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WOMENSHINE

**Richa
Anirudh**



WHAT'S TRENDING

Balance Your Elements

ZODIAC

Moon Signs

FASHION

Fashion Brigade













TRAVEL TALES

TASTE BUDS

#WSWHISPERINGTHOUGHTS

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CHIEF EDITOR'S LETTER

#SHINEON

APARNA MISHRA

Founder , Women Shine

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*Let's reach for the sky
Let's win over the world
Let's change the story.....*

Women Shine projects the amazing work being done by Wonderful women in various domains.

She is shining in the glamour world, riding high in Entrepreneurship, touching lives in Social sectors, raising the bar in Corporate World.

She is a Mom, she is a professional, she is an actor, author, artist.

Women Shine salutes the Woman of today who wears and manages multiple hats smoothly.

We present before you a beautiful bouquet of so many inspiring journeys, informative articles, and interesting write-ups.

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#Shineonwomen

See you in the next edition

Balance your earth and water elements for better health.

Hope you had a great Diwali!!!

The human body, just like the entire universe, is made up of five elements earth, water, fire, air, and space. The principal element in the order from gross to subtler is earth. The earth element is responsible for so much construction in our bodies, from hard and dense bones to the softest tissues of the brain, and plays a huge role in our health.

In this season, we need to ensure special care of the earth element. Thus, the first god that we worship at this time, Shree Ganapati, loves modak as prasad, a recipe that is particularly nourishing for the earth element in the body. As part of the Ganesh festival, people go to different trees and flowers and collect them as required for the rituals. The original norms require the devotee to pluck these offerings and perform the rituals themselves. As a result, we end up ensuring contact and absorption of the required qualities from these plants that will help us remain strong through the season. The manner in which we celebrate this festival together, going to one another's homes, promotes the things that need to keep society together, namely sensitivity, empathy, friendship, and community living.

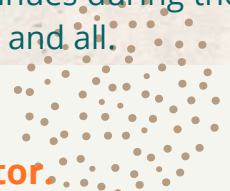
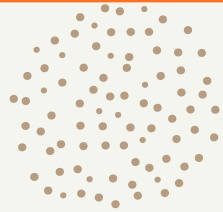
This festival is a useful guard against physical, psychological as well as social, and communication problems. Socially, the displays of arts and design, lectures, music, performances, and skills that are associated with the festival, help people express themselves and become a community. Shree Ganesh is also worshipped by those who desire children.

Next is the water element. Our lack of sensitivity and care towards the water element has resulted in its pollution and disturbance in Nature's cycle. The resultant effects are reflected in the form of extreme floods or droughts on our planet. The visarjan of Ganesh and the period of ancestral obligations make humans more aware and alert of nature and water. The water element mirrors life on the planet, in totality with all the physical traits and the emotional moods.





Yet unlike the mirror which doesn't remember the image it reflects, water keeps a store of the information and events of everything that happens. Water needs to remain pure and full of consciousness, else the pollutants and problems it stores with getting reflected back into the human being. It is part of our responsibility to ensure the purity of this element. Ayurveda advocates always boil the water before drinking, as this does more than just kill bacteria. In fact, gold-cultured water is the minimum most effort to be taken by everyone.



Several medicinal herbs, like in Jala-santulan powder and contact with a little gold during boiling, are highly recommended.

Ayurveda goes further to say that if the water is boiled until one-eighth of its original volume, it functions as a general health medicine.

The development of energy from element to element, chakra to chakra in the body continues during the following few months until Deepawali, a subject that should certainly be explored by one and all.

- The Arbitrary Doctor

Global Music video dots World Bindi Day to celebrate Womenhood



Karmanye Kreations is a US based media conglomerate and an initiative by a few NRIs with an objective dedicated to producing content on the culture and history of Indic civilization has come out with a music video about the importance of the Bindi.

The video featuring Dr Sonal Mansingh, Mata Rajyalaxmi, Malini Awasthi, Aroona Bhatt, Anusha Srinivasan Iyer, Simran Kaur Mundi, Manjari Phadnis, Nyra Bannerjee, Ragini Dwivedi, Anchal Dwivedi, Kainaat Arora, Shibani Kashyap, Nivedita Basu, among others was put recently on the social media during Navratri. The Bindi Song has been sung by Shweta Pandit, Composed by Hriday Gattani with Lyrics by Shivangi Tewari. The video is produced by Karmanye Kreations and Shilpi Shrivastav with Music on Advait Music featuring women from various walks of life.

"The video will give a global appeal to all the women around the world to wear Bindi with pride as a mark of women empowerment. A letter to officially designate a World Bindi Day has been sent to the United Nations by WorldBindiDay.org. World Bindi Day concept was conceived by few NRIs last year, when it was decided that the pious day for this beautiful concept should be the start of Navratri, which emphasizes women empowerment and their importance in the society. Hence the first day of Navratri was formalized as World Bindi Day. To make it a global initiative and spread the word among millions of women around the globe, the idea to compose a music video was conceived by Karmanye Kreations, US. The song and the video were thus made to share with the world the significance of putting up a Bindi as a mark of each woman's pride and a symbol of women empowerment," says Anant Srivastava of Karmanye Creations.

"A new Bindi song will be released next year too. Next year's plan is to reach out to celebrities, social workers, eminent personalities from around the globe to support this initiative and also appear in the video," adds Anant.

"I was attracted to the concept of coming up with a song. The song will show how the Bindi described the Indian woman. It perfectly explains the reason and pride behind wearing the bindi," says Shweta who has sung the number.

"I think a woman's beauty is enhanced by wearing a Bindi. I sometimes wear a Bindi on casual and western wear too. I have noticed it gives me a distinct persona. Other women should try it to see the difference," says **Anchal Dwivedi**.



