellectual sloth harms oneself rather than harming others. But it is still a serious vice since it consists of turning one's back on one's human nature.

Nature has given human beings the reasoning brain. It is relatively large in size and complex in structure. Its most significant feature is its algebraic (computing) faculty. Besides, the human being's mind is logical. It can establish cause and effect relationships, and it can reason. Without the endowment of such a brain, a human being could not have risen to the present level. So, human beings are 'angels'.

Philosophers believe that individuals who live with intellectual hunger and act based on reason are living a sensible and meaningful life. The individuals who refuse to think and act based on reason live like an animal. This comment may sound harsh, but it is the truth. We



Life

Drowning myself in work,
Seemed like the only way to make
my hellish life work,

Slowly and steadily, the pain eased,
Yet, there are moments when I feel
my heart being squeezed,

I am me, yet not fully me,
I will never be free,

From the memories of the past,
Which were both beautiful and vast,

I found love and peace,
It was brutally brief,

Before I could grapple with what
went down,
I felt myself going down,
Drowning in sorrow,
Hardly a person, completely hollow,

But the laughter of the boy who once
lived,
Egged me on to live,

Perhaps it is his love,
From up above,

That has propelled me on,
The darkness quickly gave way to
dawn,

I am still me,
With a range of emotions, as chaotic
as the sea.

By Gayatri Bhadran

Dr Upasana Arora

A Business Leader With Substance

Dr. Upasana Arora
CEO and Managing Director of Yashoda Super Speciality Hospitals, Kaushambi Delhi-NCR

Dr Upasana Arora acknowledges the profound impact of leadership on success, echoing the sentiments of renowned management guru John C. Maxwell, who defines leadership as "A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way." Regardless of the definition, leaders serve as catalysts for change, standing firm in their beliefs and commitments, and setting examples for others to follow. Leadership, with its strategic vision, plays a pivotal role in the advancement of nations and organisations alike. A strong leader guides their constituents towards success, elevating their country or organisation to the zenith of achievement.

Recent years have showcased the transformative power of leadership, exemplified by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, who has propelled India onto the global stage and fostered a sense of global unity with the G20 mantra of "One Earth, One Family, One Future." Dr Upasana Arora wholeheartedly aligns with this ethos, recognising the transformative impact of visionary leadership in shaping the trajectory of nations on the world stage.

As the Managing Director of Yashoda Super Speciality Hospitals, Dr. Upasana Arora has dedicated the past 23 years to the organisation, spearheading transformative initiatives since 2000. Under her leadership, Yashoda Super Speciality Hospitals achieved the distinction of becoming the First NABH Accredited Hospital in Ghaziabad in 2010. Notably, Dr Arora also made history as the First Indian to receive the prestigious Fellowship of ISQua (International Society for Quality and Accreditation) in 2015. Committed to advancing patient safety and staying abreast of cutting-edge healthcare practices, she completed the Quality Leadership Program at Harvard Medical School and various management programmes at IIM Ahmedabad.

Recognising the critical importance of optimising supply chain management for patient care, Dr Arora successfully implemented Lean Management in 2012 through a collaboration with Cardiff University, UK. She subsequently extended this methodology to enhance other operational processes. Driven by a relentless pursuit of quality improvement, she acquired expertise in Six Sigma during her tenure at NHS hospitals in the UK.

Leading By Example

Dr Arora prioritises the safety and privacy of her patients, conducting regular hospital rounds to ensure adherence to these principles. Embracing the ethos of progressive growth and continuous education integral to NABH Accreditation, Dr Arora has championed the enhancement of patient services and consistently placed patient expectations at the forefront of her endeavours. Under her stewardship, Yashoda Super Speciality Hospitals evolved from a tertiary care facility in 2006 to a quaternary care institution in 2017, expanding its specialities in alignment with patient needs. Today, Yashoda has earned widespread acclaim as a household name in Ghaziabad and Delhi NCR, attracting a steady stream of patients and solidifying its position as a leading healthcare provider in the region.

Dr Upasana Arora oversees the management and strategic

growth of the hospital, leading a multifaceted team responsible for operations, marketing, quality, and management. Under her guidance, the hospital operates as a NABH 5th edition accredited institution, adhering to standardised processes and protocols across all patient touchpoints, from outpatient care to emergency services and admission through to discharge. Comprising 650 objective elements, NABH 5th edition accreditation ensures adherence to rigorous quality standards. Additionally, the hospital's accreditation by ISQua (The International Society for Quality in Health Care) further validates its commitment to quality care.

Dr Upasana Arora ensures the hospital maintains robust client feedback and complaint redressal mechanism, available both online and offline, with clients having the option to disclose or conceal their identity. The senior management team closely monitors this system, which encompasses all aspects of patient care.

Fostering Excellence

At the core of the hospital's ethos lies a commitment to prioritise patient well-being and deliver personalised, quality care resulting in positive patient outcomes. The institution distinguishes itself in the healthcare sector as one of the few signatories of the Ethical Principles in Health Care (EPiHC) in India, adhering to the following operating principles:

- Respecting laws and regulations
- Making a positive contribution to society
- Promoting high-quality standards
- Conducting business matters responsibly
- Respecting the environment
- Upholding patients' rights
- Safeguarding information and using data responsibly
- Preventing discrimination, harassment, and bullying
- Protecting and empowering staff
- Supporting ethical practices and preventing harm

HER KEY RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- Monitoring quality parameters in accordance with NABH standards.
- Providing leadership to hospital operations
- Optimising cost controls
- Monitoring the patient feedback process and conducting analysis
- Developing business strategy and targets, and overseeing actionable plans
- Creating business-aligned budgets
- Setting monthly and annual revenue targets
- Finalising CAPEX, operational budgets, and recruitment plans within budget constraints
- Monitoring improvement initiatives and projects
- Achieving revenue targets within budgeted costs

Dr Arora remains at the forefront of technological advancements, continually upgrading the hospital's diagnostic, rehabilitative, and therapeutic departments to meet evolving patient needs and expectations. She ensures the institution stays abreast of the latest medical technologies, investing in world-class facilities and equipment.

Yashoda Super Speciality Hospitals offers a comprehensive range of healthcare services across various specialities, complemented by advanced diagnostic and rehabilitation facilities. Notably, the hospital provides super-speciality services in cardiology, endocrinology, gastroenterology, joint replacement, nephrology, neurology, oncology, pulmonology, urology, neurosurgery, and plastic and reconstructive surgery.

Dr Manimekalai Mohan
Pioneering Pathways

A Journey of a Woman Empowering Women.

Dr Manimekalai Mohan embarked on an extraordinary journey from a modest play school with 25 children to establishing 15 renowned SSVM Group of institutions catering to over 10,000 students. Her unwavering commitment to quality education and dedication to serving rural communities have been the driving forces behind this remarkable transformation.

Diverse curriculums offered by SSVM Institutions reflect the evolving needs of today's world. By seamlessly blending academic rigour with creative expression, sports, and character development, she ensures that students receive a holistic education that prepares them for success in a globalised society. State-of-the-art facilities in all campuses offer students a conducive environment for academic and holistic development. From modern classrooms and well-equipped labs to extensive sports facilities and residential accommodations, every aspect of student life is carefully nurtured to foster growth and excellence.

Dr Mohan empowers her team of educators, predominantly women, by leading by example and providing ample opportunities for professional development. Through mentorship, training programmes, and recognition of their contributions, she inspires them to excel and become role models for the next generation. Accreditations, knowledge partnerships, and collaborations with esteemed organisations enhance the educational experience for students at Dr Manimekalai Mohan's institutions. These affiliations not only validate the quality of education but also provide students with access to global opportunities, further enriching their learning journey.

The Evolution of SSVM Institutions

Dr Manimekalai Mohan's educational odyssey commenced with a profound respect for learning and a commitment to community service, rooted in her early life in Trichy. She embarked on a mission to transform education into a tool for empowerment and social advancement.

Dr Manimekalai Mohan
Founder and Managing Trustee
SSVM Group of Institutions, Coimbatore
Tamil Nadu

The inception of SSVM Institutions in the scenic locales of Mettupalayam and Coimbatore marked the beginning of Dr Mohan's educational empire. Established in 1998 with the support of her husband, Mr. Mohandoss, and the community, SSVM stood as a testament to Dr Mohan's tenacity. It became a haven for students from diverse backgrounds, championing equitable access to quality education.

Over the past 26 years, Dr Mohan's visionary leadership has steered SSVM Institutions to become a beacon of excellence in education. The network encompasses a wide array of educational frameworks, including CBSE, Matriculation, NIOS, JEE & NEET coaching, Cambridge International, and International Baccalaureate programs. A team of experienced educators, both Indian and international, employ innovative teaching methodologies to ensure a comprehensive and impactful learning experience for students.

Dr Mohan's commitment to inclusive education is evident in the establishment of Athma Seva at Mettupalayam. This specialised unit focuses on vocational training and independent living support for differently-abled children, fostering an inclusive environment where every child can thrive.

Beyond traditional education, Dr Mohan's vision encompasses societal transformation and environmental stewardship. SSVM's initiatives extend to social impact projects, scholarship programmes, and

collaborations with NGOs, reflecting a holistic approach to education.

SSVM Institutions boast state-of-the-art facilities, including modern classrooms, advanced science labs, and extensive sports amenities, to provide a nurturing and dynamic educational environment. The campuses are equipped with cutting-edge technology and offer secure residential accommodations, ensuring a supportive community for student growth.

Collaborations with esteemed partners like First in Math, Cambridge Assessment English, and participation in events like Transforming India Conclave and TEDxYouth@SSVM, align with SSVM's commitment to quality education. Accredited by MSA CESS and AIAASC, and a member of CIS with a QS Diamond ranking, SSVM's dedication to excellence is unmistakable. As an AccessUSA associate, the institution also facilitates opportunities for students to earn college credits and secure admissions to prestigious universities.

SSVM emphasises leadership development and personal growth through initiatives like the National Cadet Corps and a variety of extracurricular activities. This holistic approach ensures students not only excel academically but also develop essential interpersonal skills, discipline, and a sense of responsibility.

Innovative Offerings and Future Projections

At the core of SSVM's success is Dr Mohan's visionary educational philosophy, which aims to nurture holistic development and intellectual enlightenment. Offering a diverse range of educational pathways, from CBSE to Cambridge and the International Baccalaureate, SSVM empowers students to explore their interests and talents, shaping them into well-rounded individuals ready to navigate the challenges of an ever-evolving world. As SSVM continues to chart new frontiers, SSVM has unveiled RUH Early Years at Race Course, Coimbatore, catering to children aged six months through six years. This avant-garde preschool amalgamates the finest practices of Montessori, Reggio Emilia, and Waldorf methodologies to foster a holistic learning environment. Additionally, the SSVM KIDS CASA chain of schools in Coimbatore and Mettupalayam caters to young learners aged three to six years, ensuring a nurturing atmosphere. Moreover, one of the Coimbatore campuses provides Pre-K to 5 education, ensuring a seamless transition for students as they journey through their formative years.

RUH Continuum School, a distinguished IB and Cambridge institution in Coimbatore, stands at the forefront of globally-focused education, offering a comprehensive K-12 curriculum. As the pioneer Cambridge Early Years centre in South India, RUH Continuum School integrates the best practices of early childhood education from around the globe. Its recent launch of Ruh Continuum Primary International campus further solidifies SSVM's commitment to excellence, reaffirming its status as a beacon of educational prowess and a testament to Dr Mohan's unwavering dedication to transforming lives through quality education. With each innovation, SSVM redefines the contours of education, poised on the precipice of a future where every child's potential is nurtured and celebrated.

Dr Manimekalai Mohan's inspiring journey in education is a testament to the transformative power of vision, resilience, and unwavering commitment. Through her leadership, SSVM emerges not merely as an educational institution but as a beacon of hope, illuminating the path to a future where every child's dreams are realised and every potential fulfilled. As SSVM continues to forge ahead, it remains a role model to the indomitable spirit of human endeavour, propelling humanity towards a brighter, more inclusive tomorrow.

At the core of SSVM's success is Dr Mohan's visionary educational philosophy, which aims to nurture holistic development and intellectual enlightenment.

SSVM Institutions boast state-of-the-art facilitiesto provide a nurturing and dynamic educational environment.

Dr Neelam Mohan

An Eminent And Trailblazing Figure

Envisioning the new future of the Indian medical sector.

Dr Neelam Mohan is a visionary in pediatric gastroenterology and hepatology, with over 25 years of consultancy experience. She is celebrated for introducing therapeutic endoscopy in newborns and children and pioneering pediatric liver transplantation in India. Dr Mohan's advocacy for women's inclusivity in medicine is as inspiring as her groundbreaking contributions. Here's a sneak peek into her insightful interview with *Woman's Era*.

Could you tell us what drove your specialization in pediatric gastroenterology and hepatology, leading to pioneering work in pediatric liver transplantation in India?

My journey into pediatric gastroenterology and hepatology was driven by a deep desire to make a meaningful impact in children's healthcare in India. The high mortality rates due to liver diseases and the glaring absence of pediatric liver transplantation services in our country were my primary motivators. Inspired by my father's encouragement to contribute significantly to our nation, I felt a strong urge to pursue this path. When the opportunity to pioneer pediatric liver transplantation in India presented itself, it felt like a calling I had to answer. It was a new and challenging frontier, but I was determined to make a difference.

Dr Neelam Mohan
Director and Chief of the Department of Paediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Liver Transplantation at Medanta the Medicity, Gurugram

As a woman in this profession, have you faced any personal challenges, and how did you overcome them?

Yes, there have been challenges, especially in balancing the demands of a highly specialized profession with family responsibilities. I overcame these challenges by embracing multitasking and maintaining a positive outlook, much like my mother, who was an entrepreneur and a great multitasker herself. She inspired me to believe that I could handle multiple responsibilities simultaneously. The journey wasn't easy, especially in a field dominated by men, but I focused on my goals and gradually earned the recognition and respect I deserved.

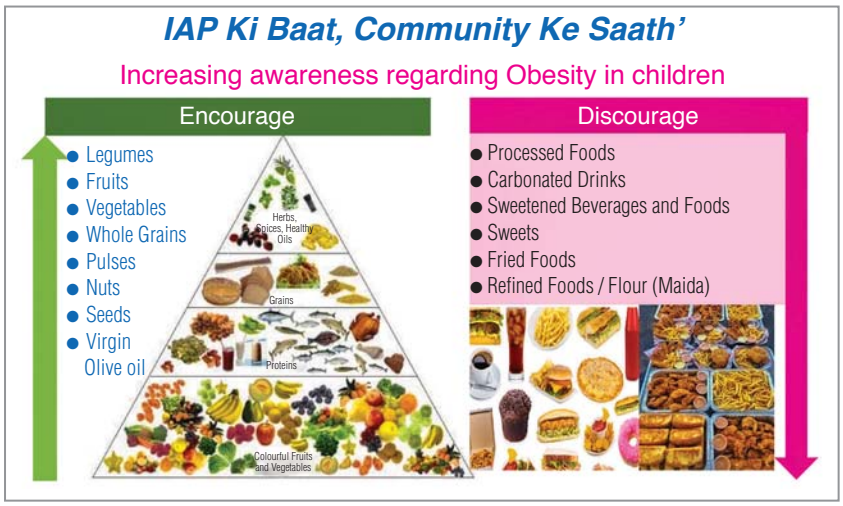
As an advisor to the National Health Authority and co-chair of STW for pediatrics, what key initiatives have you led to enhance pediatric healthcare delivery in India?

Recognising the lack of uniformity in healthcare delivery across different regions of the country, we focused on creating structured modules and algorithms that could be universally applied. These guidelines cover a range of conditions such as diarrhea, pneumonia, meningitis, seizures, and asthma, ensuring that regardless of where a child is treated, they receive the same standard of care.

My role in the Ayushman Bharat project allowed me to contribute significantly to the cost-effective delivery of healthcare services. Given the vast economic disparities in India, it was crucial to establish a pricing structure that was both feasible for healthcare providers and affordable for the general population. This

involved a careful analysis of various cost components, including medical equipment, resources, and operational expenses, to determine a baseline cost for pediatric treatments under the scheme.

Presently, as the KOL (Key Opinion Leader) of Indian Academy of Pediatrics (IAP), I am working with the team on a project called 'IAP ki baat, community ke saath', where we are addressing issues such as anaemia and obesity with the community. I am grateful for the support of Dr. G V Basavaraja, the president of IAP, in enabling us to connect with the community through this project.



Could you share some insights from your experience initiating therapeutic endoscopy in newborns and young children?

Initiating therapeutic endoscopy in newborns and young children was a pioneering step in pediatric gastroenterology. The lack of specialized services in this area and the pressing need for non-invasive treatments in infants and young children propelled me to venture into this field. Over time, I trained other professionals in this technique.

What are the benefits of promoting women's inclusivity and gender diversity in the medical field, especially in leadership positions?

Promoting women's inclusivity and gender diversity brings a balanced perspective to leadership and decision-making in the medical field. Women bring unique insights and a high emotional quotient (EQ), which are essential for effective healthcare delivery. Studies have shown that women doctors often provide superior care, highlighting the importance of their representation in leadership positions.

What are the most promising advancements in AI, technology, and medical science for pediatric healthcare, in your opinion?

AI and technology have a significant role in enhancing pediatric healthcare by improving productivity, reducing time spent on tasks, and assisting in accurate diagnoses. While AI cannot replace human doctors, it serves as a valuable tool to support and streamline medical processes, ultimately benefiting patient care.

Dr Neelam Mohan with Sia Thakur, her patient who underwent Liver Transplant 15 years back at the age of 2 years.

What is your vision for healthcare in India and globally?

International collaborations in pediatric gastroenterology have been immensely fruitful. Through such partnerships, research and protocols developed in one country can be shared and adapted globally. As the president of the Commonwealth Pediatric Gastroenterology, I had the unique opportunity to work towards uniform healthcare standards across diverse nations like the UK, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Canada, Australia, and African countries. This role allowed me to facilitate the exchange of advanced research and clinical practices. India, with its exceptional medical minds and infrastructure, has become a significant contributor to global health. Digitalization and social media have further enabled this global collaboration, allowing us to share knowledge and best practices more easily, thereby improving the healthcare of children globally.

My vision for the international scenario is to extend collaborative services to patients in Africa and other Commonwealth countries. In India, I aim to improve healthcare delivery for every child. The government is making significant changes in healthcare delivery in the public sector and encouraging public-private partnerships through Ayushman Bharat. However, the private sector constitutes two-thirds of healthcare services in India. Therefore, empowering pediatricians with knowledge for efficient and uniform management, creating structured modules and algorithms, and various initiatives to address the community and parents on preventive healthcare management would be a way forward.

Padmaja Reddy
A Pioneer in Microfinancing

Driving financial inclusion through Spandana and Keertana.

Padmaja Reddy, Founder, Spandana Sphoorty Financial Limited and Keertana Financial Limited

Padmaja Reddy hails from a serene village near Guntur, where her parents, both dedicated farmers, instilled in her a profound work ethic and passion. Encouraged by her elder brother, who pursued a career in medicine after college, Padmaja embarked on her educational journey, eventually earning a Master's degree in Business Administration. This academic pursuit led her to an NGO, where her interest in humanitarian work blossomed. Through her unwavering dedication and natural leadership, she quickly rose to the position of Deputy Director, showcasing her commitment and abilities.

During her tenure with this NGO, Padmaja encountered a pivotal moment that changed her perspective. A chance encounter with a ragpicker piqued her curiosity about the economics of their trade. She discovered the staggering costs borne by the ragpicker, including an exorbitant rent of over Rs. 50,000 for a pushcart over 14 years, which costs just Rs. 1,500, and an interest of Rs. 1,50,000 on a loan of Rs. 300. This realisation stirred her compassionate heart and keen business acumen, prompting her to take action.

Recognising the transformative power of access to capital, Padmaja offered a small loan of Rs. 2,000 to the ragpicker, catalysing a remarkable change in his life. With this modest investment, the ragpicker was able to purchase their own cart and operate without the burden of exorbitant rent and predatory lending practices. This success story spread rapidly, sparking a wave of demand from other marginalised individuals seeking similar opportunities.

Driven by her belief in the potential of microfinance to empower communities, Padmaja founded Spandana, an NGO dedicated to providing small loans to those in need. Drawing inspiration from her experiences and successful models like the Grameen Model in Bangladesh, Padmaja forged ahead with her vision, leveraging local resources and international expertise to expand Spandana's reach and impact.

Through relentless determination and strategic innovation, Spandana emerged as a pioneering force in the microfinance sector. Padmaja's visionary leadership and emphasis on efficiency shattered industry norms, achieving profitability in the first year of operation and setting new benchmarks for success. She tailored Spandana's processes to prioritise customer needs, streamlining operations, and ensuring swift access to credit for all members.

Padmaja's journey exemplifies the transformative power of entrepreneurship driven by empathy and ingenuity. Her unwavering commitment to social justice and economic empowerment has left an indelible mark on the microfinance landscape, inspiring countless others to follow in her footsteps. As Spandana continues to thrive and

expand its impact, Padmaja's legacy of compassion and innovation serves as a guiding light for a brighter, more inclusive future.

Enduring Legacy in Microfinance

Despite Spandana's remarkable success, it faced numerous challenges from vested interests seeking to undermine its achievements. Politicians, bureaucrats, and moneylenders viewed Spandana as a threat to their positions. Some politicians, previously engaged in money lending, felt the sting of competition as Spandana's model gained traction. Bureaucrats grew uneasy, perceiving Spandana as encroaching upon their domain. Even within the microfinance sector, Padmaja's achievements sparked jealousy among male counterparts from other organizations.

Spandana found unwavering support from the women whose lives it had transformed. Rather than exploiting the situation to default on their loans, these women rallied behind Spandana, demonstrating remarkable solidarity and resilience. Meanwhile, the banks that had partnered with Spandana continued to place their trust in Padmaja's integrity and dedication.

By 2009, Spandana had become the second-largest Micro Finance Institution in India, with operations spanning 12 states and a workforce of around 9,000 employees. In 2003, it transitioned into a Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC), subject to regulatory oversight by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). Despite efforts to stifle its growth, microfinance in Andhra Pradesh continued to thrive.

However, the landscape changed dramatically with the sudden passing away of Andhra Pradesh's Chief Minister and the subsequent interim leadership. Bureaucrats seized the opportunity to halt microfinance operations, leading to Spandana's net worth plummeting and its admission into corporate debt restructuring. In the face of adversity, Spandana persevered,

Padmaja's journey exemplifies the transformative power of entrepreneurship driven by empathy and ingenuity.

PADMAJA'S LEGACY OF COMPASSION AND INNOVATION SERVES AS A GUIDING LIGHT FOR A BRIGHTER, MORE INCLUSIVE FUTURE.

determined to find a way forward. Amidst the tumult, its commitment to its mission and values remained unwavering. Spandana emerged from the turmoil with a renewed sense of purpose, experiencing exponential growth and reclaiming its position as the second-largest MFI in India.

As Spandana's success attracted inestments, Padmaja's ownership stake naturally diluted. However, when the majority investors sought to sell Spandana in 2021, Padmaja had a difference of opinion on pricing. Despite pressure to relinquish control, she remained steadfast in her belief in Spandana's mission.

This impasse led to Padmaja's departure from Spandana. On the very day of her exit, she founded Keertana with a vision to address the evolving credit needs of microfinance borrowers. Recognising the demand for longer-term and larger loans, Keertana set out to fill this gap, building upon Padmaja's wealth of experience and insights.

Keertana strategically caters to the financial needs of low-income and middle-income households, providing a diverse array of financial products. Its focus on rural areas, commitment to fairness, and ethical conduct set it apart. Keertana achieved financial excellence from the start, with a post-tax Return on Assets (ROA) and a Return on Equity (ROE) that attest to its commitment.

Keertana places a high premium on corporate governance, ensuring well-rounded, insightful oversight that aligns with the best interests of its stakeholders. Over the past 20 months, Keertana has raised over 2,000 Crores from a mix of institutions, reflecting the market's trust in its vision and competence.

Keertana's commitment to offering both secured and unsecured loans distinguishes it in an industry where many NBFCs remain monoline product providers. The strategic approach of Keertana ensures sustainability, growth, and profitability. With a diverse product range and ambitious plans for expansion, Keertana continues to thrive, serving as an inspiration in the microfinance sector.

KAVITHA RAMACHANDRAGOWDA

The Impact of Women in Tech Leadership.

Please share your journey as a female tech co-founder, shaping leadership views.

Having been in the tech industry for over 17 years, my journey as a woman co-founder at Routematic has been both challenging and transformative. I've worked in diverse roles, from software development to operations, finance, and HR. Gender Bias and stereotypes are often common in a male-dominated industry such as Employee Transportation. Overcoming these hurdles involved consistent high-quality work, and building a supportive network to navigate through these challenges.

My journey underscores the importance of resilience, strategic thinking, and effective communication in leadership. I take pride in contributing to positive change and remain dedicated to inspiring the next generation of leaders, irrespective of gender.

How do you think women's leadership enhances the tech and transportation industries?

Women leaders in the smart business sector, especially in technology and transportation, possess unique qualities such as strong collaboration and communication skills, empathy, adaptability, and resilience. These qualities contribute significantly to innovation, while a customer-centric focus ensures that solutions meet a wide range of user needs. Being a woman entrepreneur means managing multiple departments. In the last few years, I've handled company finances, HR functions, operations, and more. This diverse experience has provided a holistic understanding of the business, contributing to well-informed decision-making.

Kavitha Ramachandragowda
Co-Founder and Executive Director
Routematic

How do you balance tech career demands and personal life and what would you advise to women aspiring tech leaders?

Navigating the demands of the fast-paced tech industry while managing personal responsibilities necessitates effective time management, setting boundaries, and delegation. Embracing technology and placing importance on self-care is also essential. I'm fortunate to have a supportive family and colleagues who understand the challenges.

To aspiring women leaders, I advise communicating boundaries, delegating tasks, and prioritising both personal and professional well-being. Surround yourself with a strong support system, and don't hesitate to seek help when needed.

Have you, as a female leader, encountered gender-related obstacles in male-dominated sectors?

As a woman leader, challenges like gender bias and limited representation have been part of my journey. Consistently delivering high-quality work, building a supportive network, and honing negotiation skills have been crucial in overcoming these hurdles.

Open communication about priorities has helped manage work-life balance pressures, and advocating for inclusivity has fostered positive change in the industry. Despite stereotypes, showcasing inclusive leadership styles has been key to my success.

How do you see technology transforming the transportation industry, and what role can women play in this space?

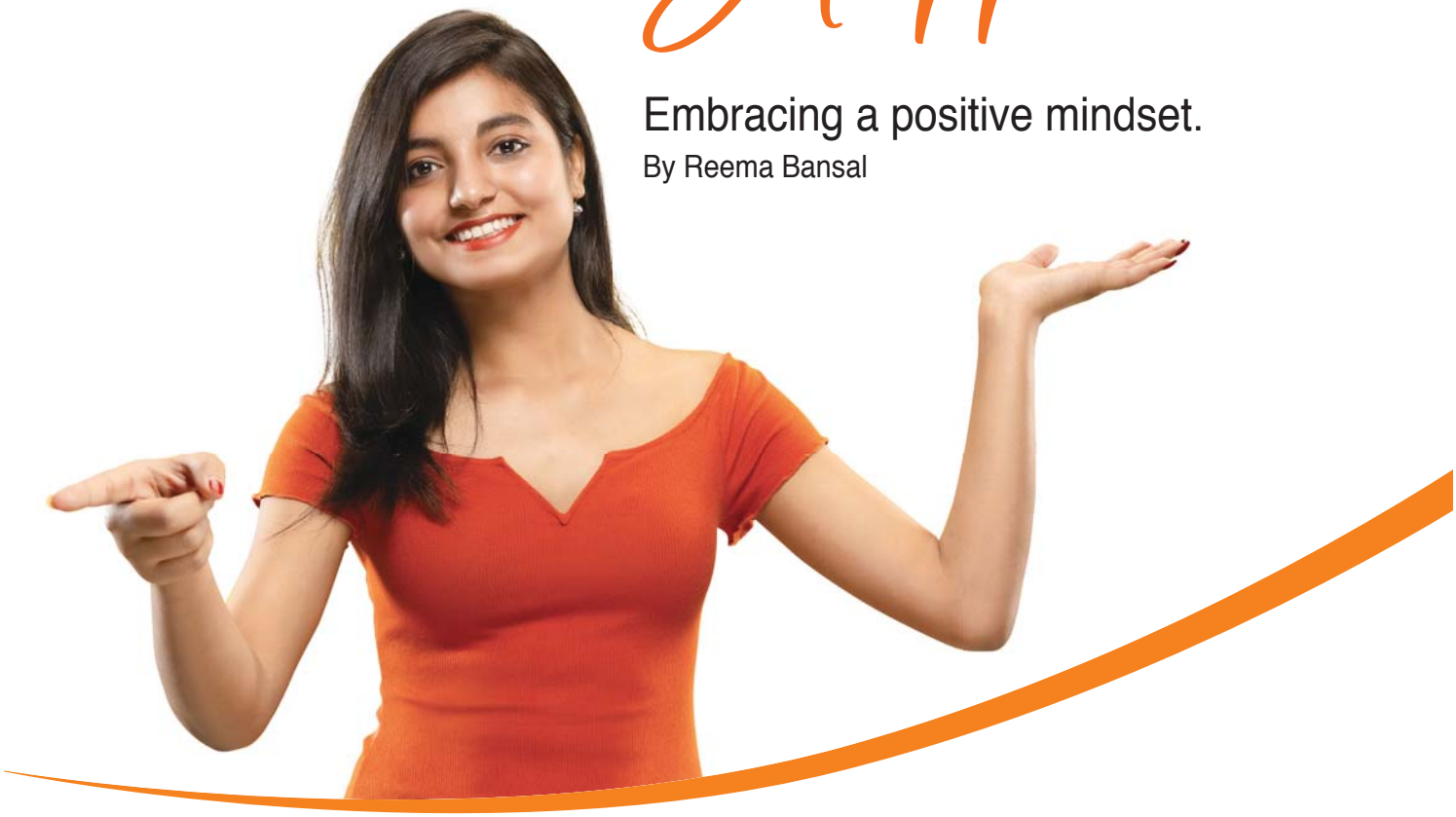
In the context of smart transportation solutions, innovations like real-time tracking, data analytics, and autonomous vehicles are optimizing operations. Women can play a crucial role in driving innovation in this space by bringing diverse perspectives and skill sets to the table. Inclusive teams, comprising both men and women, foster creative solutions that address a broader range of needs.