"I wear bindi as it is part of my Indian culture and tradition and I am truly proud of it. It also activates the third eye - the pituitary gland - which is in the middle of the eyebrows!" says Shibani Kashyap." My Bindi is the essence of existence. Without it I am incomplete. It gives me strength and the power to stand up for right and against wrong. The bindi is the sixth chakra point and my third eye to view the world," elaborates Anusha Srinivasan Iyer.

"The significance of beauty and strength in one bindi ... the essence of womanhood culture and pride. I love to wear it each day with each outfit; it only makes the look better and stronger," opines Ragini Dwivedi.

"My bindi not only enhances my beauty but also reminds me of the divine powers through my third eye. Bindi is the symbol

of my Divya Drishti," says Nyra Banerjee.

Karmanye Kreations is to show the historical aspects of our civilization. Few of the early projects that Karmanye Kreations has undertaken are - Unexplored places of Ayodhya, Kashmir History and History of Indic Civilization and the current effort is an initiative to celebrate various Hindustani Diwas like Bindi Day and Tilak Day and not just international days like Halloween or Valentine's Day.

- Team WS

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WOMEN IN INDIAN ARMED FORCES— SHE IS UNIQUE!

In recent times, there has been a lot of debate going on with regard to the entry of women officers in India's armed forces. Defence experts as well as amateurs have come up with opinions and some people have even gone to the extent of labelling this important issue as the phenomenon of conquering **"the last male bastion"**.

In this Research Paper entitled – **"Women in Indian Armed Forces—She Is Unique!"**, I have attempted to delve deeper into this issue and analyse the matter in its entirety, going beyond the concepts of women's liberation and gender bias.

The Research Paper throws light on India's competence as a military power, the war-potential of the country and considers the issue of entry of women in India's armed forces purely from the perspective of making India militarily strong.

Introduction:

Unlike developed countries like USA, UK, Canada and Germany, India as a nation isn't all that experienced with regard to the introduction of women in the armed forces. The first batch of women joined in 1992. Military science is a complex subject and India's military establishment, is now coming to terms with the long-term ramifications of women's issues involved in military landscape.

Women have been serving in the armed forces of developed countries for a long time and countries like USA, Israel, Britain and Canada for instance have acquired a level of understanding of women's issues that remains unmatched.

The United States in particular has played a pioneering role when it comes to the question of inducting women in the armed forces – a mind boggling 200,000+ American women are on active duty, which literally means 20% of US armed force's bench strength.

Israel is another country that India's armed forces can look up to when it comes to the induction of women. Although, women are not allotted combat duties, yet, they have carved a niche for themselves in administrative and technical positions.



If defence statistics is anything to go by, the Indian Army has 6,807 women and constitute 0.56 per cent of the Army, the Indian Air Force has 1,607 women representing 1.08 per cent of the Force and Indian Navy has 704 female officers who constitute 6.5 per cent of the Naval Force. If we consider the number of women officers in the three defence establishments, a total of 9,118 women are on active duty, and the best part is that approval has been granted for the induction of 1,700 females as jawans in the Corps of Military Police.

There has been a remarkable increase in the number of women deployed in the armed forces during the year 2020 and apart from the Permanent Commission to Women Officers in the category of Judge Advocate General and Army Education Corps, the Government of India has off late has also pronounced the grant of Permanent Commission to Women Officers in all three Services where women are eligible for commission.



Women in Indian Armed Forces – Historical Look back:

Before we delve into the the role of women in the Indian Armed forces, it would be prudent to know the history behind this sensitive issue.

Women's presence in the Indian Armed Forces first took shape way back in 1888 with the creation of Indian Military Nursing Service. The nursing staff of the Indian Army played a stellar role during World War I and so impressive was their dedication in the wartime that it convinced the then Army's top brass to further expand and reinforce the women's wing with the formation of an exclusive Women's Auxiliary Corps that would facilitate women personnel to serve in non-combat positions like administration, tele communications, accounting etc...

One woman who by dint of her exemplary service to the nation during World War II attained legendary status - Noor Inayat Khan's name needs no introduction, at least not in the armed forces circle! In the days of yore, the British Indian Army, though very receptive to the idea of inducting women in the armed forces, limited the involvement of women to primarily non-combat roles. Later on, with the advent Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's Azad Hind Fauj, an exclusive women's combat regiment - Rani of Jhansi Regiment saw women fighting in the battlefield versus the Imperial Japanese Army in erstwhile Burma.

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Contemporary Trends:

We are right now living a life fraught with dangers and in constant fear of the Corona virus, which shows no signs of ebbing. One cold February morning as I flipped through the pages of the morning newspaper, I was awestruck by the caption – “Indian military sees threefold increase in women personnel in 6 years”. This got me charged up!

The Hindustan Times, 9th Feb, 2021 states – “The headcount of women in the military has increased almost three-fold over the last six years, with more avenues being opened for them at a steady pace, latest government figures showed. There are 9,118 women currently serving the army, navy and air force, with the services giving them more opportunities to boost career progression, the government told Parliament on Monday.

The report further states – “Since then, the government has taken a raft of measures to empower women, including allowing them to fly fighter planes, naval aircraft and giving them permanent commission in different branches.

Excluding the medical wing in which women have been serving for decades, the army accounts for 6,807 women officers, the air force 1,607 and the navy 704 women officers. In percentage terms, women still form a small part of the military—0.56% of the army, 1.08% of the air force and 6.5% of the nSignals, Engineers, Army Aviation, Electronics and Mechanical Engineers (EME), Army Service Corps (ASC), Army Ordnance Corps (AOC), and Intelligence Corps in addition to the existing streams of Judge and Advocate General (JAG) and Army Educational Corps (AEC).



The Supreme Court Verdict on Women Officers in Combat Arms:

In March 2020, Supreme Court passed a milestone judgement – “Induct women officers in all types of warships in Indian Navy, as a natural process of societal evolution, the possible induction of women into combat arms is going to be the next challenge, which Indian Military will be confronted with. The leadership in combat arms at each level, from detachment to highest formation, is laid on a bedrock principle of ‘Leading from the front’ which must not be compromised”.