At Routematic, we believe in the power of diverse teams and inclusive leadership to navigate the evolving landscape of smart transportation. Encouraging women to actively participate in technology and transportation roles, providing mentorship opportunities, and fostering a culture of continuous learning are essential steps in harnessing the full potential of women in driving innovation within the transportation industry.

Choose Happiness

Embracing a positive mindset.

By Reema Bansal



Recently, I came across an image with the words, 'Choose happiness', inscribed on a tiny blackboard. I felt quite impressed with the simplicity and depth of the message and ended up posting it on my own social media, too. Happiness, indeed, needs to be, has to be, chosen.

Our college had undergone NAAC peer team visits for two days, and the weeks and months leading up to the D-days were quite hectic. Yet, everyone had merrily accepted and gladly discharged the assigned duties. So, when everything went smoothly and well, the lady staff decided to have a mini-outing both to celebrate that and commemorate International Women's Day, a living example to opt for happiness…

It might occur to one that this is just another way of saying that experiencing gratitude or, looking at the silver lining, whatever the circumstances, works in favour. Well, yes, it is that, but it is a lot more, as well! It entails thoughts, faith, actions, constant striving and a dash of self-love. More on each of these:

Revamping the Thoughts

There is a special type of therapy offered in the realm of psychology, that is called cognitive therapy. It was propounded by the renowned American Psychiatrist Aaron Beck (1921-2021). His tenets emphasise that if cognitive distortions are corrected, much mental suffering can be alleviated.

So, if we start keeping a note about these thoughts via self-observation, it will pave the way for replacing them with healthier and more productive thoughts. Therefore, here are a few examples of cognitive distortions:

All - or - none thinking: This is a pattern of thinking in absolute terms. Black-or-white, i.e. thinking that people / events / circumstances et cetera are either all-good or all-bad. It can help to remind oneself that the reality entails a mixture of both good and bad, most of the time.

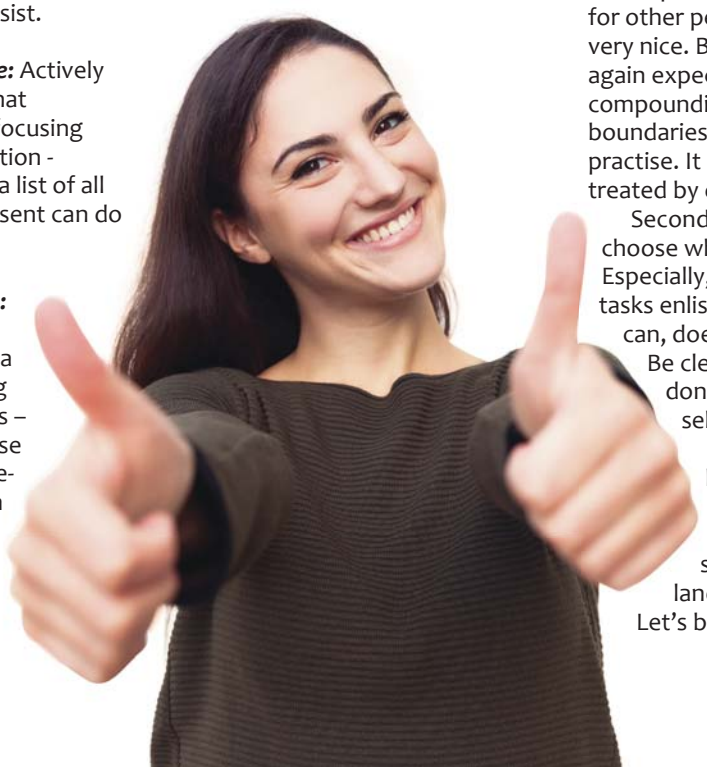
'Should' statements: Telling oneself a lot of should statements is harmful. Example, a student dwelling on 'I should always secure a high rank in exams' sets the stage for mental health issues. Learning to love oneself wholly can assist.

Discounting the positive: Actively rejecting anything good that happens in one's life and focusing only on the negative. Solution - Making an effort to make a list of all the good things in the present can do the trick.

Jumping to conclusions: Firmly believing that people are going to act in a certain way or are thinking along some particular lines – whereas that is not the case at all. This includes fortune-telling wherein the person predicts about the future unfolding of events. Pausing to reflect on facts can help.

Overgeneralisation: Assuming a rule on the basis of a single minor event. For instance, after rejection in a single job-interview, telling oneself that I will always fail at everything. Reminding to continue to learn, adapt and change, will invariably aid.

BE CLEAR ABOUT TO-DOS AND TO-DON'TS. IT WILL ELEVATE LEVELS OF SATISFACTION. ULTIMATELY, THOUGH HAPPINESS CAN'T ALWAYS BE FORCED, FOR, AS THEY SAY, IT'S LIKE A BUTTERFLY THAT ALIGHTS ON ONE'S SHOULDER WHEN ONE IS 'ONE WITH THE FLOW', YET, TAKING SOME CONSCIOUS MEASURES CAN SPEED UP THE SHOULDER-LANDING (AND MAINTAIN IT). LET'S BEGIN.



Faith and Action

They say that faith can move mountains. I have been reading a must-grab book, *The Power of Your Subconscious Mind* by Joseph Murphy, and it basically highlights that when we firmly, strongly and, with conviction, believe in something, it actually comes to pass because the subconscious ensures the same. So, it won't be far-fetched to say that faith, backed by correct actions, will actually move mountains!

Perseverance

Staying put and continuing to make efforts despite obstacles and road-blocks takes one far ahead. A lot of times, we are worried about the unpredictable aspects of some future event(s)... However, when we work hard and prepare well in the face of difficulties, too, things have a way of falling into place. They do, and we can confidently back up on this one. So, with a relaxed and calm mind, continuity of attempts is the key.

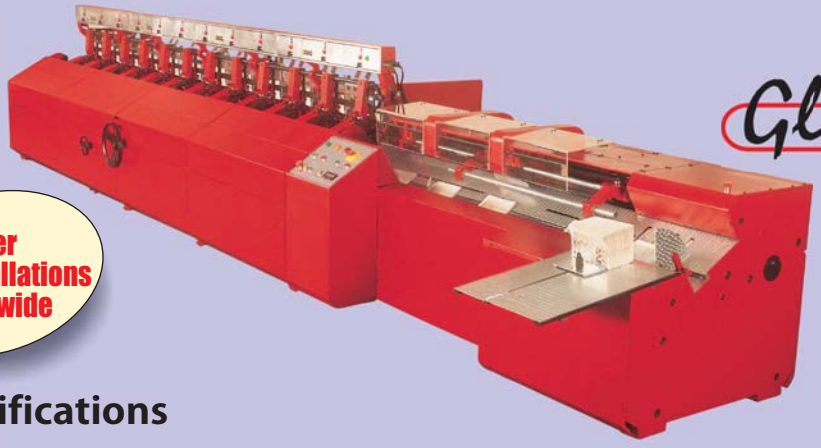
Self-care

We cannot pour from an empty cup. So, let's learn to pat our back for victories and celebrate our wins. 'Learning to say 'no'' is also a must-develop art. When we do something for other people, it's undoubtedly very nice. But it's natural that they'll again expect from us. In the face of compounding expectations, setting boundaries is the skill we need to practise. It applies to the way we are treated by others, too.

Secondly, we have to consciously choose where our time goes. Especially, in the context of the tasks enlisted – Just because you can, doesn't mean you have to. Be clear about to-dos and to-don'ts. It will elevate levels of self-satisfaction.

Ultimately, though happiness can't always be forced, yet, taking some conscious measures can speed up the shoulder-landing (and maintain it). Let's begin.

Perfect combination for magazine and textbook binding up to 60,000 copies per shift.*



Over 300 installations worldwide

Glory Specifications

Formats - untrimmed	Maximum	Minimum	
	310 x 280 mm *	110 x 150 mm	
Speed	6000 copies per hour		
Power required	3.7kw, 440V, 3-phase, 50Hz		
Block thickness	Pressed - 55 mm	Unpressed - 70 mm	
Paper handling	42 gsm to 100 gsm	4 to 32 pages signatures	Single leaf-70 gsm
Vacuum pump	Subject to number of stations		
Wire stitching device (optional)	2 - head inline wire stitching station		

TrimStar Specifications

Mechanical diagonal cut	Maximum	Minimum	Trimming height
Specs	300 x 440 mm	100 x 140 mm	100 mm
Mechanical speed	25 cycle per minute		
Clamping system	Hydraulically-operated		
Clamping pressure	From 150 to 2000 kg/m2		
Knife material	Tungsten carbide		
Power	5kw, 440V, 50Hz, 3-phase		

* Add an existing cover gluer, perfect binder or a needle thread sewing machine to complete the perfect binding line.

Pramod Engineering

Delhi Press, E-3, Jhandewala Estate, New Delhi-110055, INDIA

Phones: 9818204702 • ceo@pewbindery.in

Working videos on www.pewbindery.in

If buying a minuscule amount of the yellow metal can usher in prosperity, what is wrong with ploughing in the requisite effort, is the mindset of most people, never mind their economic status. Considering the hoary tradition and culture of our country running into thousands of years, one can vouch for the fact that this 'buying gold' business on Akshaya Tritiya is relatively new.

Similarly, southern states of the subcontinent are using the not-so-auspicious month of Aashaada/Aadi to pump in cash flow by egging the populace on with their fancy, almost unbelievable discounts.

It has gained high publicity and hence visibility in the last two decades. The last couple of years have seen advertisers urging consumers to buy silver, platinum, gemstones, land, homes, stocks and shares, electronic goods, home appliances, vehicles, new clothes, and even insurance policies, among other things.

Cashing in on Culture

The financial impact of traditional celebrations.

By S. Radha Prathi

In other words, Akshaya Tritiya or the month of Aadi is that time of the year when the thriftiest of Indians loosen their purse strings and plunge into a spending spree. Traditionalists, who do not indulge in binge buying during the marked period, prescribe worship and charity as the worthy substitute. Kings, landlords, and rich men of olden days possibly followed this practice to some extent.

The rationalists, who see their not-so-well-off brethren struggling to make ends meet, sweat it out to meet the expectation of the day, have come up with a theory. They consider the trend to have been engineered by the triumvirate, which consists of entrepreneurs, wholesale dealers, and retailers. The fashion of using occasions to promote sales of gift articles, cards and flowers is very common in the West. And as usual, we Indians want to ape them, but this time around, we have decided to revive an ancient practice to do so.

When you scratch the surface a little, it is not hard to see that it is the harsh truth. It is obvious that anybody in business would certainly like to experience a boost in sales, which automatically spells out a hike in profits. In fact, there are sellers who have introduced instalment schemes or discount offers to facilitate the buying of their expensive merchandise. If a convention or a belief can lead the public to buy their wares, what or who can stop them from selling their goods?

OUR WEDDINGS, WORSHIP ET AL., INDIVIDUALS AND INSTITUTIONS LIKE PLACES OF WORSHIP INVEST IN BUYING ORNAMENTS, APPLIANCES, CLOTHING, AND OTHER UTILITY ITEMS.

New Economy Of Gifts

Now, if this whole affair can be seen in a logical light, it can unfold a very different scene. Man's attraction to a good bargain is as old as mankind itself. As of now, India is an emerging economy. The professionals and educated class have more spending capacity. The great Indian middle class is known for its penchant for saving for a rainy day. Even the poor make it a point to include at least a gram of gold in their Mangalsutra as a sign of good omen and do not fail to invest in new clothes for the occasion. Our weddings, worship et al., individuals and institutions like places of worship invest in buying ornaments, appliances, clothing, and other utility items.

Therefore, it is obvious that the discount sales associated with festivals or the month of Aadi are only playing the role of a catalyst to inspire people to spend. Indians will do well to follow the tradition with their own interests in mind. Fluctuating rates may keep them speculating and calculating assets. However, their investment is unlikely to depreciate in value given the rate of inflation, world over. Sometimes blindly following norms can prove to be unexpectedly beneficial by pumping in transactions and boosting our economy. We

Short Story

My Mother's Teachings

Passing on Values and Wisdom from the Heartland.

By Colonel R D Singh (Retired)

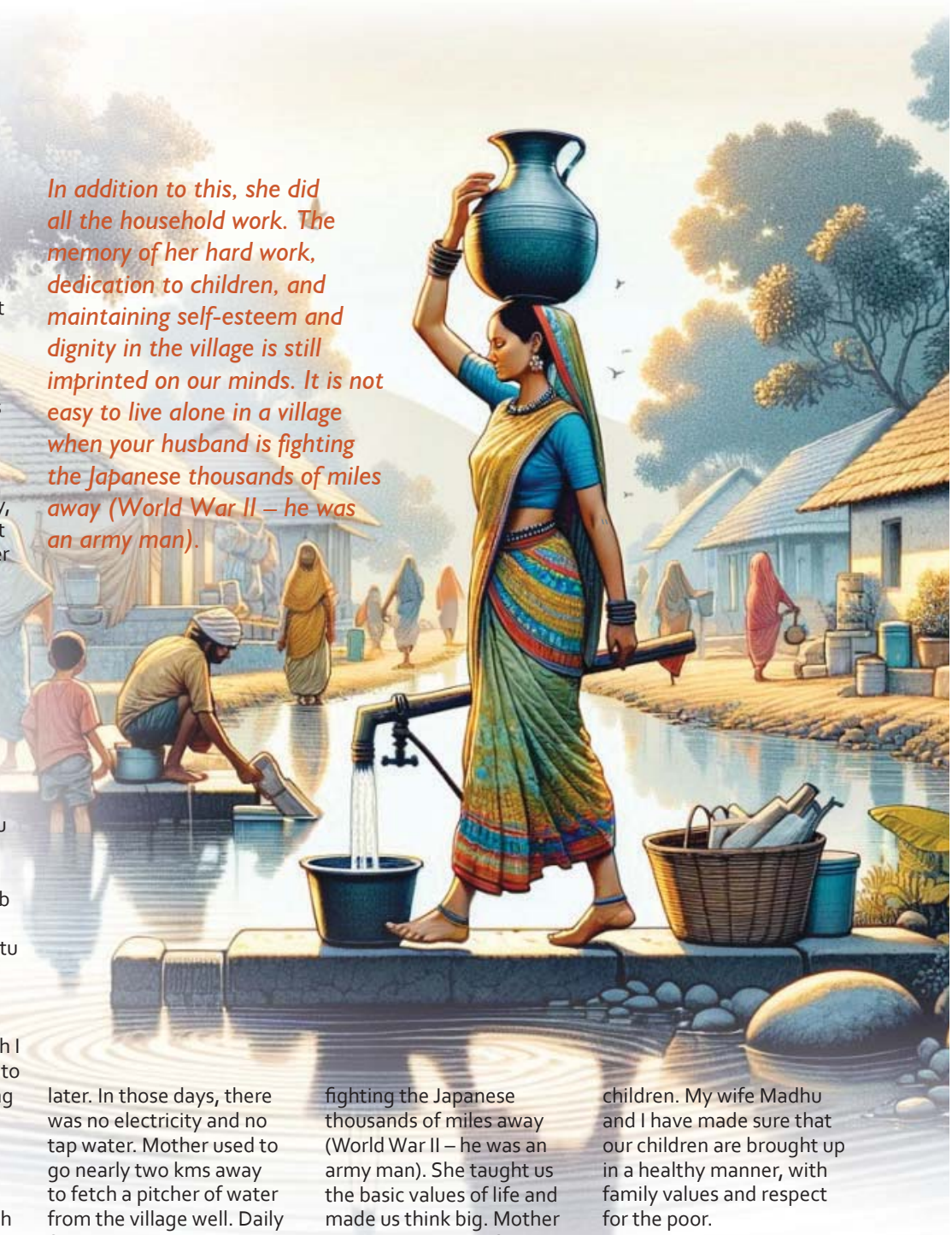
My mother was a rustic and uneducated lady, born in a small village, Chuli (Hissar) in Haryana, in 1910. But she taught us about life as well as, if not better than, any of today's modern mothers. Let me recount this as I travel through my childhood, way back in the 60s and 70s, in our village, Pili Mandori (Haryana).

The first thing she taught us was to focus on our studies with an aim to become "The President of India." Now, please do not laugh. That was the dream which our mother gave us in a remote village over 60 years ago. Towards that end, she made sure that we brothers had nothing in terms of time or money for studies.

Normally, villagers would send their children to work on fields or to graze the cattle. Not us. She would get up, without an alarm clock, at 4 am in the morning and give us tea so that we could start our studies, as well as be on time for school. Going to school meant cycling for 10 kms, as the nearest high school at Bhattu Kalan was that far.

The second lesson she taught us was to never depend on anyone, to live within our means. Indirectly, she was telling us to be free. The moment we get into the rut of beg and borrow, others will do the same. As a result, the privacy of the house is invaded, and a stream of borrowers will waste our time and distract us from our studies. So, as a family, we should be independent and content with whatever we have.

The third lesson she gave us was self-confidence, "You are the best," she always told us. So, after getting me ready with neat clothes, she would jokingly say to me, "Go and tell Guljari Bania to leave the shop." Meaning thereby, that you are the master and have no complexes. This self-confidence led me to climb the dais to speak when Indira Gandhi visited Bhattu Kalan, near our village, in 1967.



In addition to this, she did all the household work. The memory of her hard work, dedication to children, and maintaining self-esteem and dignity in the village is still imprinted on our minds. It is not easy to live alone in a village when your husband is fighting the Japanese thousands of miles away (World War II – he was an army man).

The fourth lesson, which I now infer myself, was to never make us feel wanting for money. She made us respect money but never to be its slave. During my school and college days, there was never any dearth of money. I never wasted it, and my parents never refused it. By chance, if sometimes my father said 'no' to that extra amount, my mother would quietly fish out money from some pot of grains and give it to me. So even today, I value money only for what it is worth. It does not bother me at all. That is why throughout my army career, it was soldiering first and personal requirements later. In those days, there was no electricity and no tap water. Mother used to go nearly two kms away to fetch a pitcher of water from the village well. Daily family requirement was about 12 to 15 pitchers, so she would walk 25 to 30 kms every day only to get water for the family. In addition to this, she did all the household work.

The memory of her hard work, dedication to children, and maintaining self-esteem and dignity in the village is still imprinted on our minds. It is not easy to live alone in a village when your husband is fighting the Japanese thousands of miles away (World War II – he was an army man). She taught us the basic values of life and made us think big. Mother was never scared of the village goons and stood against them when it came to the safety of her children or the ancestral land.

When my elder brother became the first commissioned officer in the area in 1963, mother felt like a queen. Now, the whole village looked up to her for help.

Mother is no more. But the lessons she gave us are being passed on to our children. My wife Madhu and I have made sure that our children are brought up in a healthy manner, with family values and respect for the poor.

We also make sure that our children remain in touch with our roots. I make it a point to take them to the village during their leave and first make them visit my parents' tombs. Then they walk on our ancestral land and mix with the village folk. No power, money, or fame can replace a mother. Thank you, mother – your toil, love, and strength were unmatched. We

Embrace Yourself

Why every woman deserves to prioritise herself?

By Ravleen Kaur Kohli

"To love oneself is the beginning of a lifelong romance." This quote by Oscar Wilde is a gentle reminder to all the women who always keep themselves at others' beck and call but often forget to sit for a while, relax, take a deep breath, and just enjoy a moment or two. When you love yourself, you can never get betrayed, which is why self-love is a lifelong romance, devoid of any harshness or betrayal.

It is the stark reality of life that the one who takes care of everyone or is available for others day in and day out eventually has a weak support system, because of the sheer reason of always putting up a strong front. But, to keep that strength going, one must give time, love, care, and compassion to oneself before everyone else because "You can't pour from an empty cup." To serve others well, you must have your glass full, so you can shower love and take care of others around you only when you are yourself mentally, emotionally, and physically strong and loved. A woman, no matter how tired, stressed out, or unwell she is, still serves others, but a feeling of frustration, unwillingness, and uneasiness starts residing within her which harms her self-worth. So, in order to do for others wholeheartedly, it is quintessential that the woman herself is happy, healthy, and loved.

But, the talk doesn't just end here; it rather takes off from here. Oftentimes, when women take care of themselves or start prioritising themselves, they are labelled as selfish, self-centred, self-obsessed, and whatnot. But, it doesn't mean that there is anything wrong with loving yourself or putting yourself first. It is just that society cannot accept a woman to prioritise herself or see her doing something that concerns only herself. When the men of the family feel tired, they are taken care of, showered with love, fed sumptuous food to lift their mood, but when women feel tired or are even unwell, they are never treated the same way. To bring a behavioural shift, women must take the first step and that is to stop putting themselves on the back burner, because if women don't love or care for themselves first, no one ever will.

Women need to give importance to themselves, in order to awaken others to the same. Little steps in the right direction go a long way if they are practised every day. Here are some areas where women must work upon to be able to become independent in terms of love, care, and happiness too, besides financial independence.

Take a look in the mirror: Shuffling amid home, office, family, and kids, most women don't even look at themselves in the mirror every day, because if they do, then their unkempt hair, wrinkles, sleepy eyes, and tired face will definitely prompt them to pay attention towards themselves. Just making it a point to look in the mirror and embrace 'who you are' will give a feeling of warmth and self-connection which is crucial towards loving yourself.

Yoga/Exercise: When women take care of their ageing parents or parents-in-law, they don't realise that they need to take the onus of their own health too. To keep their mind aligned and healthy, they have to stay physically fit by devoting time to exercise or yoga. Acknowledging their body's needs and gaining insight into what areas need to be worked upon, women must fix their exercise regime and try to follow that at least 4 times a week. This is instrumental as it will give them a sense of belonging and self-worth when they address the concerns and needs of their body.

Diet: In times when we are surrounded by adulterated, processed, and unhealthy food items, it is important to shift focus towards healthy eating. What is just one click away might be an easy option but may not necessarily be the right one. Choosing healthy options, cooking or getting cooked healthy nutritious food, and keeping processed food at bay will result in long-term benefits for the body's well-being and longevity. Owing to the routine hustle and bustle, women tend to avoid paying heed to what they are eating which consequently leads to health issues. It is therefore imperative to do mindful and healthy eating and refrain from starvation.

Hobby: Hobbies serve as the cushion that prevents possible damage when going through bumpy roads in life. Due to hectic schedules

WHEN WOMEN TAKE CARE OF THEIR AGEING PARENTS OR PARENTS-IN-LAW, THEY DON'T REALISE THAT THEY NEED TO TAKE THE ONUS OF THEIR OWN HEALTH TOO. TO KEEP THEIR MIND ALIGNED AND HEALTHY, THEY HAVE TO STAY PHYSICALLY FIT BY DEVOTING TIME TO EXERCISE OR YOGA.

and changed lifestyles, people don't practise their passion anymore, and that adds monotony to life. There have been numerous studies conducted to study the impact of having hobbies, and all of them concluded that practising your hobby or spending some leisure time doing what you love reduces your stress levels and promotes psychological health.

Reading: When it comes to books, literature, magazines, there is a deluge of options where you can dive into and pick what suits you the most and read it out to get transported to a different world.

By reading you can visit places that you could never think of, or experience situations that could be beyond your imagination.

Reading a good book enriches your mind, body, and soul and at the same time breaks the routine monotony by letting you live in the magical universe of words. Reading is one of the most valuable but

underrated gifts that you can give to yourself as it soothes and relaxes the mind.

Spending time with yourself: It may sound clichéd to spend some time with yourself, but no matter what, even 10 minutes of 'Me time' a day can do wonders for your work efficiency, mood, and energy. Just a few minutes doing what you like or enjoy doing the most, which can be as basic as reading, writing a journal, listening to music, meditation, gardening, playing an instrument, or just any activity of the world, can work as fuel for the body to continue the everyday journey.

Pat yourself on the back: Women who are always engrossed in work, striving to make ends meet, trying to strike the right work-home balance, often find themselves a little low after a while, not because they are finding it hard or are unable to manage, but because they are not being appreciated or encouraged enough.

So, women must pat themselves for always showing up, for staying strong, for not giving up even when it seems to be the only option, for being incredible managers, and for setting unparalleled examples. Rather than expecting or depending on others for acknowledgment or appreciation, women must value and congratulate themselves for being 'Women' because the word itself is symbolic of strength, valour, talent, respect, hard work, and so many other adjectives. We

A Tribute to Kavita Chaudhury

Pioneering female representation in Indian TV. By Deepak Bhatia

Ms. Kavita Chaudhury was a pioneer! Starting as a model for Surf detergent, her well-known and still-remembered catchlines were "*Daag, dhabbe dhoondte reh jaoge*" and "*Bhaisaheb, Surf ki khareedari mein hi samajhdari hai.*" She blossomed into a writer and director of her own TV serial, *Udaan*, which ran for 30 episodes, in which she played the pivotal character, Ms. Kalyani Chaudhury, IPS. Several other actresses have also portrayed lady police officers, like Tabu in *Drishyam*, Rani Mukherjee in *Mardaani*, Lara Dutta in *100*, Shefali Shah (formerly Chhaya) in *Delhi Crime*, and more recently, Sai Tamhankar in *Bhakshak*, but none was a match for KC, who set a very high benchmark as a no-nonsense, honest, straightforward, and fearless officer. And this was at a time when there was only one channel on TV in India, viz. Doordarshan, aka DD.

Women-centric films were made rarely, and the only serial that comes to mind with a lady as the principal character was Rajni, portrayed by Ms. Priya Tendulkar.

A memorable dialogue delivered by Ms. KC was, "Medal *milega aapko, aur taali bajane walon mein khade honge hum!*" This was a reference to the trend of awards in the services being given generally to male officers only.

Never mind the medal and award, Ma'am, you achieved what few had done. Not only recognition, but you also won accolades, then quietly faded out after acting in some more serials.

We were still applauding when you chose to withdraw quietly from our midst. Gone too soon. We

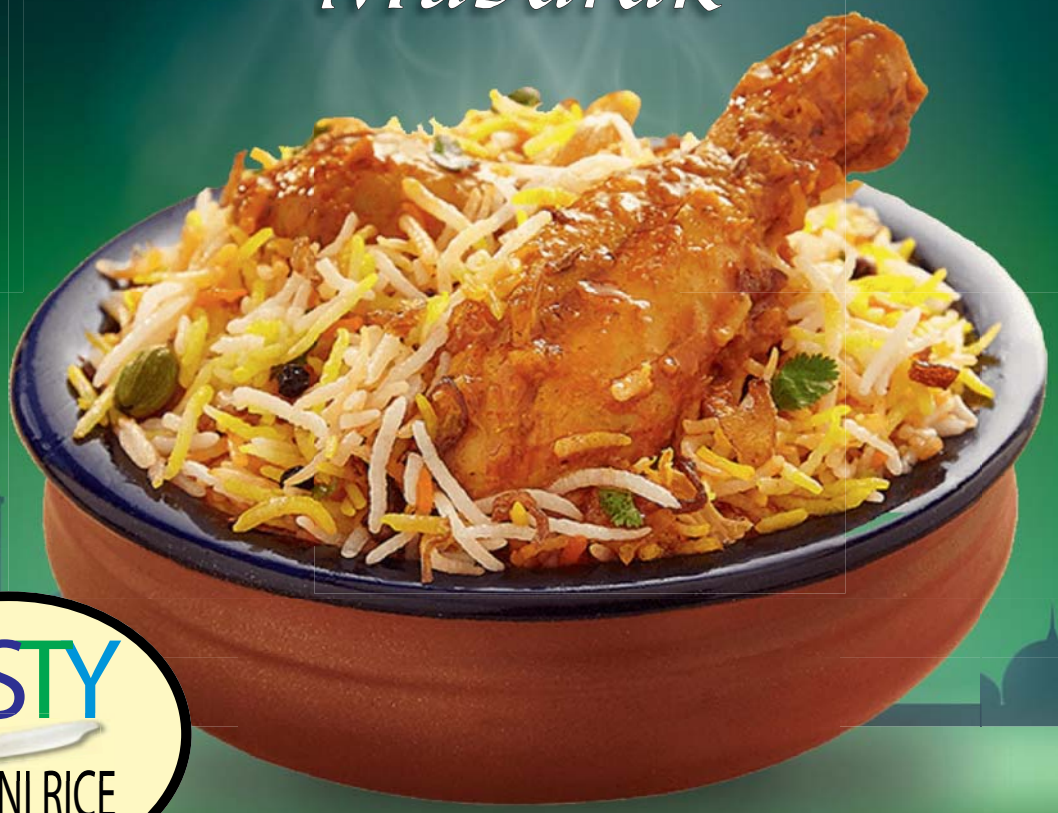
La-Taste

Aeroplane

BASMATI

Rice

Eid Mubarak



TASTY

BIR YANI RICE

Also available in all leading stores.

shop.aeroplanerice.com | amazon | Flipkart | JioMart | zepto | Best Price | more | METRO Cash & Carry | star

www.aeroplanerice.com I Email: info@aeroplanerice.com I Ph.: +91-8595912447

follow us on: http://www.facebook.com/aeroplanericeacjk insta @aeroplane_rice

Short Story

Ariv's Roster

Love finds a way. By Sarika Katti

The Rajarajeshwari temple complex shopping market had grown so crowded that it had become challenging to cross the road. A range of shops, from beauty services to everyday essentials, made this place very lucrative for every dweller in this area to shop here.

Ariv recognised her as his schoolmate, briskly walked toward her, and asked, "Are you Shilpa?"

Carts stood at every corner of the crossroads, selling flowers, vegetables, and fruits. A few kilometres from the complex is the Rajarajeshwari temple, built in the 1960s; it is a serene place that attracts many devotees worldwide.

On a hot summer noon, Ariv glimpsed a lady in a ghagra with a heavy tassel rope gold necklace and danglings in Rajarajeshwari Nagar temple. She was sitting alone and in tears. She looked at Ariv and turned away. Ariv recognised her as his schoolmate, briskly walked toward her, and asked, "Are you Shilpa?" "Yes," she muttered, bent her head, and turned her face to avoid him. She smelled of vomit.

"Is there anything I can help you with? You seem preoccupied with something," Ariv said, kneeling on his knees. "Tantrik energies," people were whispering!

"I believe he just vomited on me because of a stomach upset before tying the knot. So he walked out of the marriage hall, and I followed him," Shilpa spoke with her eyes red and her hand shivering.

"Where did he go?" Ariv questioned "To the doctor," she responded "What would you do now?" Ariv asked inquisitively. "He said he would come back, but he didn't. So I just spoke to him; he ain't coming," saying Shilpa broke down. "People in the marriage hall believe the marriage got cancelled, but that ain't true. Now I have no proof to show anyone that I am married. People believe I have become hysterical."

"Well, why don't you talk to him again?" Ariv asked. "I did; he said the marriage is jinxed, and not accepting the marriage made more sense. His mom doesn't want to go ahead with the marriage." "What about his ethics. How can he marry a woman and deny it?" Ariv asked, surprised.

"I am a private detective, and I can help you," he said with raised eyebrows. "All a woman needs is one nice good man to settle down with, and, unfortunately, these events prevent me from dating other men. I am married, and he just doesn't get it. So I feel stuck," saying she clenched her fists. "How did he get married to you?" Ariv asked. "He just put a garland around my neck. He didn't tie any mangal sutra or put the sindoor? But we are half married," I declared. "What's his name?" Ariv enquired.

"Siddharth Roy is his full name, and I am Shilpa Bansal. We are neighbours staying in Rajarajeshwari Nagar in the same apartment complex. We didn't fall in love, but our parents arranged our marriage."

"Did you have any relationship with any other men before this?" I asked. "Yes, Krishna used to meet me on the terrace. He lives in the same apartment complex, and I used to hide from others and meet him on the terrace.

One day his parents caught us, and they told our parents. Instead of getting me married to Krishna, my parents spoke to Siddharth's parents and arranged our marriage. Unfortunately, Siddharth became sick on the marriage day, and now I am called 'jinxed.' No one would marry me either," she said, sobbing. "When you were in love with Krishna, why did you agree to Siddharth?"

"My parents put immense pressure on me, Ariv; you just don't understand the dynamics at home. Same culture, value systems, and all the bigotry reasons." "So, do you love Siddharth or Krishna?" Ariv asked, confused. "I am 'half-married.' I don't love both of them now.

Krishna, when he learned that my parents were discussing my marriage proposal with Siddharth, sent a message saying that he wanted to break up with me.

"Siddharth vomited in the marriage hall and walked out; he married me in the temple in everyone's presence, and now he refuses to accept the marriage." "You mean 'half-married'? Should I fight the case or move on?" "I am not interested in Sid accepting me, but I want to know the real reason for the drama? Can you help me, Ariv? Who mixed something in Siddharth's breakfast that caused him to vomit?"

Ariv pacified her and sent her back home. Rajarajeshwari Nagar is a second home for many politicians and actors, which is how well-known the area is. Shilpa's apartment complex is a 4-storeyed building built on a beautiful 10000 sq ft plot. A 3000 sq ft built-in area of each flat and the remaining left aside for the garden is a visible palace to anyone who walks past that lane. Shilpa stayed on the 4th floor, Krishna on the 2nd floor, and Siddharth on the 1st floor.

"I am a private detective, and I can help you," he said with raised eyebrows. "All a woman needs is one nice good man to settle down with, and, unfortunately, these events prevent me from dating other men. I am married, and he just doesn't get it. So I feel stuck," saying she clenched her fists.

The following day Ariv went to Siddharth's home. Siddharth's mother peeped into the peephole and slowly opened the door. "I am Ariv, private investigator," Ariv spoke. Mother started weeping; now she has sent a policeman home, saying she walked inside the bedroom. After a long wait in the living room, Siddharth came outside.

"Sorry, sir, to keep you waiting; I was with my mother," Siddharth said. Ariv said, "Transparency is the key! Do you suspect anyone mixed some poison in your food that caused you to vomit?" "No, my mom made all the gujiyas at home, and we all ate it; only I seem affected; my parents are fine!"

"Do you suspect anyone is mixing poison in your food?" Ariv asked. "No, I just couldn't take the smoke and the oily food, and I threw up; I am not used to it." Siddharth said. "Why wouldn't you accept her?"

"As you said, transparency is the key; she never spoke about her affair with Krishna. So why would you expect that I would accept her? She never mentioned Krishna to me; why would I force myself to accept a girl who has not been truthful about her past?" Siddharth expressed.

"You should have broken up with her before fixing the marriage; now it's insulting. Who told you about Krishna?" Ariv enquired. "I cannot mention the name. I promised the person. I have nothing more to say; tell Shilpa, 'Transparency is the key'."

"Remember, both of you are jinxed; I will not let you marry again till the case is sorted out," Ariv asserted. Ariv shook hands with Siddharth and left.

Ariv, a tall man with a wheatish complexion, curly hair, and dusky eyes, is visible and stands out in any crowd. To avoid the attention he gets from people around him, he oils his hair so that it binds well and stands stiff. Yet the

dusky eyes make him look handsome, and his deep voice captivates anyone in the crowd. He opted for criminal psychology and forensics to become a private detective when all his friends were chasing dreams of becoming a doctor or engineer. However, he couldn't find a job in the forensic department, so he opened a private detective agency. He set up an office in the Rajarajeshwari Nagar shopping centre on the main road. His office is a 300 sq ft shop with a rack holder to place the case files, a table, a chair, and a computer with multiple monitors.

The following day Ariv met Shilpa at his office. He let her sit on his chair and squeezed himself into the corner next to the monitor on his table. "Why didn't you tell about Krishna to Siddharth?" Ariv questioned. "Everything happened so quickly, the wedding planning and parents getting along so well, that I didn't feel like talking about Krishna to anyone." "No one would believe you; transparency is the key!"

"The fear of dying alone would haunt me. I have two failed relationships, and what if the third one also goes the same way? I would never find anyone. Can you please help me sort out my life?" "Well, I can guide you to focus inwards, on yourself. To introspect and understand all your shortcomings and fix them. Eventually, Siddharth may choose to come into your life, or I will help you find a suitable match," Ariv reasoned. "What's looking inwards?" Shilpa raised her eyebrows and questioned. "Self-love. Get physically fit, go to your gym or Zumba classes, chill with a good group of girlfriends, work smart at your office, and have hobbies." "What do you think I do now?" Shilpa raised her voice. "Practise being calm in every situation; that helps," he retorted back. "Okay, well, I have to go now," said Shilpa, abruptly leaving the place. "Don't forget, 'transparency is the key'; remember that always and life will find ways to test you," he said calmly, making sure she didn't forget it.

The following day Ariv met Shilpa at his office. "Why didn't you tell about Krishna to Siddharth?" Ariv questioned. "Everything happened so quickly, the wedding planning and parents getting along so well, that I didn't feel like talking about Krishna to anyone."

Just as she left the place and reached home by car, she met Krishna in the parking lot. "Hey Shilpa!" Krishna yelled. "Sorry to hear all that happened to you on your wedding day. I am the culprit, I told Sid about our relationship," Krishna whispered. "Please don't talk to me, I don't want to know anything. I am half-married, I would as well wait for Siddharth to come back to me. I am not sure who did what, I am terrified of my state. I have forgiven you and have no interest in keeping in touch with you or my past," Shilpa replied in anguish and pain and hurriedly paced to her home. Listening to the conversation, Siddharth's heart melted.

For almost two years, Shilpa worked on herself; she joined the Zumba dance for her fitness, she worked hard at the office and came home and helped her mother with home chores. She didn't meet Krishna nor did she meet Siddharth. She didn't question them either. Shilpa worked in a company that developed software for "back office automation". They took care of inventory, purchases, and other necessities of every company. Her company assigned her work for which Siddharth was the client on the other end.

"Maybe, she has not put the start date and end dates of the project correctly, maybe she has increased the number of resources." After all the scrutiny, Siddharth couldn't find any fault in her work and gave her the contract. As he worked with her, he truly fell in love with her and they got married in the temple near their home and in Ariv's presence. "Thanks, Ariv! You have an amazing roster," saying Shilpa winked and left. Ariv laughed. We

MANIK CHAND™

JEWELLERS

GOLD ◆ DIAMOND ◆ PLATINUM

मानकः पथप्रदर्शकः
Bis Hallmark Jewellery

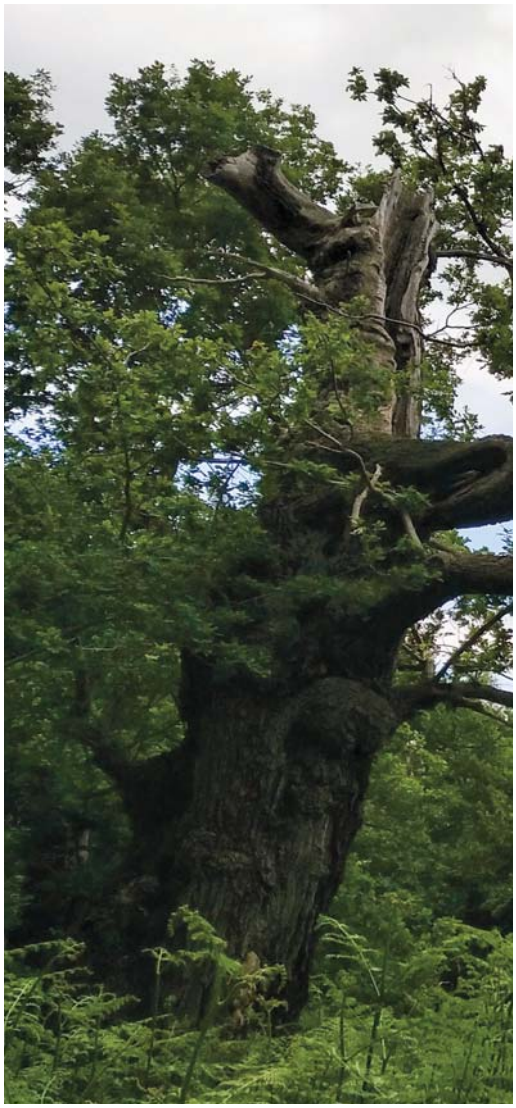
Founder Member

Manik Chand & Sons (Jewellers) Pvt. Ltd. Christian Basti, G.S. Road, Guwahati-5, Phone: 2343186, 2343189
Manik Chand & Sons (J) Pvt. Ltd. Shoppers Point, 1st Floor, Shop – F-2, 4, 6 & 8, H.B. Road, Phone: 2732767, 2736102
Manik Chand Jewellers Pvt. Ltd. K.C. Road, Fancy Bazar, Guwahati-1, Phone: 2547454, 2516922
Manik Chand & Sons Jewellers (Int) LLP. Imperial Mall, G. Floor, Shop no. 1 & 2, Club Road, Silchar, Phone: 03842-236002, 236004
Manik Chand & Sons Jewellers (Int) LLP Hotel Courtyard By Marriott, Ground Floor, Shop No.H-101,
Jail Road, Police Bazar, Shillong-793001 (Meghalaya) Phone: 0364-2912990 Mob. No. 9678068930
Manik Chand & Sons Jewellers (Int) LLP. Times Square mall, Ground Floor, Shop no. G-25 & 26, RG Baruah Road,
Sunderpur Guwahati-781005 (Assam) Mob. No. 9678068936
E-mail: Info@mcj.net.in | www.manikchandjewellers.com

www.facebook.com/Manik-Chand-Jewellers-96975243149007 **9678068937**

manikchandjewellersgs_mcj

My Nottingham Diary

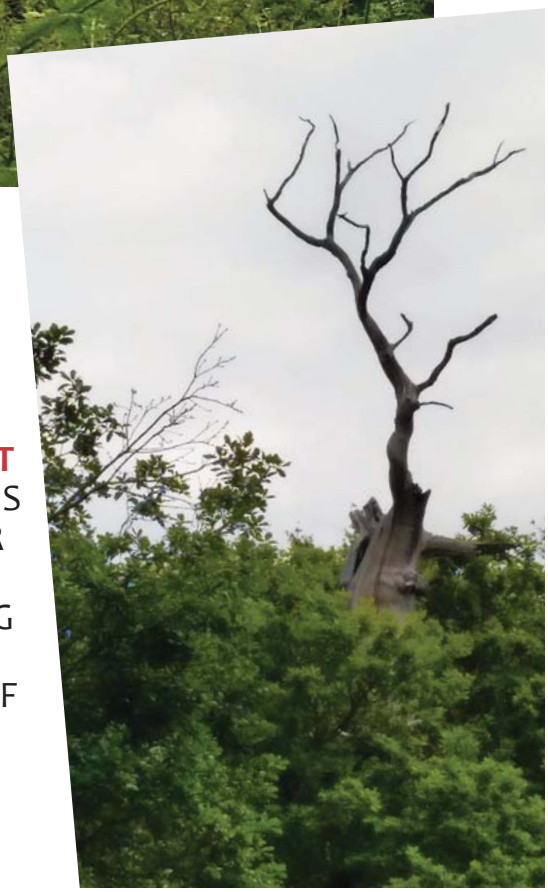


A Blend of History, Nature, and Literary Legends.

By Amrinder Bajaj

As our Lexus neared the gate of the property, it swung open of its own accord to welcome us. Up the gentle slope of a birch-lined avenue, we drove to the manor atop a hill. This was to be our home for the fortnight of our stay. A handsome white structure at the edge of Nottingham City, it overlooked vast swathes of emerald fields on one side and a cluster of red-roofed houses down below on the other. They lit up when the skies darkened, twinkling merrily in communion with the star-studded night.

Here lived my brother, a genius with his gracious wife and loving family. Not only was he an ophthalmologist of international repute, having discovered a layer in the cornea that changed the way textbooks were written, for which he had received a CBE from the Queen, but he had also just completed a year as the High Sheriff of Nottingham!



Sherwood Forest Adventure

Never in my wildest dreams did I imagine that one day, a childhood story would come to life! It felt surreal walking in Sherwood Forest, Robin Hood's land, with the former Sheriff of Nottingham. It was into this forest that the outlawed and his men retreated after robbing the rich to help the poor, hiding from the Sheriff's men in the hollow of mighty oaks. I almost expected an arrow to whiz past me. The major oak was so vast and ancient that its branches had to be held aloft by props. After admiring it, we walked along the giant oak trail past magnificent specimens of the species till we came across the 'Stag Tree', a dead tree

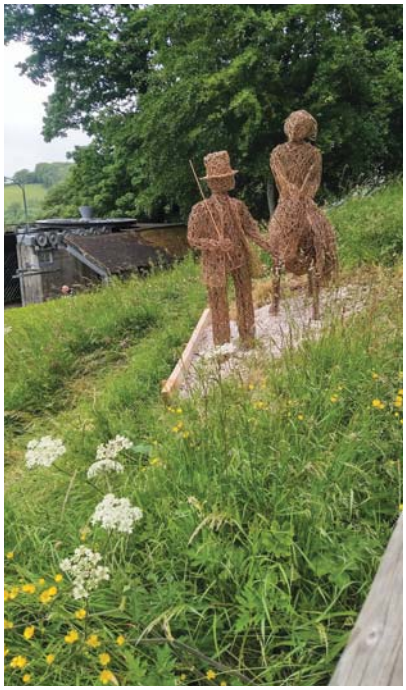
IT FELT SURREAL WALKING IN SHERWOOD FOREST, WITH THE FORMER SHERIFF OF NOTTINGHAM. IT WAS INTO THIS FOREST THAT THE OUTLAWED AND HIS MEN RETREATED AFTER ROBBING THE RICH TO HELP THE POOR, HIDING FROM THE SHERIFF'S MEN IN THE HOLLOW OF MIGHTY OAKS.

with stag antler-like bare branches piercing the sky; so named after a legendary stag that protected the forest.

When he became too old to roam the forest, he reposed atop the tree to keep a watch over his precious domain. A bracing walk through this soothing sea of green calmed our senses and soothed our souls, a process called 'forest bathing' by the Japanese.

Heights of Abraham

Heights of Abraham in Matlock Bath was a hilltop park spread over 60 acres. Over deep gorges, forested cliffs, over the narrow river Derwent, our trolley ascended so that we could descend down 159 steep, slippery steps into the caves of Masson. Under low roofs, past dripping water



WE HAD ENTERED THE BOWELS OF THE EARTH TO RELIVE THE LIVES OF MINERS WHO SPENT THE MAJOR PART OF THE DAY IN THE DARK, GNAWING AND SCURRYING LIKE RODENTS TO EMERGE FROM THEIR HOLES AT DUSK TO RETURN IN THE DARK. THE MINES WERE DEPLETED AND THE THREAT OF STARVATION LOOMED LARGE.

(which the miners drank in their day), we made our way through the tunnel till we reached the main cave. Lead was mined here under precarious conditions with smoky tallow candles stuck on helmets or crevices in walls for light.

We had entered the bowels of the earth to relive for a brief span of time the lives of miners who spent the major part of the day in the dark, gnawing and scurrying like rodents to emerge from their holes at dusk to return to their hovels again in the dark.

All too soon, the mines were depleted and the threat of starvation loomed large. This forced the miners to convert these convoluted tunnels and caverns into a tourist spot, and it remains so from 1884 onwards.

Newstead Abbey

Being a writer myself, I looked forward to calling on the two literary greats in the vicinity but was deeply disappointed. Neither of them was at home. Lord Byron, who fell in love at the drop of a hat, I'm sure, was out courting a beautiful damsel. Though envious of the lady who engaged his attention, for I was a bit in love with him myself, I did not grudge him his pursuits. They had given birth to some of the most romantic poetry in English literature.

A romantic poet had to be constantly in love, though not necessarily with the same woman, to produce these precious gems. Every lady who drew him towards her offered a different facet of the kaleidoscope of love which he penned down for posterity. These immortal lines were written for his Greek love Theresa:

"Maid of Athens, ere we part,
Give, O give me back my heart."

One of Byron's most popular poems was inspired by his first sight of his cousin, Mrs. Wilmot, who was dressed in mourning at that time. It reads:

"She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies
And all that's best of dark and bright
In her aspect and in her eyes."

For his wife Anne Isabella, who left him on account of his 'insanity' and allegations of incest with his half-sister Augusta, he wrote:
"Fare thee well! And if forever, still for ever
Fare thee well.
Even though unforgiving, never
'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel."

He went into voluntary exile after his divorce and died of marsh fever in Greece at 36 years of age! His concern for the downtrodden endeared him, while his eccentricities intrigued. He used his living room for shooting practice, swam naked in the lake on his property with a pet bear and dog Boatswain! He sat with his rabies-afflicted dying Boatswain on his lap on a chair (still there in the far corner of his study), for three days and nights without food or drink or fear for his own life, till Boatswain died.

Lord Byron inherited Newstead Abbey, which was just eleven miles from Nottingham but sold it to clear his debts. The beautiful abbey was surrounded by gardens and woodlands where peacocks, ducks, and geese roamed fearless and free. It had a waterfall, a stream, and lakes. I visualised the handsome lord with curly hair and a limp (which added to his charm) swimming naked in the lake, though modesty prevented me from seeing him floating on his back, even in imagination!

Separated as we were by the distance of time and space, I could only take a picture with his bust. I even bought a miniature likeness of the handsome lord to take back home, hoping that some of his genius would rub off on me. It now adorns the bookshelf where the books I have written stand to salute him.

THE BEAUTIFUL ABBEY WAS SURROUNDED BY GARDENS AND WOODLANDS WHERE PEACOCKS, DUCKS, AND GEESE ROAMED FEARLESS AND FREE. IT HAD A WATERFALL, A STREAM, AND LAKES. I COULD ONLY TAKE A PICTURE WITH HIS BUST.

Another son of Nottinghamshire and adjoining Derbyshire was D.H. Lawrence, though he is not celebrated at his birthplace Eastwood on account of his controversial books like *Lady Chatterley's Lover, Sons and Lovers*, and his controversial lifestyle of having run off with his German teacher's wife and being exiled on being thought of as a German spy, which embittered him towards his own country.

Stratford upon Avon

Leaving a part of my heart at Newstead Abbey, I went to Stratford upon Avon, the abode of the greatest of them all – William Shakespeare. Though I was not enamoured by his looks, his literary works were an open casket of priceless jewels that had the magical power of never being depleted, no matter how many were taken over the centuries by how many people all over the world. It is beyond the purview of this piece to elaborate upon these literary gems, but I took a keen interest in his abodes and the street in which he spent his early days. I loved the cottage in which he was born and spent a part of his boyhood, more than the grand 'New Place' that he eventually bought and inhabited.

Here I got a glimpse of his modest beginnings. On the ground floor was the hall, kitchen, laundry room, and the window from which his father, a glove-maker, sold his wares. The bedchamber upstairs had a narrow double bed on which his parents, like others in those times, slept reclining due to a belief that if they lay down, the devil would think they were dead and take away their souls! On one

side was a cradle in which lay the latest addition to the family, while on the other was a low string cot on which the toddlers slept together, till the age of five.

Only when a child was able to walk straight with a candle from one room to the other (without dropping it lest the wooden cottage catch fire) was he able to sleep with his older siblings in the other room. A chamber pot that collected excreta was kept by the side of the bed and emptied on the streets every morning! To warn pedestrians of the unsavoury onslaught, the chambermaid would shout 'Gardi loo' (watch out for the water) before emptying it, which gave birth to the slang 'loo' for toilet!

Intriguingly, Shakespeare married 26-year-old Anne Hathaway (we visited her lovely thatched-roofed cottage too) at the age of 18, as she was pregnant! He had to obtain a special licence for this as he was underage! Their first daughter, Susanna, was born six months after the marriage, and he was the father of twins, a daughter Judith and a son Hamnet (who died at eleven years of age), by the age of 21!

He was the third of eight children, the oldest surviving child, as his elder two sisters had died in infancy. Though famously known as a playwright and poet, Shakespeare began life by minding the horses of theatre patrons in London. Later, he became an actor himself and ended up being part-owner of a very successful theatre group. When he became rich and famous, he bought New Place, the second-largest house in Stratford with manicured lawns and large rooms that had the latest amenities of those times. He augmented his income by keeping livestock and growing grains and vegetables, of which, he sold the surplus.

Waterways

On the way back, we stopped at the picturesque village Bourton on the Water, with its honey-coloured cottages. We crossed one of its pretty stone bridges to have our evening tea by the smooth-flowing waters of the canal. Barton's Marina, on the other hand, was a much-hyped waterfront chock-a-block full of boats, lined by expensive shops and restaurants. Its natural beauty was marred by human invasion, or so I thought, till I learned that the harbour itself was man made, where over 300 boats could be parked. With its quaint, expensive waterfront shops, it has become a tourist destination.

The sky in these counties was something to die for. I had forgotten when I had seen so vivid a blue, unveiled by the pall of pollution that clouded my city, Delhi. As we drove home from one of our excursions, thick clouds gathered low, but for all the overload, they unloaded a mere drizzle, unlike the deluge of our robust Indian monsoon. As if to show off her jewels, as one woman to another, the half-sunny, half-dark sky revealed a treasure that took my breath away – a glorious two-stranded necklace of a complete double rainbow! Except for a brief spell of light showers for a couple of days, during which we indulged in frenzied retail therapy, the weather behaved itself for the rest of our stay. And did we take advantage of it?

Besides the new places I visited, the new people I met, my Nottingham diary would not be complete without a mention of the new tastes I savoured. There was the traditional fare of fish and chips, the juicy steak at Miller and Carter, exotic Chinese food at Chung's, fried chicken liver at Nando's, and a delicious Turkish platter at Bosphorus. Other new foods and flavours I experienced were Halloumi (fried goat cheese), Muscaca, a Greek dish made of mince, eggplant, potatoes, and cheese, Egyptian steamed vine leaves wrapped around spiced rice, and delicious desserts like Baklava and Khunafa.