This judgement entails that all officers and soldiers has to go through the same selection criterias - toughness schedule, promotion exams, command criteria assignments and appointments with no concessions. It is to be noted that most armies in developed countries that employs women officers have “gender neutrality” when it comes to physical standards and many are working towards achieving that.

The Supreme Court has unequivocally stated that women officers who volunteer for combat action must comply to the standards ensured and that the standards should in no way be lowered just to make room for women officers; or else this will compromise the **“Operational Effectiveness”** of the force.

Major General S B Asthana, who is a strategic and defence analyst and a veteran General with 40 years experience under his belt, has been awarded by the President of India twice, the United Nations etc...puts the entire issue very succinctly – “It, therefore, implies that if every male infantry officer has to go through commando course, every women officer opting for infantry must go through the same. If every other combat arms officer has to go through Commando/Counterinsurgency/Mountain warfare course and serve in Rashtriya Rifle or Assam Rifle for at least one tenure, the same yardstick must apply to women officers”.

The Future Ahead:

At a time when the Indian Military establishment is working full-time towards creating that **"Ideal Work Station"** ambience, I am sure that an efficient and cohesive system will evolve over time.

All selections for command - based assignments will I am sure be merit-based rather than gender-based, while at the same time ensure the overall operational efficiency of the Armed Forces. Achieving gender equality isn't an easy task when it has to be implemented across the board - equal hardships by all officers and identical selection process will require a lot streamlining in the existing structure.

I for one find a lot of similarity between high altitude mountaineering and working in the armed forces. Both are high risk jobs and requires considerable amounts of zeal, energy, passion and to say the least - one has to be ambitious.

The founder of the world renowned Angs Himalayan Adventures, Ang Tshering Lama, who specialises in conducting mountaineering trips to some of the world's most demanding and awe-inspiring mountains like Everest and K2, had this to say when he was asked to comment on how his company motivates women mountaineering novices on those tough and dangerous mountains -

"We plan meticulously knowing fully well that there will always be hazards at rarefied heights. The weather conditions can change dramatically within seconds. Furthermore, climber's mindset too can change that effects their physical conditioning. We, as mountain guides have guidelines in place that help us to take the expedition all the way to the summit, no matter what".

He further elaborates -

We understand that female climbers have a soft side and we are extra cautious not to push them too hard. We make a distinction between the time we spend climbing and the time spent at the camp. During the daytime, yes, we push them hard, but we are extra careful not to push them beyond limits. When we are at the camp, that's the time we try to focus on the softer side. For instance, once you arrive at camp after a real hard day out in the mountains, that's the time when people, particularly female climbers need support and need confidence boosters: a bottle of wine or even a letter from their family. Inevitably, these small gestures mean a lot and they tend to forget about the unpredictable nature lying ahead".

Like High Altitude Mountaineering, working in the Armed Forces will always be dangerous. This is what a job in the Armed Forces gives - an incredibly high stake! The thrill of serving for the nation is by far the most cherished desire one can harness as a true citizen of the country.

As an Indian, I look forward to the day when the best officers will get command positions irrespective of whether they are male or female. The nation expects a highly disciplined and cohesive armed forces. In the years to come, I am sure women armed forces personnel, will prove their mettle and carve a niche for themselves by trusting the programs, processes and protocols, which the Indian defence establishment have developed over many years of keen observation and research.



Written By:

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Do you wholeheartedly believe in veganism?

Then these 5 Indian brands might be the right fit for you

Just having a vegan diet still doesn't certainly make you vegan—adopting cruelty-free products too is significant. So what exactly is vegan fashion? A product is vegan if it is not an animal byproduct and is not tested on animals. It is considered that vegan products are ecologically more sustainable than their animal-based counterparts. Moreover, vegan substances tend to be gentler, cleaner and overall more hygienic. Here, on the world Vegan Day we list our top picks of Indian vegan fashion brands:

1. Baggit

The brand is proud of the creativity and aptitude its people possess. By sticking to their roots, they not only maintain authenticity but provide homemade happiness. Society has provided essential nourishment to flourish into the brand they are today. Hence, it is always at the crest of their priorities. They deliver quality bags that are made of cruelty-free material. This sense of awareness capacitated them to lead a clean process which received the PETA award.



2. Ecowings

Like any company, Ecowings has a mission. And that's not about making as much money as possible at all costs. They find it just as important that they contribute to the protection of humans and the environment. They do their bit by removing truck inner tubes from the waste stream and by upcycling them into high-quality products. They help reduce CO2 emissions and show that you don't have to cut a forest or need animal skins to run a healthy business.

3. The Alternate

The Alternate set out to create not just another men's fashion brand, but a brand that inspires a cruelty-free lifestyle. They aspire to ignite the debonair within you and craft products of sophistication while keeping it classic and ageless. Their aim is to blend timeless luxury with practical elegance in the most artistic way possible.

Their design inspires our everyday lives, and that's what they set out to conquer. They believe in conceptualising remarkable designs while using the finest quality materials and giving you comfort that's lasting. They are proud to be associated with Peta India. The Faux leather they use has been tested and approved by CLRI.





4. House of Anita Dongre

House of Anita Dongre is the first major fashion house in India to put into motion a comprehensive sustainable clothing plan. They are a sustainability-forward, global fashion brand that considers both its people and the planet. They are on a mission to help you build a more thoughtful wardrobe. The Company's long-standing stance on being fur-free and leather-free has also been recognised by PETA.

5. Zouk

From the rich and diverse culture of India, Zouk is a brand that brings to you the feel of grandeur and celebration. Their handmade handbags are handcrafted, highly functional range for all your needs and a tribute to our culture. Their products are 100% Vegan and Proudly Indian. The brand brings trendy bags for millennials, with an Indian traditional twist.