People who visit England speak of the many splendours of London. I have seen them all and have been mighty impressed, but the lesser-known wonders of Nottinghamshire took my heart away. Her beauty grew slowly on me like a coral reef that will enrich forever, the sea of my memory. We

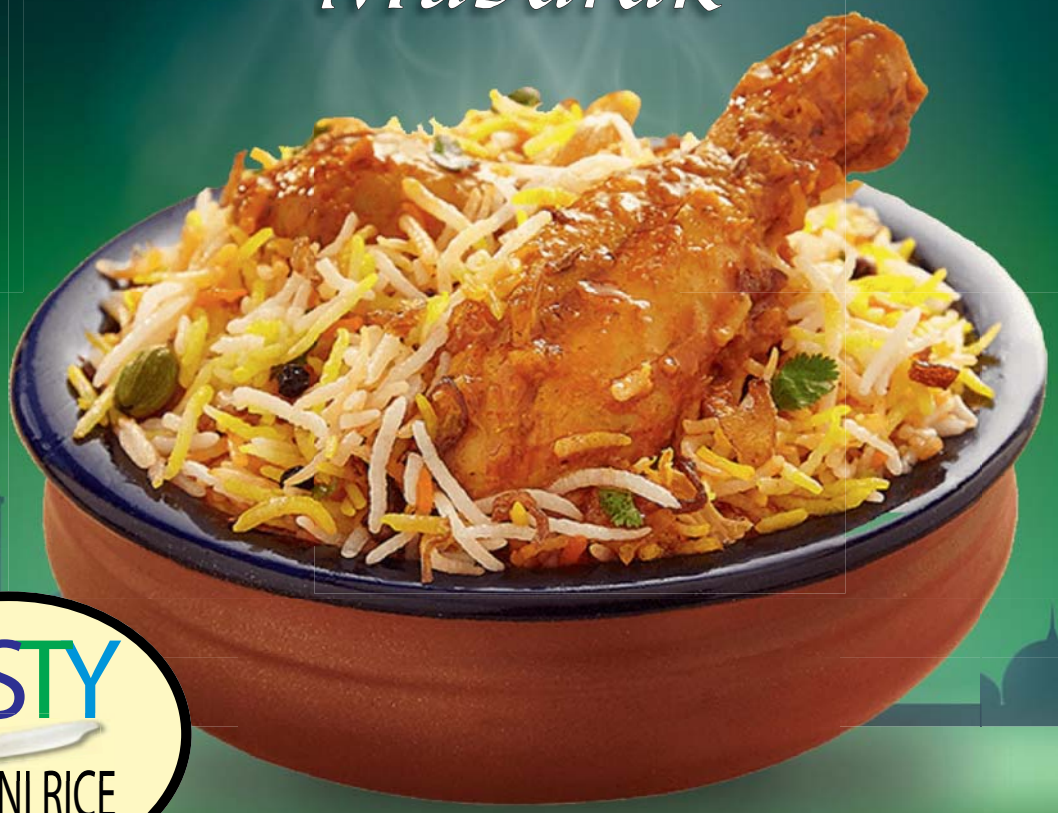
La-Taste

Aeroplane

BASMATI

Rice

Eid Mubarak



TASTY

BIR YANI RICE

Also available in all leading stores.

shop.aeroplanerice.com | amazon | Flipkart | JioMart | zepto | Best Price | more | METRO Cash & Carry | star

www.aeroplanerice.com I Email: info@aeroplanerice.com I Ph.: +91-8595912447

follow us on: http://www.facebook.com/aeroplanericeacjk insta @aeroplane_rice

Sartorial Splendour

By Neha Mehra

Neha Mehra's label is a vibrant tapestry, weaving Rajasthan's cultural threads into modern elegance. Gota and resham embroideries dance with vivid hues, creating intricate stories on free-flowing silhouettes.

Gold bead embroidered jacket set, perfect for a glamorous evening affair.

Soft and feminine baby pink Chanderi kurta set exudes elegance.

Elegant and timeless ivory set with delicate bead embroidery.

Playful yet elegant Pink Barfi front slit kaftan set.

Striking saffron high low co-ord set adds a contemporary twist.

Effortlessly chic saffron kaftan with belt clinches the waist.

Bold and stylish Black Killa front slit kaftan set for a glamorous evening.

Statement-making Black Killa ruffle kaftan set adds drama.

Sophisticated
black blazer set
with intricate bead
embroidery.

Courtesy:
Designer: Neha Mehra

CULTURAL IMITATION

Why do we ape the west?

By Dr Veena Adige

Though the world is beginning to sit up and take notice of India and Indians, there is still a huge majority here of the educated upper-middle class who still ape the West. They feel that whatever the white man says must go. '*Tum din ko agar raat kaho to raat kahenge*' seems to be their guideline.

There was a time, not so long ago, when the difference in the progress of India from the West was almost a couple of decades. I remember in the seventies, when I went to the UK and saw the ease with which potato peelers could make my tedious job less difficult, I even put it in my overcoat pocket when I returned and was caught by the security at the airport who thought that such a simple instrument could be part of hijacking! That I was heavily pregnant did not make any difference to them; they made me wait till it was confiscated and was to be returned when I landed in Mumbai!

For me, the potato peeler, so far unavailable in India and which I had used for my two-year stay in England, was a prized thing.

The people in Western countries, particularly in the USA, had a surplus of land with less population. Hence, helpers were few and they had to resort to machines and fast food for their daily needs. Houses were huge with few people in them. Hence, dishwashers, washing machines, and the like made their tasks easier. But we, in India, have a surplus of people and that too, below the poverty line, making them very useful in households that need their help.

So, why do we still go in for these contraptions when we have cheap and needy labour?

Even mundane things like fruit picking are needed in places where trees are many and pickers are few. The Western child today pays money to go to orchards and considers fruit picking a project, something which our children have learned from the time they have been able to walk and talk.

Weather plays a large role in our habits. In cold weather, it is easier to use tissues and toilet paper even though water is not a problem. The weather in most places for the major part of the year is so cold that wiping instead of washing is more logical while in the tropics, water is more used for cleansing. But our aristocrats and their minions use these paper rolls even when the price is high here, while in the West it is very affordable. You can see them buying tissue boxes and toilet rolls by the gross and stocking them since they are affordable and usable commodities.

Western Influence On New Generation

God in His wisdom made vegetables and fruits suitable for that place and its inhabitants. Thus, apples are found in cooler climes while mangoes and coconuts are cultivated in coastal places. To interchange them is absurd. But that is what our gentry is doing. They go to study abroad, settle there, and try to reinforce the Indian habits to their foreign-born children. How can they understand the culture of their inheritors when they have seen the Western culture around them? For them, dating and being independent in their teens is the in thing while here, even a fifty-year-old is treated by his or her parents as a child.

The settlers abroad follow the Western type of education, see their friends behave differently from their parents at home and their extended families when they come to India on their yearly or biyearly short visits. They, who have been brought up to voice their thoughts and feelings,

HOMEMADE CHAPATIS MAY COST TWO DOLLARS APIECE, BUT THEY MAY FIND IT DIFFICULT FOR THEIR PALATES TO EAT THE PIZZA AND PASTAS, AN ALMOST DAILY DIET IN MANY PLACES.

would be stifled if asked to be quiet among elders and keep mum unless they are directly involved in the discussions. Arranged marriages and joint families are alien.

And today's parents here are bringing up their kids in the Western open ways and wail when these same children are outspoken, even when they are in the right. The modern Indian urban child is not brought up to respect the seniors or talk to them politely. He is used to speaking his thoughts without considering whether the listener is a senior or his friend.

The ladies in the West have the 'I, myself, and me' concept while here it is the 'donkey comes last' idea. '*Pehle aap*' and not 'Me first' is our culture, which the confused modern children find difficult.

The main and the biggest problem is food. Indian-born people settled abroad try to transplant our food. Homemade chapatis may cost two dollars apiece, but they may find it difficult for their palates to eat the pizza and pastas, an almost daily diet in many places. That our curries smell is what the ABCD (American Born Confused Desi) feel while the first-generation immigrant would like to hold on to their childhood memories and tastes. Samosas and kachoris, idlis and puri bhaji would be just down their line, whereas their offspring would be more at home with sausages, pancakes, and porridge.

The latest is the lifestyle change, so often advised by doctors and nutritionists here. No fried food, no white things (milk, maida, etc.), no sugar, no carbs are the in things now. People forget that for tropical places, a balanced diet consists of carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, minerals, and is better suited. Our weather, our genes, our living styles are something which are tried and tested by our forefathers, not to be confused with the Western world.

When will we get over the British and Macaulay concepts and become proud of our own? We

Women's **Singlehood**

Intersectional Un-marriageability in West Bengal.

By Snehashish Roy

In the tapestry of West Bengal's rich culture, the threads of patriarchy and tradition weave a complex narrative for its women, particularly for those who remain single. Women, particularly in urban areas, are increasingly choosing singlehood, challenging the deeply ingrained societal expectation of marriage. It is crucial to delve deeper into the issue of "intersectional un-marriageability," exploring the limitations single women face beyond societal pressure to marry and the economic disadvantages they encounter. It is equally important to unveil the often-unvoiced social stigmas that permeate the state and restrict women's agency in life choices.

A Legacy of Women's Rights Movements

West Bengal has a proud history of women's activism. From figures like Rani Rashmoni, who defied social norms to build a temple, to revolutionaries like Kadambini Ganguly, the first woman in India to graduate in Medicine (MBBS), the state has nurtured a spirit of female empowerment. The Naxalite movement in the late 20th century, though controversial, further questioned traditional gender roles. These movements laid the groundwork for contemporary women to redefine their aspirations and life choices.

While the concept of a single woman is still met with some hesitation, particularly in rural areas and more conservative communities, a definite shift is underway.

Working women are no longer a rarity, and the idea of women pursuing personal and professional goals independent of marriage is gaining acceptance.

This change is driven by factors like educational advancements, economic empowerment, and exposure to diverse narratives through media.

However, the journey for complete societal acceptance is far from over.

Limited Choice and Unheard Voices

While societal pressure to marry forms a visible layer of the challenge, the deeper issue lies in the limited choices available to single women in West Bengal. Many factors contribute to this.

Restricted Mobility: In many communities, particularly rural areas, societal norms restrict women's movement, limiting their choices in education, career paths, and social interactions. This confinement often translates into a need for more agency in choosing their life partners or opting for singlehood altogether.

WEST BENGAL HAS A PROUD HISTORY OF WOMEN'S ACTIVISM. FROM FIGURES LIKE RANI RASHMONI, WHO DEFIED SOCIAL NORMS TO BUILD A TEMPLE, TO REVOLUTIONARIES LIKE KADAMBINI GANGULY, THE FIRST WOMAN IN INDIA TO GRADUATE IN MEDICINE (MBBS), THE STATE HAS NURTURED A SPIRIT OF FEMALE EMPOWERMENT.

Kadambini Gangul

Rani Rashmoni

IT IS CRUCIAL TO DELVE DEEPER INTO THE ISSUE OF "INTERSECTIONAL UN-MARRIAGEABILITY," EXPLORING THE LIMITATIONS SINGLE WOMEN FACE BEYOND SOCIETAL PRESSURE TO MARRY AND THE ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGES THEY ENCOUNTER. IT IS EQUALLY IMPORTANT TO UNVEIL THE OFTEN-UNVOICED SOCIAL STIGMAS THAT PERMEATE THE STATE AND RESTRICT WOMEN'S AGENCY IN LIFE CHOICES.

Rupali, a 24-year-old aspiring artist from a small town in Purulia, dreams of attending an art school in a different city. However, societal norms and her family's anxieties about her safety restrict her movement, hindering her pursuit of education and personal growth. This lack of freedom ultimately restricts her ability to define her future, including choosing to stay single and prioritise her career.

Unequal Access to Education: The gender gap in education persists in West Bengal, with significant disparities between rural and urban areas. This lack of education often translates into limited employment opportunities, further constraining women's economic independence and their ability to make independent life choices, including the choice to remain single.

THE ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE OF A WOMAN IS A KEY DRIVER OF SINGLEHOOD. RISING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN ARE LEADING TO A SKILLED WORKFORCE, ENABLING THEM TO BALANCE THEIR CAREERS WITH MANAGING THEIR HOUSEHOLDS, IF THEY CHOOSE TO DO SO.

Jyoti, a 38-year-old single mother from a tribal community in Bankura, dropped out of school due to financial constraints. This limited her employment options, making her financially dependent on her family even after becoming a single mother.

This lack of economic independence restricts her ability to make choices about her own life, including the option to pursue remarriage or remain single and raise her child independently.

Socio-economic Factor: The above case raises concerns of another factor – the economic independence of a woman. It is a key driver of singlehood. Rising educational opportunities for women are leading to a skilled workforce, enabling them to balance their careers with managing their households, if they choose to do so.

Take Aratrika, for instance, a 32-year-old architect in Kolkata. "Marriage never fit into my five-year plan," she says. "Right now, I'm focused on leading my design team and getting that promotion. Maybe, someday I'll find someone who supports those dreams, but for now, I'm happy being single." Additionally, the high cost of weddings and societal expectations of dowry can be deterrents, leading some women to opt out altogether.

Class and Caste Divisions Play Their Roles: Class and caste divisions play a significant role in shaping these choices. For urban, upper-caste women, educational opportunities and financial security may create the space to choose singlehood. However, for women from lower-caste backgrounds or rural areas, economic realities and societal pressures may limit their options. For example, Arundhati, a 25-year-old teacher from a small village, shared, "My parents desperately want me to get married. They say a good husband will take care of everything, but I dream of studying further. There's no way I can do that if I'm tethered down by marriage and household chores."

The Unvoiced Stigmas: Beyond the Societal Gaze

Beyond the visible challenges, single women in West Bengal grapple with several unvoiced stigmas that deeply impact their lives. Despite these positive developments, single women in West Bengal still face societal stigma. The term "剩女" (shengnu) – leftover woman – a derogatory term used in China, has found its way into some conversations, reflecting the pressure to conform to traditional timelines for marriage. Family pressure, societal gossip, and concerns about social security in old age can be significant challenges.

Supriya, a single accountant in her late 50s, shared, "My relatives constantly ask when I'll 'settle down.' They don't understand that the life I've built for myself is fulfilling."

Sexual Harassment and Stereotyping: Single women are often subjected to assumptions about their character and vulnerability to sexual harassment. This pervasive stigma creates a sense of constant scrutiny and fear, limiting their freedom of movement and participation in social spaces.

Archita, a 40-year-old journalist in Kolkata, faces constant unsolicited advice and judgment from colleagues and acquaintances about her single status. These comments often carry undertones of suspicion about her personal life, creating an uncomfortable and unsafe work environment.

Mental Health Neglect: The societal pressure to conform and the stigma surrounding singlehood often lead to mental health issues like anxiety and depression among single women. However, these issues remain largely unaddressed due to a lack of awareness and accessibility to mental health resources.

Shreya, a 35-year-old teacher from North 24 Parganas, struggles with anxiety and feelings of isolation due to societal pressure regarding her single status. However, the stigma surrounding mental health and limited access to mental health professionals prevent her from seeking help, further exacerbating her struggles.

Navigating the Taboos: Single women often navigate these challenges by creating strong support networks with friends and family. Some choose to delay marriage or remain open to the possibility of finding a partner who respects their independence. Dating apps and online communities are also emerging as spaces for connection, though concerns about safety and societal judgment persist. Oindrila, a 28-year-old graphic designer, says, "My friends are my chosen family. We travel together, celebrate each other's successes, and offer a shoulder to cry on. Dating apps can be a gamble, but I'm keeping an open mind."

Lastly, the Role of Media in Shaping the Society

The portrayal of single women in media plays a crucial role in shaping social attitudes. While some portrayals reinforce negative stereotypes of lonely cat ladies or career-obsessed women with no time for love, others are beginning to showcase the diverse realities and successes of single women. The Bengali movie *Ekla Cholo* (read: Alone, I walk) explores the theme of singlehood for women against the backdrop of contemporary West Bengal. While the film acknowledges societal pressures and anxieties surrounding unmarried women, it ultimately celebrates the protagonist's choice and her pursuit of personal fulfilment.

The issue of "intersectional unmarriageability" in West Bengal goes beyond the pressure to marry. It encompasses a complex tapestry of social limitations, economic vulnerabilities, and unvoiced stigmas that restrict women's agency and freedom of choice. By fostering open discussions, challenging discriminatory norms, and promoting gender equality, West Bengal can pave the way for a future where single women are accepted and empowered to thrive and contribute fully to society on their own terms. We

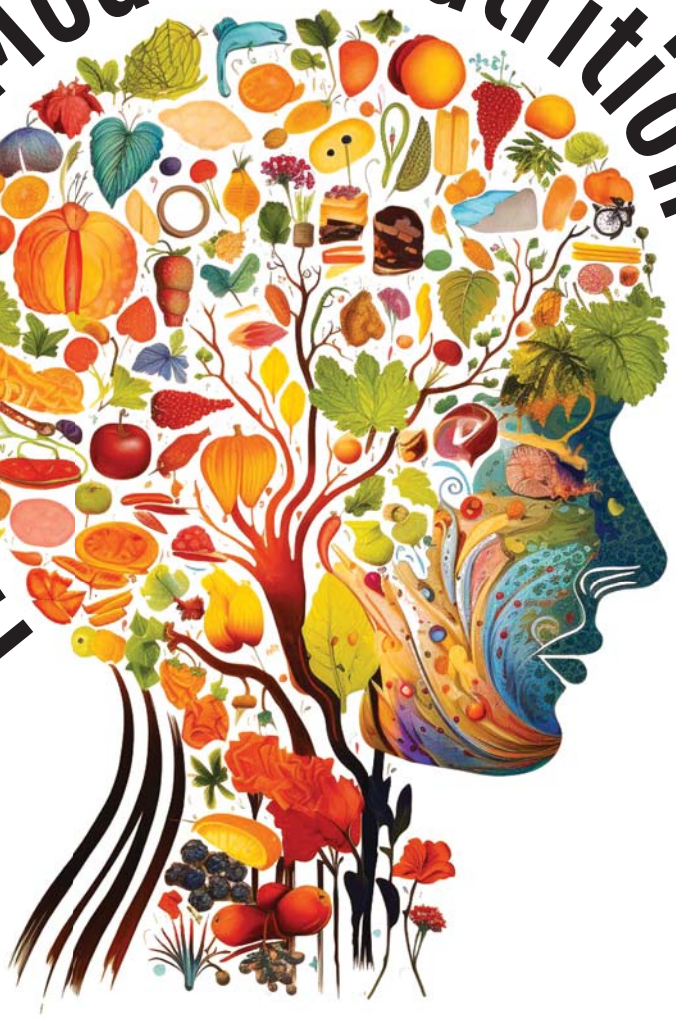
CLASSIFIEDS

CALL FOR GENUINE FRIENDSHIP

Broadminded Ladies, Couples, Housewifes, Widow, Unmarried College Girl Of Any Age, Only Females Can Call At

8882127791
9999168721

The Maze of Modern Nutrition



Incorporating traditional practices in modern eating.

By Padmaja Menon

Nowadays, when you switch on the TV or read the newspaper or any magazine, you read about what to eat and what not to. Every other second there is a second opinion or theory or research or Gyan on what to eat/drink, how to eat/drink, when to eat/drink, and why to eat/drink. It just ends up making people confused and wary. Bulimia pops up, Keto diets and intermittent fasting and exercises and yoga and a horde of options are then shown available. The latest I read was the Dorito theory! It's like the addictive eating of stuff you crave. Then again, a write-up says you should not heat meat or mushrooms or rice or any food for that matter. Gosh, how is that even possible?

No one cooks just before eating; even cooks come and prepare food in the morning for the evening, and you do need to heat up food. But no, that increases bacteria and salmonella. Uff! What can an ordinary homemaker do? I decided to google a few eating habits of yore.

Much attention is being paid to what people ate in the distant past as a guide to what we should eat today. Advocates of the claimed paleo diet recommend that we should avoid carbohydrates and load our plates with red meat and fat. Its critics, on the other hand, argue that these are the same ingredients that would set us up for heart attacks. Moreover, these animal-derived foods require more space to produce on our crowded planet filled with starving humans.

A factual foundation for the debate is provided by a review of the eating patterns of early humans and how we adapted to digest starches softened by cooking. The researchers contend that it was digestible starches that provided extra energy needed to fuel the energy needs of bigger brains, rather than extra protein from meat to grow these brains.

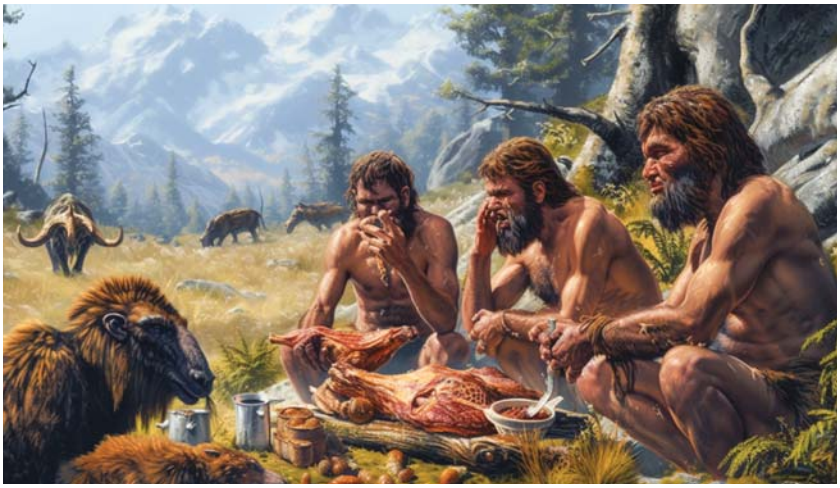
But the most striking thing about human diets is just how variable they have been and the adaptations that have taken place. Furthermore, the American evolutionary biologist Marlene Zuk, in her book *Paleo Fantasy*, contends that these dietary adaptations are not fixed on what our ancestors ate in caves at some time in the past.

So, is our energy or protein needs much different from other mammals of similar size? Brains demand a lot of energy, but so does the liver and the digestive tract. The extra nutrition that we need for brain work may be counterbalanced, at least partially, by a lesser need for a long gut to process poor quality foods or a large liver to handle nasty chemicals in these plant parts. Once built, a large brain does not require extra sources of protein to maintain its activities.

The Role of Carbs Among Early Humans

Meat has long been part of human diets, along with carbohydrates provided by fruits, tubers, and grains. We can get by without it, obtaining protein from milk or, with some planning, from legumes.

The early humans that consumed the most meat were the Neanderthals, who lived in Europe many thousand years ago but were not our ancestors. Meat formed the crucial lean-season food for the Neanderthal people during successive winters when plants were seasonally buried under deep snow, but later also for the modern humans who spread through Eurasia and displaced them around 40,000 years ago.



MEAT HAS LONG BEEN PART OF HUMAN DIETS, ALONG WITH CARBOHYDRATES PROVIDED BY FRUITS, TUBERS, AND GRAINS. WE CAN GET BY WITHOUT IT, OBTAINING PROTEIN FROM MILK OR, WITH SOME PLANNING, FROM LEGUMES.

This led to a wave of large mammal extinctions as humans spread rapidly into Australia and entered the Americas towards the end of the last Ice Age. By that time, hunting technology had been honed and meat routinely supplemented plant food, but the latter remained the dietary staple for African hunter-gatherers like the Bushmen or San people into modern times.

The Food Journey Within Evolution

Coping with the intensifying dry season in the expanding African savanna was a critical issue for human ancestors during the evolutionary transition from ape-men to the first humans between three and two million years ago. How did our ape-men ancestors gather sufficient food to eat during this time of the year when nutritious fruits and leaves were scarce?

This was when meat, or at least the marrow left within bones, could have become a nutritional fallback, probably acquired by scavenging from animal carcasses not completely consumed by big fierce carnivores, ugh, along with underground storage organs of plants.

Obtaining this meat required more walking and hence longer limbs, hands freed to carry, security in numbers, and stone

weapons to throw at threatening carnivore fangs, but not much expansion in cranial capacity. These were features of the early Australopithecines.

At this early time, another branch of ape-men, placed in the genus Paranthropus, took a different adaptive route. They developed huge jaws to chew on tough plant foods extracted from underground storage organs to get them through the dry season.

The Modern-Day Dilemma

The problem we currently face is that we retain a craving for sugar, which was scarce in the past, while most of the starchy carbohydrates we eat are highly refined. This means losing out on the other nutrients in plant parts like minerals and vitamins, and most basically, fiber. Other things that are worrying is the way they advise readers to eat more protein, fat, carbs, iron-based food, greens, fruits, and now the new fad millets.

An ignorant person will stock up on citrus fruits, but he won't be told or know that citrus will act as a barrier to medicines to act. You cannot have citrus if you want medicines to act on you and not react. You are asked to take vegetables like greens and cucumber and raw stuff salad. You are not told that raw stuff may not suit everyone; some can get food poisoning.

OTHER THINGS THAT ARE WORRYING IS THE WAY THEY ADVISE READERS TO EAT MORE PROTEIN, FAT, CARBS, IRON-BASED FOOD, GREENS, FRUITS, AND NOW THE NEW FAD MILLETS. YOU ARE ASKED TO TAKE VEGETABLES LIKE GREENS AND CUCUMBER AND RAW STUFF SALAD.

Again, you are asked to take meat protein, but nobody tells you that red meat is bad for your kidney, chicken is bad if you have gut issues, an egg is bad for cholesterol.… pork is a cool meat so bad for those with breathing issues, milk and yoghurt are not for those who have IBS. (irritable bowel syndrome) etc. Tandoori chicken, the favourite of many, is carcinogenic because of the charring it is also not known to all. And then again, every other nutritionist/dietician/neighbour/friend/family will order you to hydrate yourself. Guzzle water, they say, but they don't know or don't tell that too much water is bad for a kidney patient, and you can end up with edema. Your feet and your body will swell up like a balloon.

The dietician in the hospital after surgery (if) will come and tell you to eat a lot of protein to recover soon, but she fails to mention that too much protein is fattening. Also, when you read that you should eat a lot of vegetables, you are not told to leach them if you are diabetic. You are asked to take bananas and tender coconut water, but you are not told that they are full of potassium, which is bad if you are a cardiac patient. I mean, how are you safe? Today's kids care a hoot about sanitation or hygiene, well… not all but a few.

Food contamination with saliva: Sharing drinks from a common glass, food from the same plate, and taking a bite from the same pizza slice appears to be quite a normal practice for many of us and rather impolite to refuse if a friend is offering it. But it was a taboo in ancient India and is still held in abeyance and considered forbidden in a number of traditional Indian families. The concept of contamination with saliva, called *ucchishta* (Sanskrit), "*engili*" (Telugu), "*jutha*" (in North India), is considered unholy and extremely unhygienic, and washing hands after eating or putting them in the mouth is considered a must lest the food/person/thing touched would be contaminated.

While it has time and again been given religious connotations, it should actually be looked upon as a practice of hygiene and a wise way to prevent the spreading of diseases. Don't we live in an age of paradoxes when, on the one hand, we use sanitisers and medicated hand-washes, and on the other, do not mind licking into someone else's ice cream with traces of the other person's saliva? No wonder Covid 19 hit the world!

Not talking while eating: Most of us have grown up hearing that talking while eating is bad manners. In older days, it was considered taboo to converse while eating. The main reason behind it probably was the fear of choking on food or hurriedly gulping it down without chewing. Nutrition scientists and doctors say that chewing food well enables better digestion.

Cooking in earthen utensils: Our ancestors must have cooked food in earthenware because they did not know about plastic, steel, and aluminium. But that was not the only reason for it. Cooking in clay pots adds calcium, phosphorus, iron, magnesium, sulphur, and several other minerals to food. Clay pots are also alkaline in nature, so they mix well with acidic food and balance its pH level. Remember, deadly diseases like cancer do not develop in an alkaline atmosphere.

Not stocking up prepared meals for the whole day: Celebrity nutritionist Rujuta Duwekar in her bestseller, *Don't lose your mind, lose your weight,* recommends that, if possible, one should consume a meal within four hours of preparing it, to get the maximum benefits. In ancient times when there were no ready-to-eat and frozen foods, there were fewer lifestyle diseases. Food starts losing its nourishment as soon as it is prepared. So, it is advisable to eat it fresh. While in most busy households today the concept of preparing meals three times a day has given way to bulk preparation once, it is

an unhealthy practice that should be given up. But is it practical?

Early Dinner: In ancient Rome, dinner was called "cena" and was the main meal of the day. It was taken late in the afternoon or when the sun started going down. Aren't nutritionists asking us today to have dinner before 7 pm? The simple reason behind this healthy practice is that the earlier you have your food, the more time the body has to digest it before it goes to rest during sleep. This practice prevents the body from piling on weight. Eating late also negatively impacts sleep.

Eating food with hands: Even as a number of people proudly claim that they are not able to eat unless they have a fork/spoon, the ancient shastras recommended eating with hands "which had to be cleaned thoroughly before and after the meal." Eating with hands is neither uncouth nor tacky, but is extremely healthy. According to Ayurveda, when we put food in our mouth through our hand, the five fingers together form a mudra (a yogic position) which activates the sensory organs that keep prana in balance. It also improves digestion because when the hand touches the food, the brain sends signals to the body releasing digestive juices. This is probably the reason why food tastes better when eaten with hands. The West is also following this now.

Nowadays, teenagers and even older kids skip breakfast even though that's a meal after a long break. "I eat only when I am hungry," argue some kids, but then from where did we get the concept of breakfast, lunch, and dinner? In fact, the roots of having an early morning breakfast go long back in history. The legendary Roman breakfast called "ientaculum" was taken immediately after sunrise. It must have been considered healthy to indulge in nourishing food early in the morning. Celebrity nutritionist Rujuta Diwekar recommends, "Eat within 15 minutes of waking up if you want to lose weight." Postponing or skipping your breakfast not only makes you ravenous during lunchtime but also reduces your metabolism. But sad to say, Rujuta did not manage to make Anant Ambani thin, but she became an overnight celebrity.

According to Luke Coutinho, Holistic Nutritionist, author, and Exercise Physiologist, "Eating with your fingers helps your mind connect with your food better, and you tend to eat less and more mindfully. Food tastes better when eaten with the fingers in a hygienic way. I spoke to many people across rural and urban India when I noticed so many of them eat with their hands, and they said it is an ancient Indian tradition and makes food more enjoyable. And to me, enjoying food is very important for digestion, and even absorption of nutrients. "So, chill! You are not a culinary barbarian if you are using your hands to consume food. You are wise!

In conclusion, I would say eat everything that your parents and grandparents ate, eat in moderation, drink in trepidation, never diet drastically, do not gym continuously, and be aware of your own body's needs and limitations. Just because Mona , who is a teenager, works out for hours in the gym, does not mean you in your fifties can also do it. No, you might just drop dead. Walking is the best exercise, and being positive is the best nutrition. We

Instilling Core Values

Raising empathetic and courageous children in the digital age.

By Saranya Iyer

Times are changing. Technological shifts have brought a change in the mindset of children. The way they perceive things and engage with the surroundings they live in has undergone a complete revival. Children in today's generation are exceptionally smart and clever. They learn quickly and apply their minds with enthusiasm and creativity. They are exposed to technological devices early on, through which they get introduced to new things and concepts. But in this rapid advancement age, their ability to understand others and connect with them is slowly fading. The school curriculum is mostly academically driven, but what about the essential core values that teach humility to children? The values which, unfortunately, our education system doesn't prescribe in the curriculum, are vital to making them thoughtful individuals in the long run. They are the building blocks for a child's emotional growth. Are we doing enough to help them learn these values? How can we instil these values in them?

Gratitude

They say we create an energy of lack when we constantly highlight our struggles and discontent. To invite abundance and growth, we should thank and feel content towards the things we have. A feeling of gratitude, or being grateful for the things that we have, the environment we are in, and the people we are surrounded with, is what we should help our children nurture to usher in happiness and luck in their life. Through expressing gratitude, they will learn to appreciate the things that surround them and be more mindful of the positives.

How to Practise Gratitude: Write the things you are grateful for in a notebook or a journal. You can do this daily in the morning or before bedtime. Help your child write in their gratitude journal by leading by example. At first, your child will find it a difficult exercise, but gradually they will learn. Maybe you can ask her to write the positive things of the day and once she has listed them, ask her to write 'THANKS' against each of them.

Empathy

Empathy is when we put ourselves in others' shoes. When we respect others' feelings as our own and appreciate different perspectives, then we have learned the ins and outs of empathy. Treat others the way you want to be treated is a hidden subtext that defines empathy. A community living boosts empathy in one and exposes one to diverse ideas.

How to Teach Empathy: Children find it hard to learn empathy if they do not see the people in their circles practising it. Small things like listening to others with ears and mind wide open, not judging others, being free of bias, being considerate when someone is going through a difficult time, and not hurting others' feelings are some of the things that we can practise to teach our children about empathy. Also, ask them if someone is bullying them at school or if they are bullying other children. Nip this negative trait right at the bud. Tell them bullying is the opposite of empathy and good children are always kind to others. Empathy empowers one to stand against the bully.

WRITE THE THINGS YOU ARE GRATEFUL FOR IN A NOTEBOOK OR A JOURNAL. YOU CAN DO THIS IN THE MORNING OR BEFORE BEDTIME. HELP YOUR CHILD WRITE IN THEIR GRATITUDE JOURNAL BY LEADING BY EXAMPLE. THEY WILL LEARN, GRADUALLY.

Persistence

Persistence is when we never give up and keep on trying till we succeed. Getting up after falling and dusting off our shoes to walk the extra mile is the quality that our children should learn to survive in this competitive environment. It is very easy to scurry to the opposite side when a storm takes over, but to teach them to sustain going forward and weather the storm is the core essence of persistence.

How to Teach Persistence: Tell them about life stories where you showed persistence. Give them some challenging tasks or activities and ask them to put their best efforts into excelling in them. With every win, up the level of challenge so that they push themselves hard to achieve the desired result. Read stories about people who, despite several odds and failures, went ahead with an indomitable spirit to pursue their interests and achieved their goals.

Resilience

Resilience is bouncing back from hard situations. Whether it is grief, personal loss, or any other struggle, resilience is what makes us embark on the life journey again. It is very hard to bring back our hearts when it is beaten very hard. Children are tender souls, and once they see failure or face any form of struggle, they will recoil themselves and go into their cocoons. Resilience in today's day and age is a powerful tool to set them on a path of success. It helps them handle any situation with a positive attitude.

How to Practise Resilience: Make them understand through stories that every event teaches us some lessons. Even if things do not go as we want them to, we learn a great deal from the experience they give us. Using that knowledge to walk

further in our life is what resilience is. Tell them no matter how hard it feels, we should walk with our head held high and not shrink under the gaze of failure and grief.

Courage

Fear is normal, and everyone is bound by some kind of fear. Some are rational and some are unfounded. Children too face situations that put them in a spot and paralyse them with shock and fear. Being scared is not a weakness, nor is sharing one's vulnerabilities. To overcome fear in the minds of your children, you need to handhold them on the journey of becoming bold. Tell your children to be brave and face their fears. Teach them problem-solving skills and creative thinking to solve problems. Encourage them to take more risks by modelling courage and taking risks yourself. Pat their backs at each step so that they can walk further toward their goals. Courage and determination are two sides of the success coin. By teaching them early

on, we boost their confidence levels and shape their personality.

How to Promote Courage: Read books that have courage as a theme. Tell them how the protagonist approached the fear and managed to slay it. You can also get a personalised book made for them to make them more engaged with the theme of courage.

Parents: In-house Role Models

Children learn a lot from their parents. The way you behave with others and the words you use set an example for them to follow. To encourage these above values in your children, you need to develop these values in yourself first.

Speaking kindly, empathising with others, respecting others' feelings, and being unfazed by challenges are the things you need to apply in your daily life to lead by example.

Give them an environment filled with respect and love, set boundaries and respect the boundaries. Lastly, nurture self-care and be kind to yourself by practising art, exercising, and taking some time to rest so that you can bounce back from the stress and not show the pent-up stress on your children.

When the stress in you is navigated in the right channel, then you are not beside yourself. This furthermore strengthens the parent-child bond to a greater degree. Take a moment and cherish the bond! We

CAMPUS RUMPUS

TREASURE HUNT

It was a tradition in my school that the students of 12th standard would have to participate in a treasure hunt as part of their farewell. It used to be among all the sections; the section that finds the treasure first would not only get the best class trophy but other exciting prizes too. Once the winning class was taken to a cinema theatre to watch the latest Tom Cruise movie.

When it was our batch's turn, we all got into a competitive spirit at first. The hunt lasted a week during which we had to crack ten hints and get to the treasure. I had very close friends in the other sections too, with whom I ended up fighting because of the treasure hunt. Our batch also had a sense of camaraderie; halfway into the tressure hunt, we became distraught with our friends from other sections. Since we didn't want to fight our friends, we decided to work together.

Eventually, all of us ended up finding the tressure together—the entire 12th standard! The school did not know what to do. In the end, we were all taken on a free school trip to a nearby fort.

It wasn't the best of the gifts, compares to previous years, but it was still very memorable. We had made history in a sense.

–Gopika Unnikrishnan

MUSICAL CLASS

During my history class in college, my professor was very chill. We could eat in class, put on earphones and listen to music, even work on other projects in his class. He gave students their freedom and despite that, we liked him so much that most of us would focus on his lecture only.

But once, I had a horrible day and was stressed about an interview I had later in the day. Feeling anxious, I decided to play some music during the class. I thought it would calm my nerves. So, I put on my earphones, took my phone out and played my favourite song from the movie Devdas. I used to be a Bollywood junkie and still I am.

I was so distracted that I didn't realise that the music playing was not in my earphone but through my phone speaker. My professor stopped talking and along with the entire class, he stared at me. It's when my desk buddy kicked my feet that I realised what was going on. I jumped and turned off the music.

I really felt embarrased and was afraid my professor would scold me, but he continued his lecture. Next day onwards , my professor and wholee class started addressing me as 'Devdas'!

–Ritvik Kumar

Building a Community of Trust and Collaboration.

THE ESSENCE OF GUFTAGU

Guftagu, India's first sustainable leadership networking platform, has recently achieved a new milestone in its mission to foster economic and social well-being through the power of networking. On March 12th, Guftagu set a record for the highest number of guests and members participating in its events, demonstrating its commitment to helping individuals expand their connections, boost their businesses, and maximise their profits.

At its core, Guftagu is a community of like-minded individuals from various distinguished businesses and professions, including notable industry players such as Bata, Bikaner Wala, Varun Beverages, Chiratae Ventures, Airflow, and Madame. The platform's vision is to be one of the finest platforms for amplifying connections with care, compassion, and collaboration. Its mission is to provide the best facilities to experience and leverage the best of networking with relationship building.

Guftagu's values are centred around growth, understanding, fun and learning, transparency, authenticity, a giving attitude, and unconditional support. The platform facilitates various networking opportunities, including Guftagu Prime Connect meets, Guftagu Prime Circle Meets, and skills/interest-based meets. These events are designed to develop deep bonding among members, with a focus on first-come, first-served basis participation, and are available in both offline and online modes.

One of the key initiatives of Guftagu is its focus on empowering women business leaders through effective networking and skill-building. Recognising the pivotal role women business leaders play in driving economic development, Guftagu is committed to providing these businesses with the resources and support needed to thrive. The initiative includes dedicated networking forums, skill-building workshops, and mentorship programs tailored to the specific needs of women business leaders. These efforts aim to help women business leaders navigate the challenges of the business landscape and seize opportunities for growth.

In summary, Guftagu is a platform that embodies the promise of "Wealth Through Connections, Success Through Conversations." It is a community where meaningful conversations spark big results, and leaders connect to achieve financial prosperity and fulfil their goals. As Guftagu continues to expand its network and initiatives, it remains dedicated to empowering individuals and businesses to succeed through the power of meaningful connections and conversations.

guftaguconnect.com | @guftaguacircleoftrust

NEWS IN PICTURES

Fashion Week Spring 2024

Rakuten Tokyo Fashion Week Showcased a Celebration of Style and Creativity

Rakuten Tokyo Fashion Week Spring 2024 blended established designers and emerging talents. Held across Shibuya, Omotesando, Harajuku, and Roppongi, the event featured the Fashion Prize of Tokyo 2024 awarded to Masu, alongside shows from Yohei Ohno and Fetico. Promising a vibrant showcase of Tokyo's fashion scene, the event highlighted a mix of art, fragrance, and diverse fashion.

Oscar-winning actors

Reflecting on the Winners and Moments of the 96th Academy Awards

The 96th Academy Awards showcased diverse winners, with *Oppenheimer* and *Poor Things* leading. Memorable moments included past Oscar-winning actors honouring nominees, adding a heartfelt touch. Highlights included Ryan Gosling's performance of "I'm Just Ken" and John Cena's humour. The "In Memoriam" segment and Al Pacino's mishap during Best Picture were notable.

2024 Green Carpet Fashion

Zendaya and Eco-Age Shined at the 2024 Green Carpet Fashion Awards

The Green Carpet Fashion Awards in West Hollywood celebrated sustainable fashion, with Zendaya co-hosting in a vintage Roberto Cavalli dress. Born from the Green Carpet Challenge by Livia Firth, the event encouraged eco-friendly fashion. Co-chaired by influential figures like Cate Blanchett and Julianne Moore, the ceremony recognised leaders in sustainability across six cultural archetypes.

Krystyna Pyszková Claimed the Crown at Miss World 2024 in Mumbai
The 71st Miss World 2024 pageant in Mumbai crowned Krystyna Pyszková from the Czech Republic. The event featured a unique segment where finalists presented pitches to judges from Shark Tank. The pageant's return to India after 28 years showcased global beauty and talent at the Jio World Convention Centre.

Miss World 2024

2024 Billboard Women

The 2024 Billboard Women in Music Awards Shone a Spotlight on Industry Titans
Presented by Marriott Bonvoy, the 2024 Billboard Women in Music Awards honoured the industry's leading women in Los Angeles. Hosted by Tracee Ellis Ross, the event celebrated talent like Karol G, Charli XCX, and Ice Spice. Marriott Bonvoy Moments offered fans VIP access, and attendees enjoyed a special candy tunnel, adding a sweet touch to celebrating women's achievements in music.

Paris Fashion Week 2024 Ushered in Fashion's Elite and Rising Stars
Paris Fashion Week 2024 showcased over 100 shows, with Saint Laurent, Loewe, and Miu Miu highly appreciated. Seán McGirr, Alexander McQueen's new creative director, revealed his direction, and new silhouettes. Debuts from Chemena Kamali and Pelagia Kolotouros, along with Yusuke Takahashi and Saint Laurent's star-studded evening show, marked the event.

Paris Fashion Week 2024

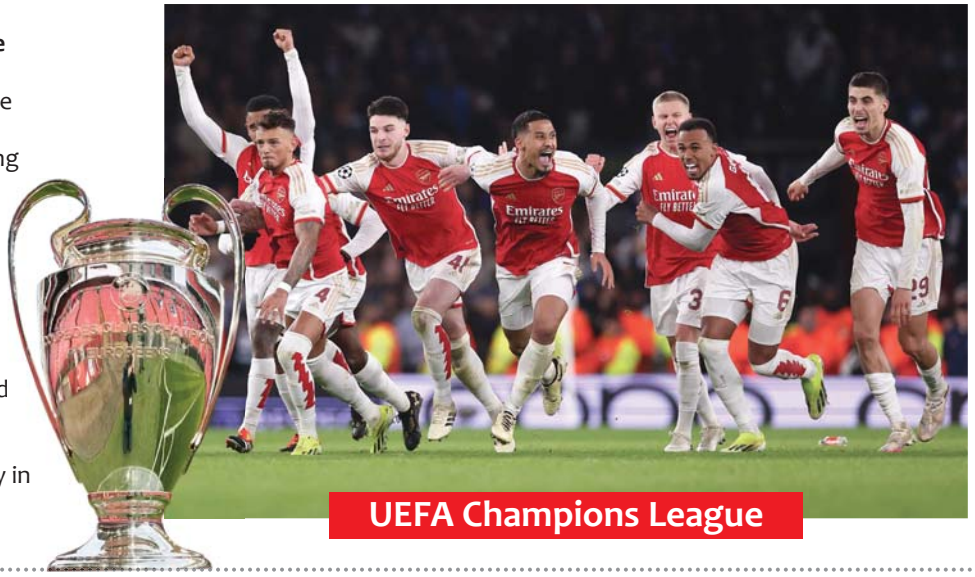
Formula One Season

Max Verstappen Secured Back-to-Back Victories in Formula One Season

At the Saudi Arabian Grand Prix, Red Bull's Max Verstappen clinched victory from pole position. Verstappen's win marked his first back-to-back victories at the start of a season and extended his winning streak to nine races. Ferrari's Charles Leclerc secured third place and the fastest lap, with Red Bull's triumph elevating them above Williams in all-time wins.

UEFA Champions League Quarter-Finals Set the Stage for Epic Duels

The UEFA Champions League quarter-final draw set up thrilling encounters, including Manchester City vs. Real Madrid and Arsenal vs. Bayern Munich. Paris Saint-Germain clashed with Barcelona, while Atletico Madrid faced Borussia Dortmund. Key fixtures included City's trip to Madrid and PSG's aim for their first Champions League win. The final will be held at Wembley in London on June 1.



UEFA Champions League

Cheltenham Festival 2024

Royal Presence and Fashion Flair at Cheltenham Festival 2024

The Cheltenham Festival, a highlight in British horse racing, saw royal family members attend, including The Princess Royal, Zara Tindall, and Queen Camilla's children. The event is known for its vibrant atmosphere, with racegoers adding a splash of colour on Style Wednesday. The festival features 28 races over four days, culminating in the prestigious Boodles Cheltenham Gold Cup, where Galopin Des Champs defended his title for trainer Willie Mullins.

Nisha Sujan Malik

Pioneering Nutty Delights

Leading a culinary revolution with Nut Set Go!

Motivated by the desire to ensure a nutritious and healthy lifestyle for herself and her loved ones, Nisha Sujan Malik embarked on a journey with challenging steps that eventually led to the founding of Nut Set Go, the ultimate destination for all healthcare enthusiasts. With the unprecedented happenings of 2020, amidst societal upheavals and personal introspection, Nisha felt the need to take control of her health and she embarked on a journey that would change her life forever.

As Nisha puts it, she and her team recognised a 'nut shaped hole in the market' that demanded delicious, nutritious vegan snacks and meals.

> OFFERS FROM NUT SET GO APPEAL TO A WIDE RANGE OF CUSTOMERS, FROM FITNESS ENTHUSIASTS AND GYM GOERS TO VEGANS LOOKING FOR SAVOURY OPTIONS TO ENJOY AT HOME AND ON THE MOVE. THEY GO THE EXTRA MILE THROUGH THEIR CSR INITIATIVE, EMPOWERING RURAL WOMEN. THEY ARE LOOKING AT THE WELLNESS CATEGORY WHICH WILL ALSO BE LAUNCHING SOON.

Nisha Sujan Malik, Co-Founder
Nut Set Go!

Originally pursuing a career in filmmaking, Nisha's path took an unexpected detour when she was hit by a nutty hunger that inspired a wonderful concept. As an avid traveller, Nisha's trips throughout the world provide ongoing inspiration, influencing the flavours and textures of Nut Set Go's delicious nut delights. NSG is committed to creating snacks that are not only delicious but also devoid of toxic sugars and oils. With a passion for both creativity and healthy living, Nisha brings a unique perspective to the world of snacking.

From kids to connoisseurs, these nutty treats captivate all. Beyond taste, Nisha and her team's dedication to quality shine bright!

nutsetgo.com | @nutsetgo

Short Story

Success

Balancing ambition and well-being. By Kalpana M Naghnoor

Kavya watched her mother as she packed her school bag that morning. Sumitra was in the hot kitchen, quickly folding the pulkas into the Tupperware box, the dal, and the sandwiches were packed in. Her daughter Kavya studied in a prestigious school, which meant keeping up with the Joneses. Hence, for the tea break, it was a variation of sandwiches and freshly squeezed fruit juice. Lunch had to have a nice-looking salad to begin with, lettuce, tomatoes, olives, and feta, protein for the main course, like tofu, chicken, or lamb, and oilless bread. Everything needed to look perfect, healthy, and colourful, like in a glossy magazine. When children studied in schools that were considered elite, naturally there were expenses that entailed keeping up with the image.

"Here," she handed the bag to Kavya.

"Thanks, Mom," Kavya took it from her and went out of the apartment and into the elevator; the school bus was due shortly.

At first, Sumitra felt it was an ordeal, the tension

Kavya watched her mother as she packed her school bag that morning.

of packing the correct kind of food; she did not want Kavya to suffer peer pressure. But she learned quickly and enjoyed making such food, the freshness of the salads, the lightness of the sandwiches, and the presentation made her feel creative. She found her preferences change to it, though her husband Ravi liked fried foods like samosas, aloo tikkis, and parathas. So, this requirement of only making and packing picture-perfect healthy food for Kavya was an escape for Sumitra. It was her chance of getting away from eating unhealthy food, which she had no option but to consume soon after marriage and the many years until her in-laws decided there were too many people in their apartment and requested Ravi, their oldest, to move out. All those years of eating now sheathed her like a huge regret. Sumitra walked every morning, willing the weight off, and yes, some of it was going, but it was taking its sweet time. She vowed she would not let that happen to Kavya.

Kavya stood outside in the apartment yard waiting for the bus; she looked up at her mother who waved from the fourth-floor balcony and would linger until the school bus arrived. Kavya waved back; she was grateful to her parents for the immense sacrifices they were making to give her the best education. But the best education was consuming them, she believed. She could see her mother pour hours over the household expenses to balance it out. She was good at it, working as a chartered accountant in a firm. Her father Ravi Sundaram was a typical IT guy, an architect, had the ease and lethargy of the profession, he wore casual clothes, mostly shorts, unless they were going to a wedding.

"I'm cool!" he'd say, studying his image in the mirror if Sumitra chided him for not wearing something more appropriate. He never stressed over it, even at a parent-teacher meeting at the school, he came casually dressed. He threw in the IT jargon, and that made up for his sloppy appearance. As opposed to that of her mother, who took care to dress well, possibly traditional jobs like accounting kept you in the path of conformity, and IT was liberating? Mom was smart and well-dressed, so Kavya felt privileged bracketing herself among the elite.

A good education saw her through school and in college she chose to study law. She opted to practise corporate law because it was a combination of what she had experienced. The safety of a salaried job, like her mother's, guaranteed remuneration at the end of the month. Corporate life, like in IT, like her father, cool and chill. Lawyers who excelled in corporate law looked chill, as opposed to litigating lawyers who were running from one court to another. She noticed how relaxed the corporate lawyers looked in smart clothes, like they were businesspeople. Yes, sometimes their feathers were ruffled, during a merger or acquisition, but in those times, it was always a collective effort, one supporting the other. Litigating lawyers were more on the edge, single-handedly managing the files day to day. So, she chose corporate; she wanted a good life.

"Congratulations!" Ravi exulted. Sumitra just smiled as they watched her drive off to meet friends.

Her father Ravi Sundaram was a typical IT guy, an architect, had the ease and lethargy of the profession, he wore casual clothes, mostly shorts, unless they were going to a wedding. "I'm cool!" he'd say, studying his image in the mirror if Sumitra chided him for not wearing something more appropriate.

"This is a tier-one firm, I'm so glad I got in! We have the liberty to wear good clothes, while the litigating lawyers must be in black and white," Kavya giggled that night at the Taj, celebrating with her friends. The bill arrived, and they all paid up; it was on the higher side, but so what? Her parents had been generous, and these friends of hers could afford it.

At Gautham & Associates, Kavya's first day, she was on cloud nine, happy to be shown around the office, which was such a grand place, thickly carpeted, and centrally air-conditioned. She met the founding partners, and that was all for the day. The second day, when serious work began, she was taken to the third floor in the Schindler lift, interior specific to the firm, so you could last-minute check if your hair and attire were appropriately neat. The third floor led from a firm door, and once there, the heat welcomed you, the hum of running ceiling fans added to the discomfort. Pramod, one of the senior associates, led Kavya to her bay, a corner one niched to the wall.

Kavya felt dismayed, cooped in, but not defeated. She judiciously began working on anything small or mundane of drafting she was called upon to do. She studied her scope to climb the ladder. There seemed to be none, delegated to do the basic work. How could she get noticed? So clever as she was, her drafting was faultless, precise, and speedily delivered. The workload increased manifold, yet Kavya was able to cope, delays happened, but they were condoned.

"Are you okay?" Her parents asked, worried about the way she looked. Well-dressed but weary. She, in turn, assessed her parents; they looked relaxed, and the plants in their balcony looked healthy.

"I'm fine," she smiled at them, "it's the new phase of my life. I'll get used to it."

Three months at Gautham & Associates, the workload was heavy, but she was shifted to a bigger bay with a window and a fan right above. It had three bays opposite hers; she was given three juniors to whom she could delegate work.

VALUABLES INTACT

KEY FEATURES:

- Strictly following the RBI Regulations
- Highly Secured Strong Room
- Round the clock security
- Various Sizes to choose from
- Lockers and Vaults provided by Godrej
- Complete Privacy
- Chair lift facility available for senior citizens

SPACE AVAILABLE TO KEEP YOUR PERSONAL BOXES •SAFE •TRUNKS •ALMIRAH ETC.

CITY VAULTS

E-3 Jhandewala Estate, Rani Jhansi Road, New Delhi 110055,
Call 7428412999 | info@cityvaults.in

SALIENT FEATURES

- RBI REGULATION COMPLIANT
- MULTIPLE SIZES AVAILABLE
- LOCKERS & VAULTS PROVIDED BY GODREJ
- HIGHLY SECURE VAULT ROOM

CityVaults.in

Our vaults have been built strictly according to the RBI specs

Thick steel reinforced walls make the strong room impregnable

Round the clock security by armed guards

All equipments are provided by Godrej

CITY VAULTS

OPEN 6 DAYS A WEEK 10AM-7PM

LARGE SIZE LOCKERS

COMPLETE PRIVACY

24 HOUR SECURITY

OPENING TIMINGS: 10AM-7PM Mon-Sat (EXCEPT NATIONAL & MANDATORY HOLIDAYS)

Kavya felt elated; the firm had recognised her skills at drafting, and now she was given help. Her workload, however, did not lessen in any way, as these were apprentices, a raw bunch in the third year of law college, from rich families, who didn't give a damn about a career. Teaching them and getting them to finish the work over the jokes they made was onerous. Of the three, there was a stan dup comedian; he was vulgar, the cynic among them was obscene, the girl was decent about everything but sullen and a clock-checker. Kavya had once been one among such, but now with a soaring urge to succeed, these apprentices were better ignored, she decided. She gave them passable work and did the serious stuff herself.

"Slow down," her father said.

"I cannot. It's the job. I bring home a salary you and mom do collectively; it means I need to work double."

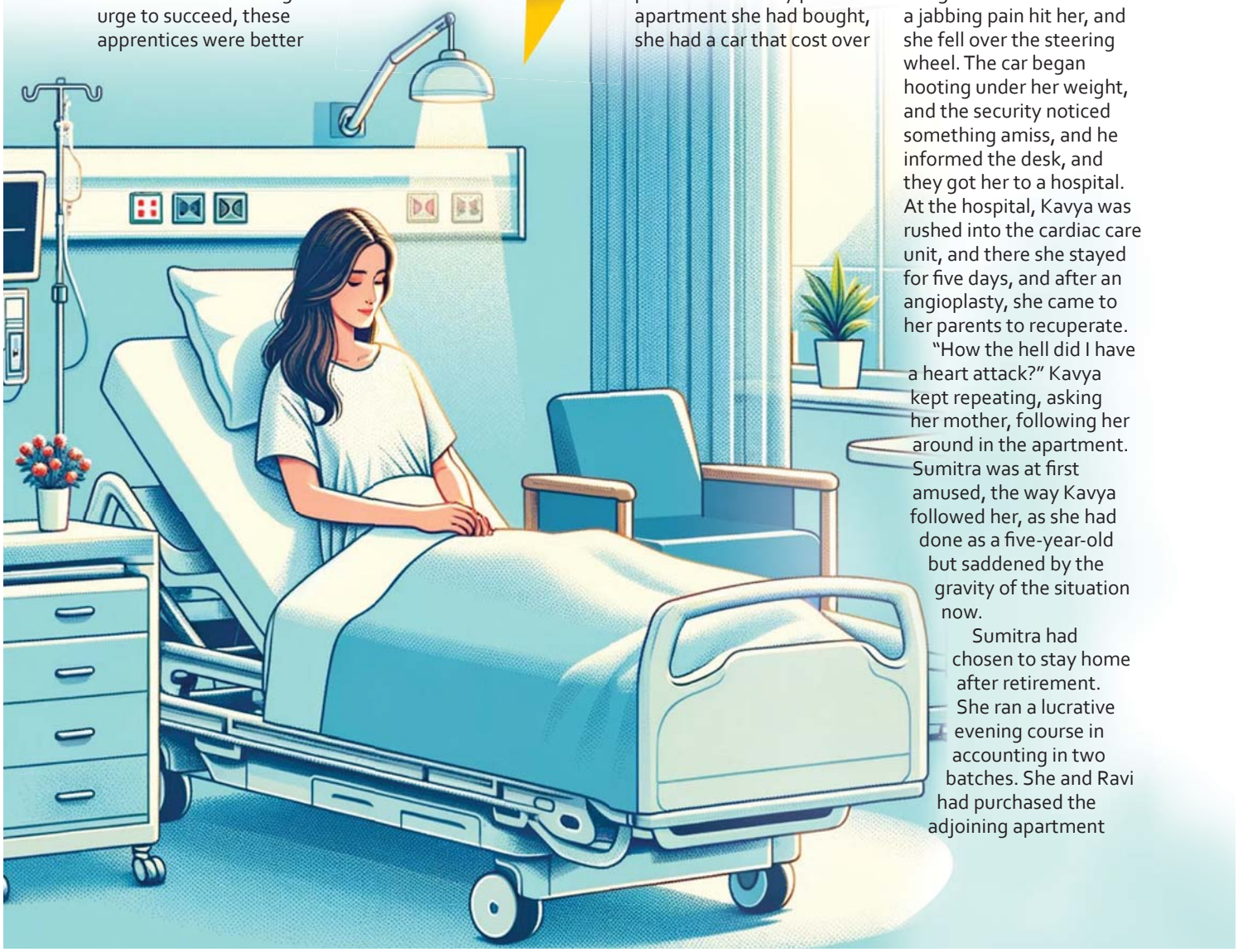
"We are aware and proud of that, but you could have chosen a less taxing office. Why do you need such a huge salary now, you are in our house, with no basic expenses to take care of?"