Written By : Aditi Gupta

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Meet Nykaa founder Falguni Nayar, India's wealthiest self-made female billionaire

Shares of FSN E-Commerce Ventures, the profit-making company that owns Nykaa, soared 89.2% to Rs 2,129 after opening at Rs 2,018 in pre-open trade.



Shares of cosmetics-to-fashion platform Nykaa made a blockbuster opening on Wednesday (November 10), valuing the company at near \$13 billion, in the latest startup listing.

Shares of FSN E-Commerce Ventures, the profit-making company that owns the Nykaa brand, soared 89.2% to Rs 2,129 after opening at Rs 2,018 in pre-open trade.

The debut price was at a 79.4% premium to the initial public offering (IPO) price of Rs 1,125, giving the company a valuation of Rs 954.37 billion.

The 58-year-old CEO and founder of Nykaa, Falguni Nayar, is now the country's richest self-made woman billionaire. Nykaa is derived from a Sanskrit word meaning heroine.

Ahead of the company's Dalal Street debut, "I started Nykaa at the age of 50 with no experience. I hope the Nykaa journey can inspire each of you to be the Nykaa of your lives." Before Nykaa happened, Nayar was an investment banker and that stint as the managing director of investment banking at the Kotak Mahindra Bank.

In 2012, people primarily bought beauty products from neighbourhood stores. That's when Nayar started Nykaa providing a range of cosmetics and skincare items that was just a tap away.

Soon after, products of international brands and those which were never heard of were introduced. Nykaa sells products of more than 300 domestic and international brands — including Maybelline, Lakme, L'Oréal, and luxury brands such as MAC, Huda Beauty, and Estee Lauder.

Source: <https://www.dnaindia.com>

- Team WS

WHAT YOUR MOON SIGN SAYS ABOUT YOUR EMOTIONAL PERSONALITY



When someone asks the famous line, "What's your sign?" they're asking about the position of the sun in the sky at your time of birth. Your zodiac sun sign symbolises the ways in which you radiate out to the world. It's the glowing essence of your personality and the premise of most horoscopes. As a result, the sun sign is the first thing most people learn about astrology. But there are other aspects of your birth chart to be aware of, including your moon sign, that reveal important things about your personality. Your moon sign can be described as your "mushy centre," or your inner child that needs tending to (and is often neglected).

Not everyone feels connected to their sun sign, which is why it's important to look at all parts of your chart. For instance, what if you're a Sagittarius who's not into traveling, a Cancer who focuses more on facts than feelings, or a Capricorn who despises wealth? According to the teachings of astrology, an individual's unique complexities are revealed by their complete birth chart. A snapshot of the cosmos at your moment of birth, this chart serves as your astrological fingerprint. It contains a comprehensive collection of planets, asteroids, and celestial points that correspond to different aspects of life. Upon reviewing your birth chart, it's clear that the sun sign is only the tip of the iceberg: There are dozens of other placements to explore.

Your moon sign is one of the most significant aspects of your astrological profile and is calculated based on the

position of the moon at your time of birth and represents your emotional inner world. Read on to learn what yours is and how you can use your moon sign to take care of yourself.

How Your Moon Sign Differs From Your Sun Sign

The sun's powerful glow maintains and sustains life, but the glowing star doesn't work alone. The mysterious and intuitive moon is also a vital part of existence.

The moon orbits the earth every 27.5 days, gliding across the zodiac into a new astrological sign every two and half days. Within its fast-moving cycle, the moon's appearance is constantly transforming: Its shape and luminosity are dictated by its proximity to the sun and Earth. Over the course of a month, the moon will assume many different forms, emerging as a bright sphere during the full-moon phase; in diverse crescent shapes during its waxing and waning phases; and then as entirely invisible during the new-moon phase.

Likewise, within a birth chart, your moon sign reveals the ever-changing ways you're impacted by experiences. Just as the moon reflects the sun, your moon sign reveals your innate reactions to life's experiences. It's your internal monologue, the key to understanding your emotional profile.

The moon stays close to Earth, hugging the planet with its consistent, steady ascension. Sometimes, even in the daylight, we can see the outline of the moon, a reminder of its dependability. The moon has a long-established association with feminine energy, specifically the role of the mother. In astrology and all things witchy, people often talk about the divine masculine and divine feminine. However, it's crucial to understand that these are not binary. Everyone contains both divine masculine and divine feminine traits, regardless of your gender.

Your moon sign, accordingly, reveals how you "mother" yourself, representing your comfort zone and sense of security. Unlike the sun, which relies on logic and divine masculine energy, the moon creates a raw, psychic feeling. The moon sign is one of the most private and protected areas of the chart: Though it's not always visible, it guides us through nocturnal illumination.

While the sun signs acts, the moon sign reacts, but the moon's responses have a tremendous impact. Consider the way in which the incredible gravitational force between the earth and moon influences the ocean's tides: When the moon is closer to earth, the tide is higher.

How Your Sun and Moon Signs Work Together

The moon sign works behind the scenes, but it has a substantial impact on your character. It governs the ebb and flow of your moods; simply put, it's the internal "you." Within astrology, feeling "misunderstood" is often attributed to the moon's relationship to other planets and luminaries. For instance, someone with a Leo sun sign may exude robust confidence but feel the intense emotional depth and sensitivities that come with a Pisces moon. Another individual with a Virgo sun sign may lead with the earth sign's signature analytical disposition but also feel impulsive thanks to a fiery Aries moon. In these instances, it's important to find a unique rhythm with your moon sign by honouring and respecting the way it differs from your sun sign. Remember, we are complex beings. Our essence is based on discord.

Alternatively, if your moon sign is in the same triplicity as your sun sign, this element may be enhanced. For example, a Gemini sun with a Libra moon will exhibit intensified air sign attributes, such as caring deeply about interpersonal relationships, since both Gemini and Libra are air signs. Those whose moon signs are the same as their sun signs were born under a new moon and are often committed to making their mark on the world (after all, the sky's completely dark during this lunation). Individuals whose moon signs are directly opposite their sun signs were born under a full moon, and it is their life mission to integrate divergent forces.