Kavya shook her head. "I'm already here. I cannot step back. It would be down-sliding!" Ravi looked at his daughter, worried; she was on a burnout, only she did not know it.

Ten years later, Kavya had made partner, the fastest, people murmured, not surprised because it would be ludicrous to even suggest anything but hard work. She had designer clothes, shifted out of her parents into a very posh apartment she had bought, she had a car that cost over twenty-eight lakhs. Kavya had it all, the law firm now banked heavily on her. She was successful in every way you saw it.

That Saturday was an unusual day because corporate lawyers don't work on weekends. But in this case, there was a dispute involved, so Kavya had to go in to meet with the litigating lawyer, and they together would have to brief the client. The process began, and Kavya was feeling hot. She asked for some chilled water, and the briefing got underway. Finally, it was over, and when Kavya got up, she felt a little dizzy. Anyway, she got into her car when a jabbing pain hit her, and she fell over the steering wheel. The car began hooting under her weight, and the security noticed something amiss, and he informed the desk, and they got her to a hospital. At the hospital, Kavya was rushed into the cardiac care unit, and there she stayed for five days, and after an angioplasty, she came to her parents to recuperate.

Finally, it was over, and when Kavya got up, she felt a little dizzy.



"How the hell did I have a heart attack?" Kavya kept repeating, asking her mother, following her around in the apartment. Sumitra was at first amused, the way Kavya followed her, as she had done as a five-year-old but saddened by the gravity of the situation now.

Sumitra had chosen to stay home after retirement. She ran a lucrative evening course in accounting in two batches. She and Ravi had purchased the adjoining apartment

on installments. She had two people who took the classes; she only supervised. The classes ran for four hours in the evening. Ravi worked as a consultant for an IT startup for three hours every day, after his retirement. So, the couple was happy with the free time they now had and the remunerative part-time business and work they enjoyed.

"How did I have a heart attack?" Kavya seemed to ask it as often as she disbelieved that such a thing could happen to a thirty-three-year-old.

"Well, you did work too hard. I'm curious to know why?" Ravi asked.

"I saw you both struggle, paying for my education. You sent me to the best of the institutions. There were two groups, students like me who came from a background where parents struggled to afford the education, and kids with parents who could easily. So, I figured if I landed a good job and worked well, I could rise fast and be able to afford everything I need. I did not need to struggle."

At the hospital, Kavya was rushed into the cardiac care unit, and there she stayed for five days, and after an angioplasty, she came to her parents to recuperate.
"How the hell did I have a heart attack?" Kavya kept repeating, asking her mother.

"You sure could afford the fancy hospital," Ravi quipped, and Kavya began to cry.

"I nearly died!" she wept.

"I'm sorry, that was insensitive of me," Ravi apologised. "You are smart, you perceived correctly that we struggled to give you the education and the odd holidays. But these are things we wanted to do, out of choice, because we planned it. We planned on one child, so we waited four years setting aside money for emergencies apart from two separate savings. Then we had you, we kept our lifestyle simple, our only lofty reach was the best education for you."

"Yes, but I saw you guys struggle!"

"Struggle, no, maybe some sacrifices here and there. But you were comparing us to people who were super rich. Why were you doing that? Is it necessary that anything one does must come with great ease or easily with money?"

"Kavya," Sumitra jumped in. "Sweetie, looking after your daughter with a little struggle is not a bad thing. The wrong thing is presuming that parenting shouldn't be a struggle. So, what if it is? It's done with love. Were you watching your diet?"

"No! My cook..." her voice trailed.

Kavya sat back and realised the success she was chasing was just an illusion; she did not know if those parents who she presumed were rich were really. Why had she just not enjoyed the care her parents were giving? Today her net worth was more than theirs, but she had already had a health setback. Success was not in the hard chase of money, at least it didn't feel like it! We

ONLINE FRIEND

My husband he stopped opening up to me about his thoughts and feelings. We would discuss finances and our social life, but not what was going on in our minds. We got used to the monotony, but then, when I started questioning why he doesn't talk to me, he would get defencive and mean. In turn, I would also shut him off.

Then one day, I had an idea. I made a fake account on Facebook and sent my husband a request. I started texting him online and sending him memes. At first, he didn't respond. Then I texted that I am only looking to make friends here because I am lonely. He responded and said, "I feel lonely sometimes too." We talked for hours after that. He told me what was bothering him, how he didn't have many trusted friends he could talk to, how he is having trouble connecting with his wife, the work stress... everything. I think he just needed an outlet. Then I started giving him advice. As his wife, I invited him to an event where he could meet new people. I started being a little bit more patient with him. He also started asking me about my day and telling me about his. Now, we are on our way to becoming closer to one another.

–Fatima Ahmed

SOME DIRTY ADVICE

I had an arranged marriage and didn't have any trouble getting along with my husband. He was sweet, caring and romantic. But one thing was missing. The first time we had sex, it was bad.

Then, a couple of other times it was also bad. Since then, we don't really engage in any sexual acts. I started worrying that he was going to feel the need to find satisfaction somewhere else.

Then, finally, I confided in my best friend. She advised me to try role playing to liven up the mood. I was aghast first. But then following some of the tips she shared, I decided to dress up and wait for my husband to get home.

When he arrived, he was confused at first but there was visible excitement on his face. He started playing along and after some time, we were able to really enjoy each other's company.

–Aahana S

40 Are The New Twenties

Women who redefined success later in life.

By Anuradha Dev

In the eighties and nineties, middle-class parents realised that girls' education was essential and sent their daughters to college after school. Still, they never encouraged their daughters to be independent. Education was another parameter for a girl to be compared to in the marriage market, along with height, colour, and figure.

Building a career is not a level playing field for men and women, especially in their twenties and thirties. While these years are mostly single-mindedly dedicated to career building for men, it's different for women. Girls have to appease their parents and get married in the hope of getting enough power to live their lives their own way after marriage.

But it rarely happens. After marriage, they are burdened with the responsibilities of husband, in-laws, and eventually kids. Most of the time, they give up their dreams. There are many families who do not "allow" their daughter-in-law to work.

And when finally they gain enough faculty to assert their needs, they feel like they're too old and they have missed the bus. This is how I felt fifteen years after my marriage when I was at a crossroads. It was the beginning for me of a new era in my life. I was still living in a joint family with two kids, but the difference was my kids were grown up, and I had enough say in the family to do whatever I wanted. But I had little confidence to do anything because I hadn't done anything before marriage. I had indeed missed the bus, but there were too many buses en route. I jumped on the first bus when I was forty years old and went back to college to complete my B.Ed. I started writing simultaneously. In a few years, I was taking online classes from home and had completed writing a book. The point is that I started whenever my passion kindled. If I had just mourned the loss of the years past, living exactly like I had been, I wouldn't be where I am now. It's just the beginning for me, but many women worldwide have achieved amazing feats while starting after forty years. Here is the list of some Indian women:

◄ Urmila Jamnadas

Urmila Jamnadas is an inspiring woman who started her venture 'Gujju Ben Na Nasta' at 77. She is also known as 'Superdadi'. The girl who was married at eighteen and had three kids by twenty-three never dreamt of becoming an entrepreneur and a Ted-Ed speaker. She had witnessed more than her fair share of struggles. She lost her newborn daughter and her sons later in life to heart disease and brain tumour, respectively. In the year 2019, her only grandson, Harsh, met with an accident and lost his lower lip. Just when her family had seen all kinds of adversities, Urmila decided to start a venture that sold homemade Gujarati delicacies. Besides building an empire of good food, Urmila has also inspired many lives.

◄ Dr. Bhagwati Oza

An octogenarian, Dr. Bhagwati Oza won a national award for sports and adventure at the ripe age of 80, presented to her by President Pranab Mukherjee in 2016. Dr. Bhagwati Oza joined mountaineering training at the age of 40, when most mountaineers retire. She was trained under Tenzing Norgay (the First to Summit Mt. Everest). A gynaecologist by profession, Oza has won more than 100 medals in athletics and swimming at National and international levels.

Hemlata Pal ►

Another story of age not standing a chance in front of passion. Chachi Cross Stitch is an online store on Instamojo that was founded by Hemlata Pal, a 50+-year-old woman entrepreneur in India, who wants to share her designs and creativity with the world. With beautiful cross-stitching products in the store, she also has DIY products that can encourage other people to take up this age-old form of embroidery.

◄ Jaswant Kular

Jaswant Kular, who is 60 years old, sought a way to meet a personal need. She wished to impart traditional Indian cooking knowledge to her daughters. Her experience led her to believe that none of the products were up to conventional Indian standards. Jaswant created her product called Jaswant's Kitchen Indian Spice Blends due to her dissatisfaction with the artificial ingredients, including fillers, and too much fat. In the beginning, her first clients were her relatives and family. But later, her business expanded exponentially, and now her products are sold in more than 100 stores after going online. The company, which Jaswant and her three daughters own, is a prime illustration of the adage "necessity is the mother of ingenuity."

▲ Deepa Malik

Deepa Malik is a Paralympic medalist who said yes to life at the age of 40. In the year 1999, Deepa was diagnosed with a spinal tumour. Even after undergoing three surgeries, she was still paralysed waist down. However, Deepa did not let her physical limitations deter her strong mind. At the age of 40, she finally decided to pursue a career in sports. Once she started, she was truly unstoppable. She is a recipient of 58 national and 18 international medals. She is also the first Indian woman to have won a Paralympic medal. Apart from being an avid athlete, Deepa is also a swimmer, disability activist, woman entrepreneur, and biker.

BUILDING A CAREER IS NOT A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD FOR MEN AND WOMEN, ESPECIALLY IN THEIR TWENTIES AND THIRTIES.

Each of these women started believing, "You don't need a certain age to start something new."

I know as kids, girls dream big, but somewhere in the ebb and flow of adult life, women let these dreams pass. It doesn't have to be this way. If you're fit and motivated, you can do anything. Let this article inspire you to start something you always wanted to. We

I AM A 27-YEAR-OLD WORKING WOMAN and three months pregnant. My thyroid gland is enlarged. I have consulted a lady doctor, and she told me that the thyroid gland sometimes enlarges during pregnancy. I want your opinion.

Disorders of the thyroid are at least five times as frequent in females as in males, and simple goitres and adenomas are known to undergo well-marked enlargement during pregnancy. In some women, the thyroid increases at puberty and at menopause, and the general belief is that the thyroid increases in size during pregnancy. This is possibly explained as the result of excessive output of anterior pituitary thyrotropic hormone. In cretinism, the menstrual functions may not develop or, if they do develop, puberty is delayed, and menstruation is irregular. In adult myxedema, menstruation may become irregular and scanty, or it may cease, but occasionally the patients suffer from excessive menstruation or irregular menstrual periods. In hyperthyroidism, the menstrual functions may not be disturbed, although in advanced disease, patients suffer from amenorrhea or oligomenorrhea.

●

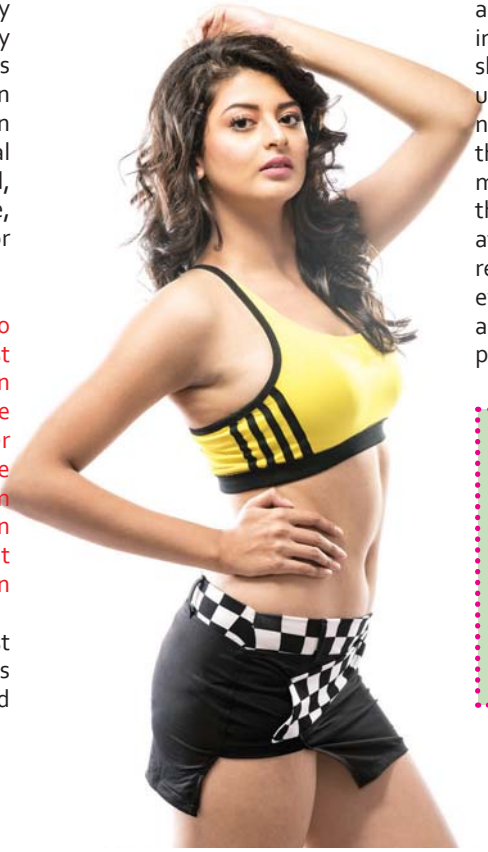
MY DAUGHTER IS ABOUT 10 years old, and for the last six months, she has been suffering from anaemia. We have consulted a child specialist. After examination and investigations, he told us that she is suffering from hemolytic anaemia due to vitamin E deficiency and advised treatment and diet. I want to know about this in detail.

Alpha-tocopherol is the most potent of eight related substances with vitamin E activity. It is found in vegetable oils, eggs, butter, wholemeal cereals, and broccoli and peas. Vitamin E prevents the oxidation of polyunsaturated fatty acids in cell membranes. The main feature of human deficiency is a mild hemolytic anaemia. This has been described only in premature infants and in a few cases of malabsorption. There is no scientific justification for self-medication with vitamin E in the belief that this will increase energy or virility.

●

I AM A 30-YEAR-OLD WORKING WOMAN and have a growth in my left breast. I have consulted a doctor, and after examination and investigation, she told me that this is a fibroadenoma in the breast and advised surgical removal. I want to know about this condition.

Adenomas arise in secretory glands and resemble the structure from which they arise. They are encapsulated, and sometimes they profoundly influence metabolism, as in the case of the thyroid, parathyroid, and pancreas. Occasionally an adenoma contains a large proportion of fibrous tissue, e.g., the hard fibroadenoma in the breast, while in other situations, notably the pancreas and thyroid gland, cystic degeneration is common. Those arising from secretory glands of mucous membranes are liable to pedunculation, as in the case of rectal polyps. Usually, fibroadenomas in the breast are non-cancerous, but they should be removed as early as possible.



●

I AM A 30-YEAR-OLD WORKING woman, and for the last six months, I have been suffering from some degree of permanent stiffness of the spine. I have consulted an orthopaedic surgeon. After examination and investigation, he told me that I am suffering from ankylosing spondylitis. I want your opinion.

As the name implies, ankylosing spondylitis is primarily a disease of the spine, though in a few cases, the arthritic changes also involve the proximal joints of the limbs, especially the hip. Briefly, it is a chronic inflammatory affection of the joints and ligaments of the spine, beginning in the sacroiliac joints. It progresses slowly, the changes gradually creeping up the spinal column from below. The natural outcome is bony ankylosis of the affected joints, but the disease may be arrested at any stage short of this. Typically, ankylosing spondylitis affects men in early adult life. After remaining active for several years, it eventually tends to become quiescent, always leaving some degree of permanent stiffness of the spine.

- Dr Sanjay Teotia

Readers are invited to send in any health and medical queries they would like to be answered. Woman's Era will provide answers to your questions and offer solutions to your problems. Individual replies cannot be sent. Address your letters (neatly written on white paper) to:

Woman's Era E-3, Jhandewala Estate, New Delhi-110 055.

Printing

Coffee Table Books

Upto
500
Copies in
short time

Many Samples
to Choose from

Delhi Press

Printers since 1938

Call to Discuss

9810160122

Eclectic Fusion Feast

Bringing together diverse dishes in perfect balance.

By Roma Ghosh

CHILLI JAM FLAVOURED DAHI BHALLAS

INGREDIENTS

For Making The Bhallas:

1 cup urad dal
4-5 tbsp mung dal
Salt
10-12 peppercorns
2 tbsp bottled chilli jam
2-3 pinches baking soda
Oil for frying

For The Dahi And Other Toppings:

300-400 ml thick sweetened curd
2 -3 tbsp chilli jam
Chopped coriander
3 tsp dates and gur chutney

METHOD

Soak the dals in water for 3-4 hours. Drain out excess water and grind to a paste. Heat oil for deep frying. Also, keep a large bowl of drinking water to drop the fried bhallas.

Remove to a large mixing bowl. Add the remaining ingredients for the bhallas and blend well so that the mixture is smooth and fluffy. Drop portions into the hot oil and fry the bhallas on medium heat.

Fry 3-4 bhallas at one time. Turn over till crispy and golden brown. Now drop these bhallas into the bowl with water and allow the bhallas to remain in this bowl of water for 2-3 minutes. Squeeze out the water from the bhallas and place it on a serving plate.

Top with the sweetened curd, chilli jam coriander and dates chutney. Serve chilled.

Chilli Jam
Flavoured Dahi Bhallas

Barki Samosas

BARKI SAMOSAS

INGREDIENTS

For the samosas:

3 cups flour maida
1 cup wheat flour
Salt
2 tsp ajwain - carom seeds
4-5 tbsp ghee
The 'slurry' For spreading on the samosa sheet
2 cups ghee
4-5 tbsp maida

For the filling

4-5 cups mashed coarsely crushed potatoes
1 cup shelled peas
1 large cauliflower head cut into very small pieces
Salt
2 tsp cumin seeds
1 tsp anardana or amchur powder
1 tsp garam masala powder
1 tsp cinnamon powder
2 tsp roasted jeera powder
Half tsp elaichi powder
3 tbsp ghee
Oil for deep frying

METHOD

First, prepare the filling by heating the ghee. Add the cumin seeds and allow to splutter. Add the peas and cauliflower pieces and cook over medium heat adding salt to taste. Fry till vegetables start turning into a light golden brown colour. Then mix the potatoes together with the spices and salt to taste.

Stir very gently. Cook for a further 2-3 minutes on low heat so that the spices mix well into the vegetables. Cool at room temperature.

Prepare a slurry mixing the ghee and maida to obtain a smooth paste. We will refer to this as slurry.

To prepare the samosa patties:

Sift the dry ingredients - the maida, wheat flour, ajwain and salt together. Add ghee, and mix with your fingers to resemble breadcrumbs. Add just enough water to knead into a pliable dough. Now divide the dough into 4-5 portions. Work with one portion at a time. Make a round ball, and roll it out into a circle like a chapati. Now spread a portion of the slurry on this chapati. next cut one-inch broad strips from this chapati. Now fold each strip into a ball. Roll two- 3 strips on top of each other to obtain a round ball. Roll this ball into a smaller-sized chapati. Place a portion of the filling in the centre and fold it over like a gujiya. Seal the edges using a fork or make light folds. Prepare the samosas in this way. Deep fry in oil on medium heat till crispy and golden brown.

Note: the number of strips you use to wrap over each other will depend on the size of samosas you want. We generally make the samosas big in size, usually double the size of a normal samosa and half moon in shape.

Steamed Corn And Peas Parcels In Banana Leaves

STEAMED CORN AND PEAS PARCELS IN BANANA LEAVES

INGREDIENTS

5-6 pieces of banana leaves 4x4 inches in size
1 cup fresh green peas
1 cup corn niblets - coarsely crushed

For the marinade:
2 tsp mustard paste
2 tsp green chillies paste
2 tbsp brown onion paste
1 chopped tomatoes or cut in rings
2 tsp garlic paste
2 tbsp thick curd
1 tbsp mustard oil
Salt
5-6 whole green chillies

METHOD

Prepare the banana leaves by wiping with a wet kitchen towel to remove the dust. Pat dry and then just warm for a few seconds holding over a gas flame for 3-4 seconds tsp that the banana leaves become soft and easy to use.

Mix together the peas, crush corn the onion paste, tomatoes and marinade. Your filling is ready.

Place a portion of the filling in the centre of each banana leaf and fold from all sides into a parcel. Seal with a toothpick pick. Steam all the parcels in a steamer for 12-15 minutes. Serve piping hot as a starter or as a main course to go with steaming white rice.

FESTIVE TASTY CHICKEN

INGREDIENTS

6-8 chicken legs

For the marinade:
100 gms thick curd
2 tsp garlic paste
2 tsp ginger paste
2 tsp red chilli paste
Salt
2 tbsp mustard oil

For the gravy:
2 tbsp browned onions
3 tsp ginger garlic paste
Salt
2 tsp tandoori chicken masala
3 tbsp mustard oil
200 ml fresh cream
3 tbsp tomato purée
Fried onions/ barista for garnishing

METHOD

Make insertions in the chicken legs. Mix all ingredients for chicken marinade. Use the marinade to rub

Festive Tasty Chicken

Coin Shahi Tukra

onto the chicken legs and leave aside for 15 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 180 degrees C. And then grill the chicken legs till a light golden brown. Turn once or twice so that all sides are browned. Keep these cooked legs warm.

Simultaneously heat a deep pan and prepare the gravy. Heat the oil and add the ingredients to the curry. Mix well. Mix in 1 cup of water and continue to stir and fry the mixture till oil separates. Now add 2 more cups of water and allow the gravy to simmer. Lower the heat and add the cooked chicken legs. Cook till gravy thickens and the desired consistency is reached. Garnish with fried onions or cream Serve with Naan or roti.

COIN SHAHI TUKRA

INGREDIENTS

For the coins:

1 thin-crust pizza or
4-5 slices of milk bread
Oil for deep frying
1 cup sugar to prepare the sugar syrup

For the topping:

1 cup rabrie or condensed milk
Or 1 cup chocolate sauce or strawberry sauce
Dry fruits or fresh fruits for decoration

METHOD

If you are using a pizza base you can cut the coins from one pizza base. But if you are using bread slices use two slices together to obtain thicker coins. To prepare the coins use fresh bread. Remove the sides and then use a rolling pin to flatten each bread slice. Put one slice on top of another. Next, use a cookie cutter and cut round coins from the layered bread slices. It is easier to work with pizza crust for this recipe.

Heat oil and deep fry each of the coins and drop these into a sugar syrup. Leave for a minute in the syrup and then remove so that the syrup is drained out. Keep aside.

To prepare the syrup:

Mix the sugar with equal amounts of water and bring to a simmer, mixing until the sugar is dissolved. You can also air fry the coins if you don't want to deep fry the coins.

The topping on the coins can vary. Use rabrie, or condensed milk, or chocolate sauce as the base on the coin and then top with dry fruits or fresh fruits. This gives the shahi tukra a twist.

If you are using condensed milk for spreading you could completely skip using the sugar syrup. This is optional if you want to use less sugar.

FISH/ MATAR KOCHURI WITH ALU SABJI

Fish/ Matar Kochuri With Alu Sabji

INGREDIENTS

For The Matar Filling:

2 cups shelled peas - crushed
Salt
3 tsp oil
1 tsp cumin seeds
1 tsp amchur powder
1 tsp red chilli powder

For the fish filling:

400 gms of boneless fish
2 tbsp mustard oil
2 tsp ginger grated
1 tsp green chilli paste
Salt
1 tsp roasted cumin powder
For the dough
1 cup wheat flour
1 cup maida - flour
Salt
1 tsp ajwain seeds
Salt
3 tsp ghee
Ghee or oil for frying the Kachori
Jacket potatoes - Small-sized potatoes with skin
Salt
2 tsp black sesame seeds
Half tsp turmeric powder
Half tsp red chilli powder
3 tablespoons oil

METHOD

Prepare the potatoes by pricking each potato. Sprinkle all the spices. Rub onto the potatoes and keep aside for 10 minutes. Heat oil and fry the potatoes in oil over low flame covered with a lid till potatoes are tender. Cut into thin slices.

Alternatively, you could first cut the potatoes into strips with the peel on and then cook. It is easier this way.

To make the peas filling for the Kachori:

Heat oil, add the spices and cook for 2-3 minutes on medium heat adding salt to taste. Leave aside to cool. If you are using fish stuffing then steam the fish to cook. Heat the oil. Mash the steamed fish and add to the oil with the spices. Cook on medium heat for 2-4 minutes. Your filling is ready. You can use either the matar filling or fish mixture for stuffing the Kachoris.

Prepare the Kachori dough by sifting the maida, wheat flour, salt, and ajwain. Mix in the oil with your fingers to resemble breadcrumbs. Add just enough water to knead into a dough. Divide dough into small portions. Shape each portion into a round ball. Flatten each ball and fill it with a small portion of the peas filling. Roll back into a round ball and then flatten into a round puri shape. Prepare all the stuffed Kachori in this way

Heat oil for deep frying. Fry the puris one at a time till puffed. Turn over so that Kachories are golden brown and crispy. Serve with jacket potatoes sabji.

Beetroot Shammi Kebabs

BEETROOT SHAMMI KEBABS

INGREDIENTS

2 cups of boiled grated beetroot
Half cup boiled mashed potatoes
Half cup chana dal - soaked for 3-4 hours
1 cup sattu flour - roasted chana dal flour
Salt
2 tsp roasted cumin powder
1 tsp red chilli powder
1 tsp anardana powder
2 tsp lemon juice
Oil for deep frying

Makki Canapés With Varied Toppings

METHOD

Grind the soaked chana to a fine paste. Place in a large mixing bowl. Mix all the remaining ingredients. Mix all the ingredients together. Divide into small round Shammi kebabs. Heat oil and deep fry these Shammi kebabs a few at a time till crispy and golden brown on all sides. Serve as a snack.

MAKKI CANAPÉS WITH VARIED TOPPINGS

INGREDIENTS

For the corn meal makki coins:

3 cups makki flour
Salt
1 tsp ajwain seeds
3 tsp chopped fresh garlic
Luke warm water for kneading
2 tsp white oil
Ghee for tawa frying the coins
Beetroot circles / shredded or salad for serving
or use tinned sarson ka saag or better still prepared at home
Or baingan ka bharta

METHOD

To make the coins:

Sift together the makki atta, salt and chopped fresh garlic. Add just enough lukewarm warm water to knead into a pliable dough. Rub with oil and knead to a pliable dough. Divide into 4-5 portions. Roll out each portion into a round paratha. Use a round katori to shape small coins from the parantha. Heat a tawa and fry the coin-shaped paranthas on low heat. Turn once or twice till both sides of the coins are crispy and golden brown.

To serve:

Place a small portion of salad leaf or a slice of beetroot. Or top with a small portion of sarson ka saag. Or even some baingan ka bharta topping. Serve as a starter.

A round slice of cheese topped with olives or salad also is a different canapé topping you can try.

Breaded Fish Cutlets

BREADED FISH CUTLETS

INGREDIENTS

4-5 half-inch thick fish fillets
For the filling 4-5 tbsp of mint chutney
For the marinade:
2 -3 tablespoons thick curd
3 tsp lemon juice
Salt

For the dip:

3 eggs
Salt

For coating:

3 cups bread crumbs
Mustard oil for deep frying the cutlets

METHOD

Cut the fillet to whatever size you want to serve. With a sharp knife make a slit horizontally in each fillet to get 'Pocket'. Fills this pocket with a small portion of the mint chutney to serve as a filling. Stuff all the fillets in this way and then proceed further. Mix the ingredients for the marinade. Use this to marinate the fish fillets and leave aside for 10 minutes.

Beat eggs, adding salt to taste.

Prepare the cutlets by working with each fillet. Dip the fillet into the beaten egg and then coat with bread crumbs. Prepare all the cutlets and then fry in hot oil on medium heat, turning gently once so that both sides are crispy and golden brown.

Alternatively, you can tava fry the cutlets on low heat turning to cook both sides.

Serve hot with mustard sauce.

Quick Gobi Gajar Aachar

SWEET POTATO BONDAS

INGREDIENTS

For the bondas:

400 gms sweet potatoes
2 tbsp corn flour
1 tbsp rice flour
Salt
4 cloves garlic chopped
1 tsp mustard seeds
Few curry leaves
Half tsp red chilli powder
1 tsp roasted cumin powder
3 tsp lemon juice juice

For the batter

2 cups gram flour
Salt
1 tsp turmeric powder
2 pinches baking soda
Half-taped chilli powder
Oil for deep frying

METHOD

Boil or bake the sweet potatoes until tender. Peel and keep in a mixing bowl. Mix in all the ingredients for the bondas and mix well.

Prepare the batter by sifting the ingredients for the batter in a large bowl. Add enough water to form a smooth batter. Blend with your r fingers to obtain a smooth and fluffy batter.

Heat oil for deep frying. Divide the sweet potato mixture into small portions. Dip each portion into the prepared batter and deep fry in oil at medium heat. Turn over to cook all sides till crispy and golden brown. Serve with coconut chutney. Or serve with instant chilli pickles. A tasty snack for guests.

Sweet Potato Bondas

QUICK GOBI GAJAR AACHAR

INGREDIENTS

1 medium-sized head of cauliflower
2 medium-sized red carrots
Salt
1 tsp turmeric powder
200 ml mustard oil

For the spice powder:

¼ tsp fenugreek seeds
1 tsp mustard seeds
1 tsp cumin seeds
½ tsp fennel seeds
2 dried red chilies
2 tablespoons vinegar
3 tbsp jaggery powder

METHOD

Cut the cauliflower into florets. Scrape lightly the carrots and cut them into one-inch strips. Sprinkle salt and turmeric powder on these and keep them aside.

Grind the spices to a powder. Heat the mustard oil. Bring to room temperature. Mix in the cauliflower and carrots and the spices. Mix well. Add the vinegar and jaggery powder. Mix again. You can use the pickle or keep it in a bottle and leave it aside for 2-3 days. Stays good in the fridge after that for a week or so.

Quick Chilli Pickles

Green Chutney With Orange Zest

QUICK CHILLI PICKLES

INGREDIENTS

300 gms fresh green chillies
Salt
1 tsp turmeric powder
3 tsp mustard seeds
2 tsp grated ginger
2 tsp chopped garlic
200 ml mustard oil

METHOD

Wash the green chillies and then dry so that there is no moisture. Trim both ends of the chillies and cut them into small pieces.

Dry grind the mustard seeds to a coarse powder. Heat the mustard oil and then cool to room temperature. Place all ingredients in a mixing bowl and mix well. You can consume the pickle instantly and store it as well. Use a clean glass container to store the pickle. You can leave it outside for 2-3 days. Stays good even longer if kept in the fridge.

GREEN CHUTNEY WITH ORANGE ZEST

INGREDIENTS

250 gms fresh green coriander
60 gms mint leaves
1 tsp zest of orange (remove white portion) thoroughly
3 green chillies
1-inch piece ginger
4-5 cloves garlic
capsicum- use half of medium size
3 tsp lemon juice
1 tsp salt

METHOD

Grind all ingredients using as little water as possible. Add salt and lemon to taste. Mix and store in the fridge. Tastes good for a week.

CHOCOLATE POPPY SEEDS FUDGE

INGREDIENTS

250 gms chocolate
60 gms condensed milk
2 tsp lightly roasted poppy seeds

Chocolate Poppy Seeds Fudge

METHOD

First, prepare the mould in which you will freeze the fudge. Use butter paper to line the mould. This is important because the butter paper helps to unmold the fudge. Melt the chocolate over a double boiler. Once the water is boiling, reduce the heat and melt the chocolate stirring over low heat and no lumps should remain. Remove from heat and mix in the condensed milk. Stir and mix in thoroughly. The mixture will begin to thicken. Pour into the mould. Top with poppy seeds and allow to set at room temperature. Once the fudge is set, keep it in the fridge for 3-4 hours. Unmold, cut into pieces and serve as a sweet dish. We

Short Story

Part 1
Year: 1980

Jugaad On Pahaad

Two youngsters conspire to follow their dreams. By Snigdha S Jauhari

The brown bricks glazed in the orange hue of the setting sun.

The children playing on the sandy grounds were throwing up clouds of fine, shiny yellow sand all over the place.

"One has to clean hair twice a day with so much dust flying around." Kanchan mumbled, covering her head with her dupatta.

Her house was just about a hundred kilometres from the desert. This, once quiet, small town, now had quite a few modern facilities, but the spirit of its inhabitants was still of the one etched in the stones of the bygone era.

Kanchan entered her house and went into the large courtyard, where her mother and other women of the family were cooking. The inner part of the courtyard was covered and functioned as a kitchen, where only vegetarian food was cooked. Diagonally opposite was another shaded part where non-vegetarian food was cooked on special occasions.

Seeing Kanchan, her mother said, "Don't go for music tuition tomorrow. Prithvi saheb's family will be coming."

Kanchan knew what that meant. She wanted to protest but knew that direct confrontation will not help. "I don't know what to say, it would matter to no one... but I will try to think of something." she said to herself.

She was 17 years of age. Had just finished her school and was hailed as a budding Sitar player. She

had an ear for music and a deep interest in learning Sitar. She wanted to pursue music wholeheartedly.

However, oblivious to her wishes—since young girls' dreams were of no importance to her large, joint family—discussions regarding her marriage had already started.

And Thakur family was considered most eligible.

The next day, the 'seeing party' arrived in the afternoon.

The 'boy', Surya Pratap Singh Thakur, unlike his powerful name, looked rather powerless.

Slim and of average height, he had a thin face and gentle brown eyes. He was all of 19 years of age.

Despite promptings from the giggling women of his family, who had come with him, he did not speak to Kanchan. Though, he answered a few questions in monosyllables when Kanchan's mother spoke to him.

Clad in a bright yellow sari and her head bent, Kanchan sat quietly, keeping her irritation well under control.

The ordeal lasted for a little over an hour after which she breathed a sigh of relief.

In the evening, she decided to go out. She was feeling suffocated and angry, and knew that if she remained in, she would pick up a fight with her mother.

"I am going across." She told her mom. 'Going across' meant going to one of her friend's houses.

Their houses were close to each other. Some of her best friends lived in the lanes opposite hers or in the adjacent lanes.

Hoping that none of her friends would see her, she crossed the lane quickly and walked towards the hill.

The hill—a majestic, silent relic of the past – had some remains of an old fort on it. Besides that, it was bare and if one were to go higher, it offered a breathtaking view of the town situated around it.

The incoming wind from the desert was warm. She sat down on the sunbaked rock, feeling the full force of wind on her face and in her hair.

"I don't want to marry now." Miserably, she said to herself. "I want to study music. But...what do I do?!"

She sat brooding.

Generally, of a happy disposition, she knew that wriggling out of this was near-impossible. But she was not willing to give up.

In her community, girls, by the age of 16, were placed in the marriage-market. From the day a daughter was born, dowry was accumulated and earmarked. As per the quantity and quality of the dowry, the groom-family was shortlisted.

"What to do"? Kanchan was asking herself for the tenth time.

Her head bent, lost in her thoughts, she sighed aloud and then, sensing something, she looked up; standing behind a large rock, was someone!

Suddenly, the person—as if he too, had sensed a presence—turned around, and Kanchan found herself looking directly at her prospective groom!

Feeling embarrassed and confused, she gaped and then looked away.

The boy too, seemed to be going through the same set of emotions, looked away.

A few minutes later, having gathered enough courage, he walked towards her and gave her a weak, watery smile.

She frowned in return.

"I... am Su...Surya Pratap." He stammered.

Kanchan kept her head bowed and did not reply.

"Do you...want to...ma... marry?" He squeaked.

Bewildered, Kanchan looked up.

Hoping that none of her friends would see her, she crossed the lane quickly and walked towards the hill. The hill—a majestic, silent relic of the past – had some remains of an old fort on it. Besides that, it was bare and if one were to go higher, it offered a breathtaking view of the town situated around it.

"No...no, what I...I am saying is I am not ready... for marriage. I don't want to...marry you...no, no...I mean, I don't want to marry...anyone." Nervous, he completed his sentence in one breath.

Kanchan exhaled.

She now felt a little less tense but still did not say anything.

A bit shyly, Surya sat on the edge of the same rock on which she was sitting, and said, "*Babuji* wants me to marry and get into the kiln business but I want to be a doctor."

Kanchan looked at him and heard herself speak, "Then why don't you tell him?"

"I have told him twice, but he says it will cost a lot of money."

"So, money is the problem." Kanchan said.

"Money is not the problem." Surya chuckled, "Spending money is the problem. I, being the youngest in a large, joint family, my father, uncles, my brothers take all decisions about me." He concluded quietly.

There was a touch of helplessness in Surya that matched her own state of being, and that gave her a sense of bonding with another tormented soul.

"Oh," she said.

Then she thought for a moment and said, "Have you spoken to your mother?"

"Yes," Surya said, "She told me to do as *Babuji* says."

"But you are a boy, not a girl, so why do your parents want you to marry so soon?" Kanchan asked.

"Because my father has a business. My family makes bricks. He wants me to get into the kiln business and your father is giving the land for this purpose." Surya answered.

"Oh!" Kanchan exclaimed. Then she persisted. "You are the youngest son and I know, the youngest sons are loved very much. You should insist."

"But how do I insist?" Surya said with a bit of exasperation.

Kanchan turned around. She now faced him directly and looked straight into his eyes.

Leaning forward she said, "You should do a *bhook hartaal*."

"What?" Surya

exclaimed, his eyes round with surprise.

"*Bhook hartaal*, *bhook hartaal*. Hunger strike," Kanchan repeated, loud and clear.

"I...I heard that." Surya raised his hand, to stop her from repeating with such vigour and gusto. "But ... does it...eh.. will it help?"

"It helps." Kanchan said brightly. "My younger brother did it when he wanted the music system. He got it. My cousin did it when he wanted a motorcycle. He got it."

"What!?" Surya said incredulously.

"It helps." Kanchan said brightly. "My younger brother did it when he wanted the music system."

"Yes." Kanchan said, "Even you do it. Then you can become a doctor and I will have a chance to study music."

"So even you don't want to marry me?" Surya asked.

"No. Of course, not," Kanchan said indignantly, as if he was responsible for this infraction in her good life.

"Then why don't you do *bhook hartaal*?" he asked with a smile

Kanchan sighed, "Oh! Who cares if we girls do? My cousin Kanta once did it and she was force-fed. My mom caught her and her mother caught her and our grandma poured milk down her throat. She hadn't eaten the whole day, so she drank the whole two litres of milk...so you see," she added gloomily, "even I will be force-fed."

"So, I was going to marry into the family of *bhook hartaalis.*

Professional Hunger-strikers," Surya laughed heartily

Kanchan continued to counsel him. "Your *bhook hartaal* will help both of us. You will be free and so will I. Go For It. It works wonders for boys."

Surya chuckled, "Yes, from your family's history, it seems promising."

"Yes", Kanchan said mischievously, "If *jugaad* works, then why break *pahaad*."

Surya had a good laugh. "Yes, absolutely."

Then he said pensively, "The thought of spending my life in the kiln scares the hell out of me."

"Then do something." Kanchan dramatically raised her fist. "Your name is Surya Pratap. Don't take it lying down. You must rise and shine"

Surya smiled broadly.

He gazed at the flaming orange of the sun on the horizon, that shone brightly even at that hour.

He quietly thought over their conversation. After a while, he looked at her. "Okay." He said determinedly, "*Bhook hartaal* or whatever, but I will do something to become a doctor."

Kanchan exhaled.

She did not know that she had been holding her breath while he was thinking.

She was happy for herself, but truly happy for Surya.

She had seen girls unhappy, but in all her 17 years, for the first time, she was seeing a boy unhappy! And, she felt good that she could help remove the cloud of unhappiness for him.

On the horizon, the blue sky was drawing smokey grey lines—a smattering of fluffs of pale grey furs had begun to push away the orange and the pink hues as the sun lowered its golden crown. The wind coming from the desert felt much cooler now.

"I think we should go now." Surya said. He got up and looked around, "I don't think it would be right for us to be seen here together."

Suddenly, Kanchan too, realised that, and for a moment was confused about the next course of action.

"You go down first." Surya said clearly, taking charge of the situation. "I will come down the hill after you have moved some distance."

Kanchan nodded and started to walk down.

Surya stood watching her for a while then called out, "Hello."

Kanchan turned around.

A grateful Surya raised his palm to his forehead in a friendly salute.

And Kanchan smiled back.

1981. A Year Later

She was standing in her college courtyard, after her music class, when the college peon handed her a courier.

It was addressed to her.

She felt very surprised. Never before had she received any courier or letter addressed to her. Her surprise turned to astonishment when she opened the letter.

It was over a year since she had given him that whacky idea. But receiving a letter from him was the last thing she had expected.

From the courtyard, she sprinted towards the open field at the back of the college.

There were houses, farms and a potters' colony around the college, though at a distance. However, at the back, there was a large expanse of sandy land with a curious mix of trees and some hardy vegetation.

Clustered around a small pond, the trees stood like wise men among several small sand dunes of soft, yellow sand, which, like children, shifted shape and place with every gust of strong wind from the desert.

She came to a large tree whose broad, brown, gnarled trunk acted as a shield from any prying eyes. Squatting under the large, leafy tree, facing the clear pond, she began to read the letter...

Respected Kanchan ji,

You probably would remember me. You had given me the idea of *bhook hartal* to threaten my parents so that they let me study medicine. Well, to tell you the good news, today I have passed the first year of my medical exam. Now I am in second year.

By this letter, I would like to thank you for instigating me so perfectly (actually, I mean motivating) and giving me the idea of *bhook hartaal* (though, even today I think that it was a crazy idea, but please don't mind my calling it crazy). It was very useful. I did not actually have to do *bhook hartaal*. I only told my mother (actually, casually threatened) and she made my father agree to my wish.

So, thank you very much.

Respectfully,

Surya Pratap Singh.

... to be continued.

NEIGHBOURS ALL

NOISY NEIGHBOURS

During Covid, the reality about my neighbours came out. Even though it isn't as serious as it sounds, it has successfully made my life miserable. I had a full time job before that kept me out of the house on most days. Then during pandemic, I shifted to work from home and also switched to a job whose office was located out of the city. So I was a full time remote employee. It looked good at first since I could stay at home and work at my leisure. But my noisy neighbours have made it impossible now.

At first, it was just slamming doors and loud footsteps, but now it has gotten worse. I counted it as normal neighbourhood noise in the beginning, but then when their dog started barking in the middle of the night, I started getting annoyed. I tried reasoning with them, but they straight up asked me to shift somewhere else if it bothered me. Now, they slam doors more loudly and their utensils keep falling on the ground. It disturbs my meetings so often. I can't move out of my house but I need to try scaring them away. A good concocted ghost story is my plan.

– Srishin Das

THE NICE ONE

I had just moved into a nice neighbourhood with my husband around the time I was recovering from cancer. We wanted to be nearer to the hospital and my son's school. Since I was mostly on bed rest, my husband would drop off my son to the school. He was managing everything on his own. With our busy schedule, we hadn't interacted with our new neighbours much.

When my report came back after my first round of chemo, the doctor informed me that my cancer had returned. My husband was worried but I told him it will be okay. It was a tough life but we would survive. I tried to put on a brave face but internally, I was breaking. I could not sleep that night. By 5 in the morning, tears started rolling down my cheek. I went outside and sat in our car. I had an emotional breakdown that day. I did not want to scare my husband so I stepped out. While I sat in the car crying, someone knocked on the window. I was startled. It was my neighbour Shekhar uncle, on his morning walk. He asked me what was wrong and tried to console me. I invited him to sit in the car with me and I told him everything. He was very kind and he helped me feel a little better.

Since then, he comes over frequently to keep me company. I eventually beat the cancer and it hasn't returned in over five years. Shekhar uncle and I have become best of friends now.

– Manasvi Gupta

Aradhaga

Stories Woven In A thread

Empowering the underprevileged.

By Enactus Ramjas

In the heart of Delhi NCR, a movement is underway that is as vibrant as the textiles it repurposes and as resilient as the women it empowers. Project Aradhaga, an initiative by Enactus Ramjas since 2012, is not just about creating fashionable accessories from upcycled fabric; it's a testament to the power of sustainable action and social entrepreneurship.

The fashion industry is notorious for generating significant amount of waste, with fast fashion exacerbating the problem. This rapid turnover of cheaply produced garments contributes to overflowing landfills, pollution of waterways, and exploitation of labour. To address these prevailing issues, Enactus Ramjas initiated Project Aradhaga, it focuses on the textile upcycling avenue to put the seal on sustainability and style.

We transform discarded clothing into stylish accessories, catering perfectly to our environmentally conscious customers.

Beyond the environmental impact, Aradhaga's core strength lies in its community of beneficiaries, who are underprivileged women from the Delhi NCR region. For more than 11 years, these women have been the driving force behind the project, mastering skills such as sewing, knitting, and weaving. Through their empowerment, they are paving the way for a brighter future for themselves and their families, enabling them to earn a sustainable livelihood and improve their quality of life.

Aradhaga stands out for its deep connection with its beneficiaries. It's a relationship that transcends the technicalities of social entrepreneurship, providing the project with meaning and depth. We aim to help our beneficiaries in becoming economically independent and educated by conducting various awareness sessions about the importance of mental health, financial literacy, menstrual hygiene and many more.

We organise cloth donation drives around our campus area to collect retired clothes, from this material our beneficiaries use their proficiency and expertise to transform each material into something new and sustainable. Every product designed is filled with thousands of untold stories that are woven along with each thread that is used. Our major customer base focuses on the younger generation, the Gen-Z audience as the world is saying, and our products reach them through college fests, online sites and instagram dms.

Our harmonious team of skilled women entrepreneurs, residing in Chattarpur, craft high-quality products like tote bags, scrunchies, potlis, rakhis, pouches, and many more, transforming textile waste into fashionable products that resonate with hearts and sustainability. We also provide customisation facilities in our products to articulate your style through personalised prints. Whether it's a cherished pattern, quote, or motif; these totes serve as a canvas, enabling you to depict and share your personal narrative with the world. It's a subtle way to infuse your everyday accessories with a touch of individuality.

Moving forward, we will also be introducing new and improved products like laptop sleeves, coasters, bookmarks and many more to expand our upcycled product line. By incorporating different new designing techniques to make the process highly sustainable, we aim to reuse the flowers that are discarded after one time use to extract the natural dye out of them and utilise it to create new designs in our product line. We will also incorporate the sun printing method to avoid the harmful microplastic particles present in printing dyes.

Alongside sustainability, Aradhaga also recognises the vital role of skill enhancement and growth in every human being's life. With this in mind, we plan to dive into newer and more creative avenues to expand this venture and create an opportunity for our beneficiaries to reach one step closer to their fullest potential. In order to fulfill this, we plan to set up skill enhancement training sessions to make our beneficiaries familiar with the art of crocheting, advanced stitching, etc. Our goal is to not only improve the financial situation of our beneficiaries but also prioritise their personal well-being. To achieve this, we organise various mental health awareness sessions in addition to other initiatives. Additionally, we are keen on establishing a self-help group to further support their holistic development. This comprehensive approach underscores our commitment to fostering a well-rounded development among our beneficiaries.

OUR TEAM OF SKILLED WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS, RESIDING IN CHATTARPUR, CRAFT HIGH-QUALITY PRODUCTS LIKE TOTE BAGS, SCRUNCHIES, POTLIS, AND MANY MORE, TRANSFORMING TEXTILE WASTE INTO FASHIONABLE PRODUCTS THAT RESONATE WITH HEARTS AND SUSTAINABILITY.

Our team's consistent hard work and the unwavering commitment of making an impact, resulted in

Aradhaga being honoured as the winners of the prestigious Walmart Women's Empowerment Grant in 2014. This recognition served as a testament to our team's dedication and commitment to empowering women and creating a positive impact on their lives. With the support of this grant, we continued our mission of driving transformative change and fostering entrepreneurship among women, making a significant difference in the communities we serve.

Project Aradhaga proudly aligns with two critical United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): SDG 5 - Gender equality and SDG 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth. Aradhaga's commitment to advancing gender equality and promoting economic growth serves as an inspiration towards building a more just and prosperous society.

Aradhaga stands as a dedicated initiative centered on women's empowerment, playing a pivotal role

in fostering their journey towards financial autonomy. Operating within the heart of Chattarpur, our project engages beneficiaries who craft exquisite tote bags infused with unwavering passion. Beyond the stitches and seams, our initiative weaves dreams of economic self-sufficiency for these women. With every tote bag, we contribute to their journey of empowerment while embarking on a collective voyage towards a greener and more sustainable world.

Aradhaga's Tote Bags

Aradhaga Tote bags, a fusion of style and sustainability, stand as the cornerstone of our collection. Each tote bag is carefully handcrafted by our women beneficiaries with love and care. These bags will not only add style to your daily outfits but they will also help the planet live a little longer. We also provide customisation facilities in our tote bags to articulate your style through personalised prints. Whether it's a cherished pattern, quote, or motif, these totes transform into a canvas for your distinctive taste. It's a subtle way to infuse your everyday accessories with a touch of individuality. So, whether you're on errands or enjoying a leisurely stroll, choose an Aradhaga Tote bag because it not only gives you a chic and sophisticated vibe but also reflects your dedication to environmental consciousness.

Aradhaga's Scrunchies

Aradhaga's Satin Scrunchies fuse comfort with practicality, boasting a silky-smooth texture that gracefully secures your hair while minimising breakage and frizz. Crafted by our talented community of beneficiaries,these scrunchies effortlessly complement any outfit, preserving hairstyles and preventing creases. In a commitment to both style and eco-friendliness, these vibrant accessories will look good on your hair as well as on your wrist. These scrunchies are a super convenient addition to your everyday style and will look prettier than your normal, non-sustainable hair tie.

Aradhaga's Rakhis

Aradhaga's Rakhis, meticulously crafted with care, sustainability in mind, seamlessly blend tradition with love. Explore a diverse range of eco-friendly designs, each capturing the essence of tradition, weaving a special touch into your festive celebrations, as skilled hands of our women beneficiaries add a heartfelt touch to every stitch. Choosing Aradhaga Rakhis not only makes your special bond more beautiful but also helps support a greener future through sustainable choices.

ARADHAGA POTLIS STAND OUT AS A VIBRANT AND RENEWABLE ADDITION. AVAILABLE IN A RICH SPECTRUM OF COLOURS, THESE EXQUISITE POTLIS, STITCHED WITH CARE BY OUR RESILIENT WOMEN BENEFICIARIES, SERVE AS A STYLISH AND VERSATILE ACCESSORY.

Aradhaga's Potlis

Recently launched, Aradhaga Potlis stand out as a vibrant and renewable addition to enhance your gifting and special occasions. Available in a rich spectrum of colours, these exquisite Potlis, stitched with care by our resilient women beneficiaries, serve as a stylish and versatile accessory. Ideal for gifting to your loved ones or as a chic addition to your ensemble, Aradhaga Potlis seamlessly blends elegance with contemporary flair, ensuring every moment is uniquely special.

Aradhaga's Pouches

More than just accessories, they embody empowerment. Crafted by skilled women beneficiaries, each pouch carries a touch of creativity. These pouches are not just for storing things; they become your everyday companions, adding a special touch of elegance and a sprinkle of heartfelt warmth to your daily life. Elevate your storage game by carrying the items with ease and making a positive impact by embracing style with sustainability. We

IN-LAWS/OUTLAWS

HER FAVOURITE SIL

My mother-in-law showed very stark favouritism in treating her daughters-in-law. While my sister-in-law won her affection, I was mostly kept out of the loop. My sister-in-law was also a homemaker and spent more time with my mother-in-law. They used to go on shopping trips and didn't even bother inviting me. I had a job on the other hand, which she didn't like as she believed that I should be home cooking for my husband.

Then, I got pregnant with our first child. I was still going to work despite the morning sickness and tiredness. Yet, my mother-in-law never bothered to offer her help. Then, my sister-in-law also got pregnant three months later. She moved in with my mother-in-law until her delivery. My husband and I had to hire a maid for help. Still, my mother-in-law remained unhelpful. One day when we dropped by her house after work, my sister-in-law went on praising my mother-in-law for taking care of her and making her healthy, nutritious food. She was being spoiled. I left immediately as I felt bad about not being treated the same. My mother thankfully came and stayed with me to take care of me, and I gave birth to a beautiful, healthy boy.

– Disha Pant

MINI VACATIONS

My husband has to travel once every few months for work trips, when he has to go away for days on end. My in-laws stay a three-hour drive away from our house. During my husband's first work trip, I was worried about staying alone in the house for so many days. I was still getting used to married life. My in-laws invited me over to stay with them until he comes back. I happily agreed and got to spend a lovely time getting close to my in-laws. They were very gentle people but also very funny.

Eventually, unless I have some work, I go stay with them whenever my husband is out on work trips. We started going on mini-vacations too. We would just take the car and drive to a destination. We went to many tourist spots. Once, we booked ourselves into a resort and got ourselves a spa weekend. It is always so nice to find such nice people as family. They have become my friends and we share everything with each other. My husband is a little jealous of us to be honest.

– Roohi Agarwal

LYING IN-LAWS

My in-laws were very good at lying and they lied so much to sabotage my relationship with my husband. At times, I wonder how much one person can lie. I have always been a kind daughter-in-law to them, but they never treated me with the same kindness.

Although, on the outside, they seemed like the perfect in-laws. Everyone thought that I was lucky to be married into such a nice family. But the reality was far from perfect. From day one, I realised that something wasn't right. Before we got married, my husband told me how his mother tried to dissuade him from proposing to me as she got word from someone that I was seen out with a boy. It was funny because the time she mentioned it, I was actually not even in the country. Then, even after we got married, she kept lying about things. For instance, she again lied to my husband that she saw me out in the mall with a man, who I was hugging very much.

A week before our anniversary, we received a frantic call from my mother-in-law, saying that my father was taken in for an emergency surgery for appendicitis. We were all worried and my husband decided to go visit them. He reached right around the time my in-laws were leaving the hospital after the surgery. He stayed with them for the whole week, and we ended up spending our anniversary apart. I had work so I couldn't accompany him. Later, I found out that my in-laws tried to make it into a big deal that I didn't visit them. It was just annoying how much they were trying to sabotage our marriage despite it being years.

A few years later, my father was admitted to the hospital again for severe stomach pain. My husband and I were with him then. The doctor said that my father-in-law had appendicitis! We were shocked. How could it be as he got his appendix removed years ago when he first claimed he had appendicitis? That is when we realised that the first time was a lie by my in-laws to make my husband visit them during our anniversary. It was their effort to assert their power over him. Since then, even my husband wanted to distance himself from them.

–Devika

HOW I FELL FIRST

When my in-laws and future husband came to see me for the first time, I wore a saree to impress them. I was still not very comfortable wearing sarees and found them troublesome. On top of it, I was wearing heels. It was a recipe for disaster. As I entered our living room with a tray of tea and snacks, I could feel my legs shaking. But I tried to maintain my balance and bent down to serve tea to everyone. My future husband was smiling at me and I found him so cute. My father-in-law was sitting beside him and as I was standing straight back up, my attention drifted to my future husband's dreamy smile and I accidently tripped and fell. Fell right onto my father-in-law! He caught me thankfully and helped me get back up. I felt so awkward. Everyone asked me if I was okay and a second later, they burst into laughter. It was hilarious but I was so embarrassed.

I couldn't look into my father-in-law's eyes for months! My husband still teases me for it and says how their entire family fell for me.

–Ruhi Jaiswal

Diminishing Role of Higher Education in India

Fetching knowledge from different sources.

By Riti Paliwal

As the world is ever-growing and expanding, in terms of fetching knowledge from different sources, traditional higher education institutions are struggling to keep up. The job market in today's time and age is looking for a new set of skills that is not prioritised by the universities. In this article, we will talk about why universities are increasingly becoming irrelevant.

For generations, a university was the main aim for many students and their parents. After getting through the stiff competition, students get into these top-notch universities with the ambition of rousting their career path. Also, the degrees that were attained from these big universities paved the way for getting a well-paid job. But in the recent trend, the number of applications decreasing for universities across the country signals some major changes.

Year after year, the bulk of fresh graduates complete their graduation armed with three to four years of education and a bachelor's degree in the search for secure and suitable jobs in the country. Yet many of these graduates do not manage to get a secure and reputed job in their chosen fields. And often they end up living and doing anything available. Lost and forgotten in their pursuit thinking what exactly went wrong even though these students had great grades in school and college? They completed their studies in university and still in the world of skills they seem to be worthless. Let us find out why universities are colleges are termed as irrelevant these days.

Evolving Landscape

Earlier it was believed, that getting a college degree was enough to get well-paying jobs with great benefits. But that is not the scenario now, the job market is evolving and the skills that every employer seeks are changing quickly. With the new technologies, the job market is becoming more competitive than ever before. Employers today are searching for people who can offer a different set of skills that can benefit them and stand out from the crowd. This means that the regular model of higher education may no longer need to be enough to fetch a job in today's market.

Automation and AI

One of the major reasons behind higher education becoming irrelevant is the rise of automation and Artificial Intelligence. Many jobs that require a college degree can now be automated and many others are on the brink of getting replaced by AI. Because of this employers are looking for candidates who possess skills that cannot be easily automated. These skills are logical thinking, critical evaluation, creativity, and emotional intelligence. These skills are not important in the workplace but they are also important for personal growth and development.

MANY JOBS THAT REQUIRE A COLLEGE DEGREE CAN NOW BE AUTOMATED AND MANY OTHERS ARE ON THE BRINK OF GETTING REPLACED BY ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE. BECAUSE OF THIS EMPLOYERS ARE LOOKING FOR CANDIDATES WHO POSSESS SKILLS THAT CANNOT BE EASILY AUTOMATED.

Evolution by Online Learning Platforms

Online learning platforms like Udemy, Unacademy, and Byjus offer students the ability to study the academics and applications of the real world in a cost-effective spectrum. These platforms have brought a revolution in the education sector by making it more accessible and affordable for everyone. Abhishek Gupta, a student from B.tech in IT says that universities and colleges are limited to theoretical knowledge. Colleges and universities are wasting his time. He would prefer a skill-based,

less theoretical programme to get into the workforce quickly. With the assistance of online learning students can learn at their own pace and on their schedule. Apart from online learning platforms, there are Massive Open Online Courses, or MOOCs, that offer thousands of courses for free. These courses are imparted by top professors and experts in their fields and are made to be accessible to anyone and everyone with an internet connection. MOOCs are a great way to explore newer topics and gain new skills without the commitment required in a traditional degree programme.