The moon's phase and the house it occupies — in a birth chart, "houses" refer to different areas of life — reveal how and where we express our emotions. For instance, someone with a Capricorn moon in the ninth house, the zone that governs expansion, feels emotionally satisfied when achieving greatness through exploration. Accordingly, this person may love to travel for work. Someone with a Scorpio moon in the seventh house, the zone that governs partnership, may feel most fulfilled through deep, intense bonds. (This individual must remember to not get lost in relationships and maintain a solid sense of self.) Your moon sign provides dynamic insight into your psyche, so it's important to build a relationship with this placement. Don't hesitate to create your own interpretations for how the different planetary energies in your birth chart blend. A thoughtful analysis of moon signs always requires a deep dive into the soul, and your moon sign will always be energised when you show yourself honest compassion.

And of course, as with all things astrology, understanding your moon sign is mostly a witchy way to have fun. If you need help stabilising emotions or process trauma, please seek out the help of a certified therapist (but by all means, feel free to share your moon sign with them).

————to be continued...The Traits Associated With the 12 Moon Signs, in December, 2021 edition

“When women support women, amazing things happen”....Shagun

Shagun is a mother, a wife, an entrepreneur and an avid supporter of empowerment of women by building relationships through networking, raising each other up and channeling the power of collaboration and supporting one another.

She is a graduate from New Delhi, India and did her Masters in Human Resource Management at UCLA, Los Angeles. She worked in corporate sector for many years only to quit and follow her dreams and passions. She designed and sold Indian jewellery and clothing from her home boutique and also represented India as Mrs India in Virgelia Productions Mrs Asia USA.

She found her brand LA Fashion Closet in 2018 with the main mantra of “When women support women, amazing things happen”. LA Fashion closet has quickly become the leading source of networking, promoting, advancing and entertaining women and girls by empowering them, bringing them forward, and highlighting their respective field of work and entrepreneurial skills. They also have fun along the way by hosting entertainment events for women.



LA Fashion closet hosted its very first successful entertainment event 'Valley Women meet up' in Aug of 2021 where many small business women came together, collaborated and benefited by each other's connections and support.

Her goal is to simply bring people from different background together by means of collaboration, partnership and make meaningful connections that will last a lifetime.

-Team WS

RICHA ANIRUDH



A woman with contagious positivity who has inspired many lives. Richa Anirudh is a Indian journalist, RJ, talk show host, author, and an editor. She is one of the most popular faces of Indian television. Richa is an inspiration to many women who want to dream big and break the glass ceiling. Let's take a look at her journey and that we can learn from her.

Women shine: Your popular show Zindagi live, How did it all start? And was that a turning point?

Richa: Oh yes that was the turning point personally and professionally.

I am blessed and fortunate that a show like "Zindagi Live" came my way, especially when I was on the verge of quitting my career in journalism.

During those days, media houses focused on stories that helped their channels to reach the top of the TRP list. A lot of times I felt that I don't belong to this industry.

There are many prevalent issues like drugs etc. we need to address such issues as to why the new generation is getting into that. As a journalist, one should focus on broader issues and communicate that. And even before Zindagi live, I was always inclined towards real human stories.



"Zindagi Live" helped me professionally and personally. I am such a kind of person who gets bored very easily. But when I was doing this show, it impacted me, my life, and my thought process. It gave a new meaning to my life. I learned to let things go and not complain, which I used to do earlier.

And I remember, when we started the show, I wasn't the first choice to host the show, and then when I got the opportunity we went ahead with 13 episodes.

Also, we won the "Best Talk Show" award for all its 6 seasons.

Women shine: Zindagi Live was a powerhouse of emotions and raised many social issues, Which one was close to your heart?

Richa: My brother had been an alcoholic for almost 20 years and now has recovered and he is a de-addiction counsellor.

I have seen and felt the agony that we all as a family went through during that phase. We have done maximum episodes on addictions. We got an incredible response for our episode on alcoholism with my brother and this remains close to my heart.

Women shine: Thank you for sharing this with us, also please tell us a little about Covid aur hum?

Richa: I have joined organisations as a consultant, apart from Zindagi with Richa on YouTube, there is a program with BIG FM- "**Big Heroes with Richa Anirudh**". As the name suggests, here we talk about unsung, inspiring real stories of the common man who are helping individuals, communities.

Also doing a weekly digital show with India Ahead digital which is called '**Covid Aur Hum**'. This talks about various aspects of dealing with COVID. We have done many sessions on mental health issues too.

Thanks to my "Zindagi Live" days where I got an opportunity to address many social issues and gained experience in broadcasting, radio hosting, and social media handling.





Women shine: We love to learn about your achievements and how passionate you are about your work, such an inspiration, Did you always want to work for the media?

Richa: I grew up in a small town in Uttarpradesh. In the 1980s, Media and Journalism was not a popular career as it is nowadays. Once I completed my 12th I got advice from people around as to what career path I should opt for. My mother told me to take up B.Sc, M.Sc. It was also suggested that I take up banking, but I am horrible with money, even today I have no clue about my finances. So that wasn't an option for me too. My parents also suggested I should appear for civil service examinations but during that time I used to read newspaper headlines that were very disturbing so civil service was also out of my list. With all the suggestions that time, I was aware as to what I "didn't want to do" for sure.

I had just had two things in mind and that is to do something that has a variety and journalism is that! No two days in a journalist's life are the same. And second, it should bring inner peace and happiness.

Women shine: Very impressive...so on a lighter note, Would love to know How do you relate with the character, Niyati from mad mommas?

Richa: The Co-writer of the web series "Aarya", Anu Choudhary who is a dear friend approached me and I accepted since I could very much relate to the

story and the character as an anchor myself.

It's a very cute story, told from the point of view of a successful TV anchor, Niyati who has just become a mother, and she tries to balance marriage, kids, and family. So any woman who will listen to mad mommas will surely relate to Niyati.