Boot Camps and Skill-Based Training Programs

Boot camps and Skill-based training programs offer students a quick path toward acquiring skills that are required by employers. These programs are usually shorter and more affordable than regular degrees. These programs focus on practical skills that have direct applications in the workplace. Also, the best part is that the skill-based training programs are available in a wide range of fields, including software development, data analysis, and digital marketing. The key benefits of programs are that they are designed to be highly focused and intensive. Students get the opportunity for wider range of skill learning and gain practical knowledge in their respective fields.

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES ARE USUALLY SLOW IN ADAPTING TO THE CHANGING MARKET. AND AS IT COMES UNDER THE DIRECT JURISDICTION OF THE LEGISLATURE IT TAKES A LOT OF TIME FROM THE GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS PART. HOWEVER, THERE IS ALSO A LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THE JOB MARKET REQUIRES.

No connection between Academics and Industry

The major reason behind the emergence of alternative education models are disconnection between academics and industry standards. Colleges and universities are usually slow in adapting to the changing market. And as it comes under the direct jurisdiction of the legislature it takes a lot of time from the government institutions part. However, there is also a lack of understanding of what the job market requires. Many universities are still teaching outdated skills and knowledge that are no longer relevant in today's ever-changing world. Neeraj Mehta who is a 12th pass out pursuing Graphic Designing from a reputed online platform says that the course is not enough to get a well-reputed job in the market. He is also preparing for SSC exams simultaneously with his online programme.

Also, they purely focus on research and theory; industries prioritise practical knowledge and skills. This major difference in priorities can lead to a gap in the type of education that students receive and the skills that employers want. According to Reshma Chauhan an aspiring Digital Marketer, university education is outdated and does not resonate with the employer's demands in the market.

But if you start investing in brushing on your skills by doing internships, it would add an extra skill set to your profile.

Final Takeaway

There are various reasons why behind curriculum in many higher education institutions in India is outdated. One of the main reasons is that the government does not take any initiative in funding for curriculum development. Also, the faculty members are not trained in various universities, the curriculum has several bad consequences for students.

Also, the students may not be able to get the necessary skills and knowledge they require to succeed in the job market. Therefore, students are countering this gap by learning and fetching the right skills from online platforms that too at an affordable cost. Addressing and acknowledging these issues is important for the inclusive transformation of the Indian higher education landscape.

By improving research opportunities, ensuring quality education, and enhancing employability skills, India can bring a robust and equitable higher education system. It is crucial to tackle these challenges together to pave the way for a brighter future. We

House of beautiful printing

DELHI PRESS

Offers printing and finishing of...

- Text Books
- Coffee Table Books
- Magazines
- Balance Sheets
- Novels
- Presentation
- Folders
- Diaries
- Calenders
- Directories
- Publicity Posters
- Newsletters
- Leaflets
- Catalogues
- Brochures
- Any Special Printed Fabrication.

We offer the best combination of price, quality & service.

Call to discuss a quote

DELHI PRESS (Since 1938)

E-3 Jhandewala Estate,
Rani Jhansi Road, New Delhi-110055

WhatsApp|Call|Sms: **9810160122**

info@DelhiPressCo.com

Sexual Frequency

Understanding the optimal frequency of sexual activity.

By Purnima Atul Goyal

This question is very exciting. According to religious scholars, humans should have sex only for reproduction; it should not be a means of play, joy, or entertainment because the sexual discharge (sperm and ovum) produced during sexual intercourse is a boon given by the gods.

According to religious texts, sexual fluid contains immense power and energy, which should be conserved and spent wisely.

Logicians argue that no matter how much sex a human being has, it is not harmful because nature has made creatures suitable for reproduction in large quantities. In ancient times, to increase the quality and quantity of the population, superior men were constantly employed to impregnate women. Exemptions were given in cases of polygamy, multiple wives of the king, and extramarital affairs. It is clear from these things that some people in society were employed only in the work of population growth and there was no side effect of it. All living beings mate without any limit; nature determines the number of children they have.

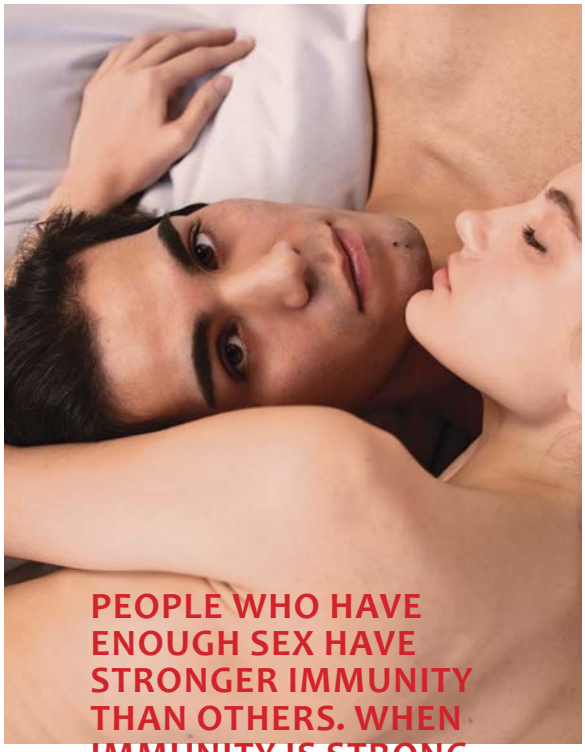
Osho said we should have sex excessively, all the time, and in every way because the desire for pleasure ends only when it is fully enjoyed and satisfied.

Both elements of creation and destruction are present in the universe. Creation does not happen as fast as destruction; hence, the rate of reproduction of organisms is very high. When an organism has a favourable climate, its population increases very rapidly, be it mosquitoes in the rain, insects crawling on the ground, or fish in a pond.

The habit of food, reproduction, and self-defence is innate in humans and all living beings. All living beings in the world earn their living only by consuming and reproducing. Man is the only creature who thinks about progress and develops by saving time from enjoyment and sex.

Man is not the creature that was created by God; he has achieved immense change and progress physically and intellectually, and the reason for this is rules and restraint.

Man has used his power and time not only to increase the population but also to create prosperity and convenience, but it has also led to lifestyle-based diseases and problems in man.



PEOPLE WHO HAVE ENOUGH SEX HAVE STRONGER IMMUNITY THAN OTHERS. WHEN IMMUNITY IS STRONG, PEOPLE DO NOT FALL ILL QUICKLY. THE PERSON'S BODY ALSO GETS READY TO FIGHT BACTERIA, VIRUSES, AND GERMS. WHEREAS PEOPLE WHO HAVE SEX ONCE A WEEK HAVE VERY LITTLE IGA. IGA IS AN ANTIBODY THAT CAN HELP PREVENT DISEASES.

It is said about Dhritarashtra that he was blind and of no use; hence he only had sex day and night and gave birth to 100 children. It is said about Vivekananda that he did not ejaculated his semen while observing strict celibacy, due to which he suffered from indigestion. It has been claimed in the book *The Monk as Man* that Swami Vivekananda was suffering from 31 diseases, including insomnia, malaria, migraine, liver, diabetes, kidney, and heart. The author says that the reason for Swami Vivekananda's death at an early age was his illnesses and celibacy. There are not just one but many benefits of having sex; it is said that sex and good health go together as many researchers have shown that it helps in getting a slimmer waist, reducing the risk of breast and prostate cancer, reducing depression, and helping in keeping the heart healthy.

It has been scientifically proven that excessive procreation may cause physical harm to men and women, but any safe sex done for entertainment poses no risk to anyone.

Regarding more sex, sexologist Dr. Mamta Gandhi says that it depends on the two partners whether they have less or more sex. Also, it is difficult to tell what too much sex is. Still, excess sex can hurt life. While having more sex reduces the risk of heart disease, having more sex can lead to many problems.

Benefits of Sex

According to the American Sexual Health Association, having sex is important for physical and mental health. Having sex provides physical and mental satisfaction. Besides, many health problems can also be prevented. The benefits of having more sex are as follows:

People who have enough sex have stronger immunity than others. When immunity is strong, people do not fall ill quickly. The person's body also gets ready to fight bacteria, viruses, and germs. According to sexologist Dr. Swati, people who have sex twice a week have more immunoglobulin A (IGA) in their saliva. Whereas people who have sex once a week have very little IGA. IGA is an antibody that can help prevent diseases. Sex is considered an important part of life. Just as food is needed for physical energy, sex is also necessary. To keep a special relationship strong, it is considered necessary to have sexual relations.

Having sex allows you to connect with that person physically and emotionally.

Sex provides relief from pain; sex relieves fatigue and also reduces stress levels. More sex can help reduce pain in any part of the body. Sex can give us relief from back and leg pain. Apart from this, having sex can also provide relief to women from stomach aches and cramps during menstruation. Sex can also help reduce the pain caused by arthritis.

Having sex can provide complete relief from migraine and cluster headaches. This research was done at Laxmibai Medical College; this study proved that sex improved the migraine of 60 per cent of people. Some people also saw a reduction in cluster headache symptoms.

Sex can also be considered a good workout because having sex reduces your stress and relaxes the body. Along with this, having sex can help in burning about 5 calories per minute. Sex is good for heart health. Therefore, it is also called heart exercise.

Having enough sex can also prove to be good for blood pressure patients. Some research has proved that having sex can reduce systolic blood pressure. Having enough sex keeps blood pressure under control. Along with this, having more sex can also help in reducing the risk of heart disease and stroke. Having sex improves heart health.

Having sex can also help keep hormones balanced. People who have enough sex have balanced levels of oestrogen and testosterone hormones. This can also help in increasing heart rate. After sex, prolactin hormone is released, which helps in good sleep. If you have sex at night, it can help you get good sleep. Having sex reduces stress and gives good sleep.

People who are active in sex life have to face less stress than others. Having sex releases feel-good hormones in the body. This reduces your stress, and you feel good. Having sex can increase a person's happiness and keep him stress-free.

HAVING SEX CAN ALSO HELP KEEP HORMONES BALANCED. PEOPLE WHO HAVE ENOUGH SEX HAVE BALANCED LEVELS OF HORMONES. THIS CAN ALSO HELP IN INCREASING HEART RATE. AFTER SEX, PROLACTIN HORMONE IS RELEASED, WHICH HELPS IN GOOD SLEEP.

You will be surprised to know that sex reduces the risk of prostate cancer. Research has shown that men who ejaculate at least 21 times a month are less likely to develop prostate cancer than other men. But it may be a little difficult to say that this happens only through sex because ejaculation can also be done through masturbation.

Disadvantages of Sex

Newly married couples have sex every day and even several times a day, which often leads to a problem called honeymoon syndrome. In this disease, wounds are formed on the inner and outer skin of the clitoris due to friction.

Just as having more sex provides many benefits to the body, similarly, when sex is done daily or more, it can also harm health. Sex is a physical need of every human being.

There is no harm in having sex once or twice a week, but some people like to have sex more than twice a week.

On one hand, having more sex reduces your stress and gives you good sleep. Besides, the risk of heart disease is also reduced. At the same time, when you have excessive sex, you may have to face some side effects. Therefore, you should always have sex keeping your health in mind. Sexual activity can completely affect the body from head to toe. The disadvantages of having too much sex are as follows:

- Having excessive and unprotected sex increases the chances of contracting a sexually transmitted infection (STD). Having too much sex can also increase the risk of unwanted pregnancy. Women may feel pressure on the vagina due to excessive sex.
- Having too much sex can increase the heart rate and breathing rates of both men and women. You can get tired when you have too much sex. Due to fatigue, you may face difficulty in doing other work.
- Having too much sex increases blood circulation a lot. When blood flow increases, the penis may swell. Excessive sex can also

cause muscle tension. Due to this, you may feel pain and cramps in some parts of the body.

- Having too much sex can cause excess fluid to come out of the body. This may make you feel weak and tired.
- Due to excessive sex, a woman may feel dryness in the vagina. This may cause pain while having sex.

Minimum and Sufficient Time for Sex

If you still have doubts about how much and for how long a married couple should have sex, then the research of Professor Neha Anand of the Department of Social Work, Allahabad University can be beneficial for you. Professor Neha analysed the sex habits of couples of different ages, and details of most people's behaviour are given here; thus, we can consider it a "Public Opinion Poll" and make decisions accordingly.

In general, every married and active couple continues to have sex between the ages of 18 and 50. The entire population copulates about 1.5 times a year. In this analysis, couples were divided into age groups – 18-30, 30-40, 40-50, and above 50.

Between 18-30 years of age: Most of the youth in this age group have high feelings about sex. The study found that a couple in this age group has sex or masturbates an average of 199 times a year. Accordingly, they have sex 16.6 times a month and 4.12 times a week. When we are young, our sexual sensibilities are at their peak, and we get involved in sex out of curiosity. It is said that one should not stop it; it is beneficial for both health and mind in every way.

Between 30 and 40: This period of age is also very special from the point of view of sex life. However, during this period, one gains experience but also increases responsibilities. At this age, marriage and children come into the lives of most couples, and due to this, there is a shortage of time. Due to a lack of time for sex, people have less sex. According to research, a person in this age group has sex on average 90 times a year.

MOST OF THE YOUTH IN THIS AGE GROUP HAVE HIGH FEELINGS ABOUT SEX. THE STUDY FOUND THAT A COUPLE IN THIS AGE GROUP HAS SEX OR MASTURBATES AN AVERAGE OF 199 TIMES A YEAR. WHEN WE ARE YOUNG, OUR SEXUAL SENSIBILITIES ARE AT THEIR PEAK, AND WE GET INVOLVED IN SEX OUT OF CURIOSITY.

Between 40-50: We should not forget that sex brings positivity to our lives. This strengthens mutual relationships. Many changes occur in health after the age of 40. During this period, many physical problems may occur, ranging from fatigue to body pain. At the age of 40 to 50, physical ability may be less, but the desire for sex is the highest. According to the study, a person in this age group has sex on average 55 times a year.

More than 50: This age was not used to calculate the average, but even at this age, most people remain sexually active. The potential that we had at the age of 20 is no longer there, but this does not mean that we should not think about sex at this age. For elderly people, sex is as important as walking in the morning. It is also true that love has no age limit; a physical relationship is also necessary for an emotional connection in love.

According to sexologist Dr. Manoranjan, every person should have sex twice a week, whether it is masturbation or oral. The stimulation received during sex is very important for the health of the heart and brain.

According to Anjali (Home Science student), sex is not only penetration; sexually active women get orgasms not only from intercourse but also from their partner touching them, lovingly caressing their hair, or hugging them. It also gives them pleasure. A kiss can also help them achieve sexual satisfaction.

From the above analysis, we can say that a healthy and alive human being must get sexual stimulation once every three days; it is very important for his health. Single people should not hesitate in masturbation, while elderly people should resort to touch and oral sex instead of penetration. We

Short Story

Maidless Misadventures

Chronicles of Domestic Chaos. By Renuka Mohan

I got married in 2013 and came to Bangalore as my husband was working here in a corporate house. My marriage was a dramatic one. We were invited for dinner as my father's friend was celebrating his silver jubilee. There was a well-dressed person whom he introduced as his nephew from Bangalore, who was working with a corporate office. Moreover, my uncle told my father that he is alone. He was the only son of his parents who met with an accident two years back. He was studying at that time. But he kept a brave face, completed his studies, and got a very good job. Now he is planning to get married. The next day, both the elders talked, and we were sent to spend some

time and decide if we would like to be companions. We found many things in common and gave our consent. Within three days, everything was done. Anirudh was to start some new venture of the company, and he was not to get leave in the coming four months. So, I came here to start my new life.

Since that time Savitri has been with me. She was not only a maid but also taking care like an elderly person in the house. Her husband was working as a security guard in the same society. I also got a job but was not worried as Savitri was managing everything properly. When my daughter was born, my mother came for a month only. It was Savitri all the time with me, and the same at the time of my son; everything she managed. Now my son is two and a half, and my daughter is going to be seven. Life was going on smoothly. I never thought about any problem. But stars move on their path and change everything. Savitri's father-in-law expired, and now they were to take care of their agricultural land in the village. Now, I was facing the big problem of getting a maid.

For the last eighteen days, I was taking care of the kids and home. Husband is in a corporate office with no time to come and go. So, I have to do everything myself, going to the market, purchasing fresh vegetables, ordering or bringing groceries. I couldn't order food from outside as my daughter has just recovered from Jaundice. These days made me realise that no matter how hard the office work may be, it is still easier than this domestic work. Now I realise how much work my maid was doing as I always found the wardrobes all set, everything neat and clean, delicious food on the table, and by just having an inspection round of the kitchen, my duty was over. Spending some happy time with family was the most satisfactory time to get good sleep and to freshen up for the next day's schedule, with breakfast on the table, tiffins, kids' school bags, and car keys in our hand and still finding some faults.

I was trying my best to maintain wardrobes, set the kitchen properly, and keep the house as it used to be with Savitri's help. Although I was putting all my efforts, they were still not sufficient to manage. All vegetables and groceries were laying on the dining table. The wardrobe got upset when I took one cloth out of it, leaving it to be maintained later but it was never possible. Being considered a very hardworking and efficient worker at the office, being bedecked with special awards for my management skills was no good for me at home.

The privileged round of the kitchen turned into a whole-time project. Quality time with family was a total miss. By the time I was free from the kitchen, all were asleep. Every time I pray, I pray for a maid like Savitri. Home was becoming a mess, office work was suffering, social life was nowhere. I would have given anything to get a suitable maid.

Just by sending kids to school and husband to office, I was exhausted and decided to have a cup of tea. I had hardly finished tea when I got a call from Mrs. Sharna to convey my heartfelt wish for a maid. She was coming in fifteen minutes with the maid. I got up and tucked all the scattered clothes from the drawing room to our bedroom. I was feeling light as a feather. It seems loads of weight were taken away from my head.

My efforts were still not sufficient to manage. All vegetables and groceries were laying on the dining table. The wardrobe got upset when I took one cloth out of it, leaving it to be maintained later but it was never possible. Being considered a very hardworking and efficient worker bedecked with special awards for my management skills was no good for me at home.

The doorbell after some time was the most melodious and musical sound for me, which stirred the violin of my heart. A good-looking slender girl about nineteen or twenty with a nicely tied Sari accompanied Mrs. Sharma. I was introduced to her, and she to me as Maya from Nepal. I checked her identity credentials, inquired about her background, previous experience, and many other things to satisfy myself. Salary was settled, work was explained. Just for my masterly satisfaction, I asked her – Will she be able to manage everything?

Her one sentence shook me badly. She said, "Madam ji, I will manage your house as you will hand it over to me." One quick glance around the kitchen and everywhere mocked me and told me you can't hand over your house in this way to get it the same every day. I thought for a moment and asked her to join from Monday.

A gossip session with Mrs. Sharna was a joyful time for me as I got the full information about every member and every activity of the society. But today I was wishing her to leave as my mind was planning how to manage everything in two days. Meanwhile, I was watching the activities of Maya. My son was enjoying her company. This was a satisfying point.

They left after having a cup of tea. I looked at every corner of my house and decided to start from the kids' room. The first thing I did was to set the wardrobe of kids, putting everything at the proper place, daughter's school day's hanky, her undergarments and socks in a box, her uniform on one side and to change at home clothes on the other side, cleaning and making their bed with a nice cartoon character's bed sheet and bed cover, hanging the wet towels on the stand, and arranging the shoe rack. After doing that much, I

gave a look at the room and was happy at my achievement. I appreciated myself. Looking at the clock reminded me that it was time for my daughter to come back from school. No energy was left to cook food. We have to be satisfied with bread, jam, and juice.

After an hour's rest, I started with our bedroom, which took me two hours to set everything, then the guest room, which was in better condition and then came the turn of the maid's room, which I was using as a dump room. By this time, the husband was back with the demand for snacks, daughter's repeated calls to help her with her homework, and little master's cries for no reason were giving me the feelings of bedlam. By this time, I was out of breath, and all had to be satisfied with Dal and Chawal.

By now all were awake. The husband wanted tea and kids' milk and biscuits. What I wanted was out of syllabus. I was sitting with the family sipping tea only physically. My thoughts were in the kitchen. What shortcuts for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Dinner I decided to order from outside and to make something light for my daughter.

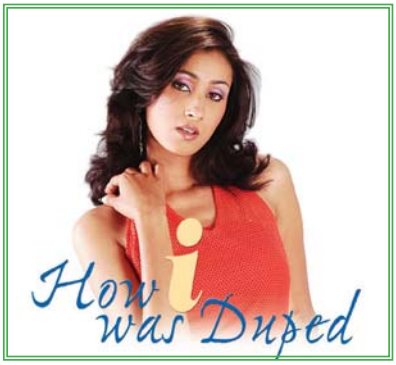
Sunday breakfast time used to be the most enjoyable time as Savitri prepared what everyone wanted to have. But today they were forced to satisfy themselves with bread and omelette. Finishing breakfast, I started setting and checking all utensils to ensure they were clean. I found two coffee mugs, three cups, not properly washed, one serving tray left with juice stains, a frying pan needing more scrubbing, a milk pot having cream sticking on one side. I cleaned them all and arranged them properly. Somehow, lunch was served, which they ate half-heartedly.

Helpless after lunch, I threw myself on the bed. In the evening, I started with the cleaning of the fridge. Wrapping all vegetables in the wrapping net, I placed them properly, emptying all packets into containers, discarding many old unnecessary things from the kitchen stand. Now, I was repenting why I was not wise enough to wrap up the groceries and vegetables when they were delivered or brought. My being at home made me lazy and lackadaisical.

I concluded that if I had been out of feeling at home, arranged things side by side, and bothered to maintain as Savitri had left it, such a mess could have been avoided.

Such problems keep on arising when we are working women and have to depend upon a domestic helper. Whenever such problems arise, don't be quiescent, languor, inert, or sluggish. In such a condition, treat your office table as home and all works as your office files which won you the awards for best organiser. Then you will not have to miss the precious time with your family.

It was going to be eleven pm. All were asleep. I gave a last round in all rooms and the kitchen and satisfied, went to bed with great contentment, one of getting a fresh home every day, and secondly, I have not to worry about many things. We



WORRIED PARENTS

I had been living in another city for my job for almost five years then. I am an independent artist so my income is a bit uncertain but I manage pretty well on my own. If in case I run out of money or need emergency funds, my parents help me out since they are well off.

Once my parents called me worried asking if I was alright. I said yes and my mother started crying. Apparently, someone called them and told them that I had met with an accident and needed an emergency surgery. The caller claimed to be a stranger who found me on the road and took me to the hospital. Then the caller said that he found my parents' number in my wallet. He said that the hospital was asking to deposit a security amount of 17,000 for the surgery. They even talked to a 'doctor' who explained what was wrong with me in complete medical terms. Believing them, they transferred the money to the hospital's account. But since then, they haven't heard back and the number is switched off. They searched the truecaller and the hospital's number turned out to be under some random person's name. They suspected foul play but by then it was too late.

– Smitha Mehta

THE LOUSY PLUMBER

I had a plumber who would work at my neighbourhood very regularly. When I moved into a house in that neighbourhood, I decided to call him for a broken pipe. He did a good job at first. But then a few months later, the pipe broke again. He said that he could change the pipes and get the best quality ones if I paid him the money. I decided to go with it. He took the money and installed a new pipe. It was always a hassle whenever he worked. Later, a few weeks later, I realised that the walls were getting damp again. I contacted him and he made up more excuses. He came to check and said that the leak is actually from another pipe. He fixed it too. I was so pissed at the first guy. He was not doing his job properly. The new plumber said that the new pipes that were installed were actually of low quality and the first guy definitely asked me for way more money. I made sure that all my neighbours knew what a lousy plumber he was.

– Ritika Shivaram

Yes! I would like to subscribe to Woman's era

Please Tick (✓) box applicable

☐ **1 Year Woman's Era** ₹1200

☐ **2 Year Woman's Era Delivery Via Registered Post** ₹2400

Free Digital Subscriptions For 2 Years And 2 Extra Print Issues

Book my Subscriptions Now!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Pin _____ Phone _____

Cheque/D.D. No. _____

Drawn on (Bank/Branch) _____

Amount 1200 / 2400 in favour of

Delhi Printing & Publishing Co. Pvt.Ltd.

Mail with payment to:

Delhi Printing & Publishing Co. Pvt.Ltd., E-3 Jhandewala Estate, New Delhi-110055

Call: 9810160122 | info@DelhiPressco.Com

AS YOU SAY

REKINDLING PASSION

In the February issue of your esteemed magazine, the article *Lips, Tips, and Tricks* proved to be a delightful and enlightening read. The author, Purnima, deserves commendation for her thoughtful and provocative approach to a topic that is often shrouded in silence and stigma.

The article's strength lies in its ability to resonate with readers on a deeply personal level. My husband and I, having been married for ten years, found ourselves engrossed in the content, revisiting it multiple times. It's rare for a piece of writing to have such an immediate and profound impact on one's intimate life, but this article managed to rekindle a spark that had dimmed in our relationship. After reading it, we experienced a renewed sense of connection and intimacy, reminding us of the importance of maintaining a healthy and active sexual relationship.

Additionally, incorporating expert opinions or scientific research might lend more credibility and depth to the discussion.

–Saloni Gupta

THE INAUGURATION OF RAM MANDIR

Apropos the editorial in WE--February 2024 about Ram Mandir inauguration, it could happen on account of Prime Minister Narendra Modi embarking on a dedicated unwavering journey showing utmost restraint in waiting for the judicial verdict to reclaim the sacred site which finally ending in a triumph after meticulous efforts thereby heralding the symbolic victory of faith. In fact, temple inauguration on 22nd of January was proof that prompted Modi to call the event a divine moment and rightly asked the Hindus to celebrate a second Diwali. In short, the same is specifically associated with Ramachandra, the seventh incarnation of Vishnu. Finally, with history been set right by the construction of a grand Ram Temple with Ram Lalla, an iconic replica of ancient culture of Bharat installed, India only expects to see better days of peace and tranquillity even as inauguration of the temple considered to be one of the most watched events in India and across the world thus signalled both a wish fulfilled for Hindus and a tourism bonanza for all.

–R.Srinivasan

THE GRAND PRIVILEGE

Referring to the article, *The Grand Privilege*, by Rama Kashyap, February 2024, Grand children provide an immense pleasure to the grandparents and watching them grow is an amazing experience for them. When they were parents they were so occupied with the routine of life that they hardly had any time to watch intently the milestones of their own kids but having enough time at their disposal, it is blissful joy for them to enjoy the company of their grandchildren. They love playing with them, taking care of them, talking to them, narrating stories to them and they love spending time with them. The grandchildren take away their boredom and they get energised in their company. A natural bond is automatically established between grandchildren and grandparents due to their unconditional love and support of the ever caring grandparents and it is true that they love them more than they love their own children. No complaints, no comparison, a perfect bond on the foundation of love is ultimately created between the grandchildren and grandparents. In a nutshell, the grandchildren prove to be a boon for the grandparents.

–Harinder Kaur

A COMPASSIONATE PERSPECTIVE

Santosh Pattanaik's article *Kindness as the Universal Language* emphasises the importance of kindness in our lives. It highlights how acts of generosity, empathy, and care can alleviate suffering and bring inner joy. The article encourages practicing kindness in all spheres, including self-compassion, to promote mental and physical well-being.

While it effectively champions kindness, a broader exploration of its challenges and benefits in different contexts could enhance its depth. Overall, it's a timely reminder of the transformative power of kindness.

–Karishma S

Woman's era *invites readers' opinions and reactions on articles, short stories and features published in Woman's Era. E-mail to: letters@womansera.com or by post to:*

As you say
Woman's era
E-3 Jhandewala Estate, New Delhi-110055.
Womansera.com

Name:
Mobile:
E-mail:

ZEE LABORATORIES

More Than 5 Crore Satisfied Users

ANTI SCAR & WRINKLES

LIGHTENS DARK PATCHES OF SKIN

BLEMISH FREE SKIN

Cream • Soap • Face Wash

MYFAIR

Improves texture & Brightens Skin

9896134500
9896277535
A Complete Cosmetic Range
Available at all leading chemist stores

Online Shopping:
www.wellncare.com

Scan Code
for Shop Now

Acquire Curated Artworks of
Masters • e-Masters
• Commissioned Works • Sculptures

The Lexicon Art
@Delhi Book Company,
M-12, Connaught Place, New Delhi - 110001
011-41618159 ● 9810160122 ● 9560358880
info@TheLexiconArt.com ● TheLexiconArt@gmail.com

THE LEXICON ART