Women shine: From work-life balance to the stigma of entrepreneurship, how according to you has the role of working women changed in recent years?

Richa: I believe that Women have become much smarter today.

Many of my media friends have ventured into entrepreneurship. Many of them are now bloggers, YouTubers, and also they are into fitness.. and nowadays I discover women know what they want and stand up for what they believe, unlike our days where we couldn't be vocal about what we wanted.

Women shine: Your message to our female readers who are trying to balance home and career.

Richa: When I was the Primetime anchor and my daughter Ayesha was very small, my mother supported and helped me to take care of her.

One needs to maintain a work-life balance. So when my daughter was in her teens, I got my office timings changed so that I can stay at home in the evenings with my daughter.

Many times I have declined projects to be with my daughter. Today she acknowledges that and says "mama you were a prime time anchor, and yet you did this for me ". It's nice to know that she appreciates that. Working moms should not feel guilty. Mom's guilt should not take over you. Try and talk to your children, they understand trust me and they should know that you are doing all this hard work for their future.

Live your life fully but balance it all out. Don't only make your career your life.



Mariam Ansari

Nandini Mishra: a Social Entrepreneur

Smt. Nandini Mishra is a dynamic, energetic self motivated selfless women and a humble social worker. She was born and brought up in Lucknow and studied in Lamartinere Girls school Lucknow. Her father was a senior IAS officer, grandfather a vice chancellor and father in law a great scholar and professor. Her husband was a reputed Govt. official later he also joined in this cause.

She is a Post Graduate in Economics from Allahabad University and has degree of CS. She got several offers from different institutions and business groups for different posts but she kept all this aside and continued her services towards poor & needy.

She decided to adopt a district like Mirzapur which is extremely backward, Naxal and poverty prone, where natural calamities affects, no infrastructure was at that time. The district Mirzapur is surrounded with jungles, mountains and river Ganges from all the sides.

Mirzapur where Nandini did not find any relative, friend except hurdles troubles, depression, and disturbing elements etc. she started working for the rural sisters and did not lost her patience and started giving her services with motivation, compassion and commitment.

After working hard for 20 years amongst the poorest of poor women in Mirzapur today the scene has changed overall and now it has become of hub of **Women Self Help Groups** which is the main back bone of her work. Rural ladies are now out from the clutches of money lenders, women are self reliant, self confident and mostly running their own little business units, they were education less and are now graduated and mostly doing job and going to offices.



Besides social work, she is involved in promoting Indian culture and heritage. A yearlong cleaning of daily Ganga Ghat and performing of Jan Arati has been initiated by her in involving the district administration under the aegis of Vindhya Heritage Foundation. The veteran Indian classical dancer and Navratan of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji for Swachhata Mission, MP Rajya Sabha Smt. Sonal Mansingh is highly impressed by her work and renders her guidance from time to time as a mentor and guardian.



Every Third year a Mega event "Mahashakti Sammelan" Under the leadership of Mrs. Nandini Mishra is organised. In this event, the rural women and their adolescent daughters from the whole of the eastern U.P participated. This Programme is organised by the rural ladies themselves for their respectful rights . Around twenty thousand rural women and their adolescent daughters participate and make the program a grand success. The event is graced by several veteran women rights Social activists, Academicians, Journalists, and Local M.L.As and M.P. Some eminent women are conferred with Mahashakti and Shakti Bhushan Samman for their outstanding works in the particular area on this occasion.

There are 1.5 lakhs women and 25 thousand adolescent girls, who are associated with her and have belief in her to elevate poverty and give the smile on her faces.

According to her - Women is the most precious creation of God. They have the power to bring changes in all sectors of society.

-TEAM WS

Larissa Bonesi

Model turned actress Larissa Bonesi opened up about her hard work from being just a girl with dreams to the woman with success in a recent TEDx Talkshow

The sizzling Brazilian model turned actress, Larissa Bonesi has been candy to the eye. She started her career back in 2011, in the super hit song "Subah Hone Na De", starring Akshay Kumar and John Abraham. Larissa's first Bollywood debut was- "Go Goa Gone" with Saif Ali Khan where she was seen in a supporting role. Larissa has worked in the major hit songs like "Surma Surma" with the sensational singer Guru Randhawa and many other songs like "Yes or No", "Are You Coming" and "Dim Dim Light". She even featured in the 2016 Telugu movie "Thikka" and "Next Enti" 2018 Telugu movie. Actress Larissa Bonesi recently appeared on TEDx Golden Bridge, an independently organized TED event - Talk where she opened up about her journey and self-love. She talks about how she overcame all the challenges that life threw at her by taking them positively and turning them into



something beautiful. She talks about how self-love is important in one's life. She says that don't do something to be just accepted by society. Do something because you want to do it. Show everyone the real you and let them accept you for you. She talks about how empathy is something that is needed in today's time. Show empathy whenever you can because the world needs it. What she learned through her experiences is not to give up on something that you want, however difficult it may be. She also talks about social media abuse and how people just abuse/judge everyone so quickly even without knowing them or where they came from. In conclusion, be kind to people and spread kindness and love everywhere, whenever possible, and most importantly always love yourself for what you are and accept yourself for who you are.

<https://youtu.be/YdwG2VbQn6M>

On the work front, Larissa Bonesi will be seen in the upcoming Netflix web film "Penthouse", the actress will be seen along with Bobby Deol and Arjun Rampal and "Penthouse" is directed by prominent director Abbas-Mastan. And two more projects ready to be signed and start whenever she is back from her home time with family in Brazil.

Snigdha Mishra: Mental Health Educator



I am a Psychotherapist and Mental health Educator. Also founder of Life Surfers, and Founding Member of Bharatiya Counselling Psychology Association and Lets Talk(COVID mental health crisis support Helpline). I'd spent most of my mid to early thirties battling undiagnosed depression, having made the mistake of not seeking help. The memories are mostly flashes and most of those years I don't remember at all. I recovered with a strong sense of understanding how mental health

literacy is of utmost importance if we need healthy people around us. I focus on Improving Mental health Literacy and helping people understand and improve their mental health.

We cannot wait for our nation to build enough infrastructure to cater to the massive need. Instead, we have to look for solutions amongst ourselves for informed peer support where people help each other in terms of their mental and emotional needs. That's what my passion is and that's what I build I strongly believe and works towards, capacity building for improving the mental health care gap in India, therefore focusing on community-based tertiary mental health support systems through training of laypersons in Mental health Support Skills - Peer Mental Health Aid and education and development of skills in Psychologists through my organisation Life Surfers.

My core areas of work are Training laypersons in Mental Health Support Skills, Counselling, Psychologist Education, with a focus on up skilling mental well-being by enhancing emotional and behaviour health and psycho education, improving mental health literacy, nurturing safe spaces, providing trained mental health peer support and improving help-seeking behaviour.

I have training and expertise in Cognitive and Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapies, Clinical Hypnotherapy. Trained in CBT from The Beck Institute, Philadelphia, USA, and a certified Corporate Social Responsibility Trainer from Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs, under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, India.

I'm an avid reader, music lover, passionate cook, and social activist. I actively support capacity building and awareness on Gender Equality & Mental Health.

You can follow @mhwthsnigdha and @lifesurfersorg on Twitter and Instagram or Facebook.



- By Snigdha Mishra



About fashion and lifestyle

A networking meet was organised to celebrate 17 months of a global digital magazine.

A trunk show was also staged by local designers including Pallavi Singh Raghuvanshi, Sadhvi, Gaurav, Shama, Abhishek and Tahreem. The models sashayed down the aisle to showcase the designs.

It was a new experience for people to see the dresses and buy on the same time. The event was choreographed by Lucky Surin and conceptualised by Shipra Anand and Sandeep Gola.

Earlier, magazine's founder Aparna Mishra welcomed the guests.

A panel discussion on Carving Your Own Niche conducted by Shipra Anand



Aparna Mishra with others and model

was also held. One of the panelists was Singapore-based actor Renita S Kapoor. She talked about her journey and why she loves this space to work. Fashion designer Anju Narain was also among the panelist and she spoke about her design philosophy. The event had a huge

turnout. Many of city's who's who were present at the event. There were few stalls too and people bought things like handicrafts and various gifts for Diwali. Present on the occasion were Lalita Pradeep, Shweta Singh, Manjula Goswami, Arushi Tandon, Satya Singh, Reena Singh, Dimple Trivedi and more. The show was anchored by Roma Bachchani. MTC

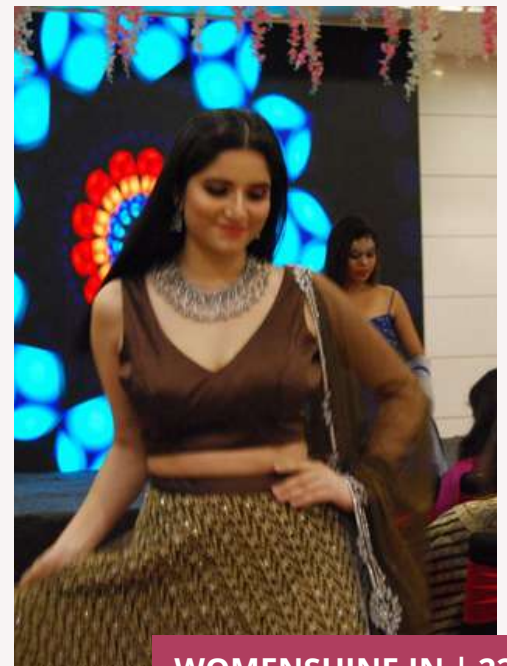
वुमेन शाइन ने किया नेटवर्किंग मीट का आयोजन

कैनविज टाइम्स संवाददाता

लखनऊ। शनिवार को होटल सेल्वेट में वुमेन शाइन की ओर से महिला सम्मेलन कार्यक्रम का आयोजन किया गया। इस दौरान यहाँ पहुँचे फैशन डिजाइनरों द्वारा अपने बनाए हुए नए-नए डिजाइन के वस्त्रों का प्रदर्शन किया यहाँ फैशन शो के आयोजन के दौरान तमाम मॉडल्स ने रैप वॉक के दौरान अलग-अलग डिजाइन के परिधानों का प्रदर्शन किया। शो के दौरान जब मॉडल रैप पर पहुँचीं तो सभी की आँखें उन पर टिक गईं। कार्यक्रम में एक प्रदर्शनी का भी आयोजन किया गया था जिसमें तमाम संस्वाओं द्वारा अपने अपने उत्पादों की प्रदर्शनी लगाई गई थी यहाँ पर खास बात यह थी कि जितने भी लोगो ने अपने अपने उत्पन्न प्रस्तुत किये थे वो सारे के सारे हाथ से बने हुए थे। इस मौके पर विमन शाइन की संस्थापक अपरणा मिश्रा ने बताया फैशन वॉक में खास बात यह है कि



यहाँ पर जिन पोशाकों की प्रदर्शनी हो रही है उन वस्त्रों को जो चाहें वो यहाँ मौके पर से खरीदी भी सकता है। अपरणा मिश्रा ने कहा। की लखनऊ की पहचान है ड एंथ्रॉपडरी वॉक और चिकन वॉक को बढ़ावा देना जरूरी है इसी तरह से अगर छोटे-छोटे कार्यक्रमों का आयोजन होता रहेगा तो लोग ज्यादा से ज्यादा उसको जानेंगे और उनकी बिक्री भी बढ़ेगी। कार्यक्रम में बॉलीवुड सेलिब्रिटी रेनिता कपूर और डिजाइनर अंजू नारायण भी उपस्थित रही। कार्यक्रम में विशिष्ट अतिथि के रूप में रेणुका टंडन, कनक रेखा चौहान, सत्य सिंह, डॉ धीरा सिंह, ललिता पांडे, मेघना तिवारी, मंजुला गोस्वामी, आरुषी टंडन, सत्य सिंह, रीना सिंह, डिपल त्रिवेदी आदि उपस्थित रही।



मेन शाइन,ने वैश्विक डिजिटल नेटवर्किंग मीट का आयोजन कर कराया फैशन



वकार हुसैन स्टेट न्यूज टाइम्स इसे कोरोना काल में 30 मई 2020 को लॉन्च किया गया था। अब यह 17 महीने का हो गया है। यह महिलाओं और जीवन शैली के लिए एक वैश्विक डिजिटल पत्रिका है।

यह विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में अद्भुत महिलाओं द्वारा किए जा रहे अद्भुत कार्यों को प्रदर्शित करता है। यह ग्लैमर की दुनिया में चमक रही है, उद्यमिता पर उच्च सवारी कर रही है, सामाजिक क्षेत्रों में जीवन को छू रही है, कॉर्पोरेट जगत में बार उठा रही है।

यह एक माँ है, यह एक पेशेवर है, यह एक अभिनेता, लेखक और एक कलाकार है।

वीमेन शाइन आज की उस महिला को सलाम करती है जो कई टोपियाँ आसानी से पहनती और प्रबंधित करती है।

धुमन शाइन की संस्थापक अपर्णा मिश्रा ने धुमन शाइन को दर्शकों के सामने पेश कर कार्यक्रम की शुरुआत की। स्थानीय डिजाइनर पल्लवी सिंह रघुवंशी, साकवी, गौरव, शमा, अभिषेक और तहरीम का ट्रंक शो था। मॉडल्स

ने दर्शकों के बीच अपने परिधानों का प्रदर्शन किया। लोगों को ननवे से बाहर खरीदने के लिए वही कपड़े उपलब्ध थे। यह पहली बार वीमेन शाइन द्वारा आयोजित किया गया था।

लोगों के लिए एक साब कपड़े देखना और खरीदना एक नया अनुभव था। इसे लकी सुरीन द्वारा कोरियोग्राफ किया गया था और एफएसी के शिप्रा आनंद और श्री गोला, जेडी संस्थान द्वारा संकल्पित किया गया था।

शिप्रा आनंद, निदेशक एफएसी द्वारा आयोजित प्यारिंग योर ओन आलाप पर एक पैनल चर्चा हुई। पैनलिस्टों में से एक रेनिता एस कपूर, सिंगपुर की एक पुरस्कार विजेता अभिनेत्री, रेनिता एस कपूर ने प्यार / 8% थ्री सिस्टर्स एंड ए ड्रीम, रिलिज्ड ऑन द वॉल्फ जैसी फीचर फिल्मों में राष्ट्रीय और अंतर्राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर प्रदर्शन किया है। डिजिटली होस्टेड पर वेब सीरीज प्लसपों का शहर - सीजन 2 आदि। अंग्रेजी, हिंदी, पंजाबी और तमिल जैसी विभिन्न भाषाओं में अभिनय करने वाली एक

बहुमुखी एक पुरस्कार विजेता अभिनेत्री, रेनिता एस कपूर ने प्यार / 8% थ्री सिस्टर्स एंड ए ड्रीम, रिलिज्ड ऑन द वॉल्फ जैसी फीचर फिल्मों में राष्ट्रीय और अंतर्राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर प्रदर्शन किया है। डिजिटली होस्टेड पर वेब सीरीज प्लसपों का शहर - सीजन 2 आदि। अंग्रेजी, हिंदी, पंजाबी और तमिल जैसी विभिन्न भाषाओं में अभिनय करने वाली एक

वुमेन शाइन, एक वैश्विक डिजिटल पत्रिका ने 30 अक्टूबर '21 को होटल सिल्वेट में अपनी पहली नेटवर्किंग मीट का आयोजन किया

Crime Week 22 mins ago 0 7

2 minutes read

इसे कोरोना काल में 30 मई 2020 को लॉन्च किया गया था। अब यह 17 महीने का हो गया है। यह महिलाओं और जीवन शैली के लिए एक वैश्विक डिजिटल पत्रिका है।

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यह ग्लैमर की दुनिया में चमक रही है, उद्यमिता पर उच्च सवारी कर रही है, सामाजिक क्षेत्रों में जीवन को छू रही है, कॉर्पोरेट जगत में बार उठा रही है। यह एक माँ है, यह एक पेशेवर है, यह एक अभिनेता, लेखक और एक कलाकार है।



महिला सम्मेलन कार्यक्रम का आयोजन



संवाददाता

संवाददाता। महिलाओं को होटल सिल्वेट में अपने ज्ञान और अनुभवों को साझा करने का अवसर मिला। इस दौरान यहां पहुंचे विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में अद्भुत महिलाओं द्वारा किए जा रहे अद्भुत कार्यों को प्रदर्शित किया गया।

यह कार्यक्रम एक प्रतियोगिता का भी आयोजन किया गया था जिसमें विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में अद्भुत महिलाओं द्वारा किए जा रहे अद्भुत कार्यों को प्रदर्शित किया गया था।

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The Fashion Brigade

Meet the fashion brigade who have entered into the world of fashion and trying to innovate and add more dimensions to the designer wear.



Tahreem Ansari

"**MAABETI**" is a label that has the ability to innovate the creativity of twinning dresses for mother and daughter, bridal wear, luxe occasion wear, luxe trousseau packing as MAA and BETI of this label work together to reach the heights in the field of fashion. (IT'S ALL ABOUT CREATING WITH♥).

Saumya Agarwal

'**The Divine Threads**', by Saumya Agarwal and Tanya Uppal is a Lucknow based start up by two young Designpreneurs. It brings a mix of fusion wear for women . The Divine Threads clothes are made from the finest fabrics and no detail goes unnoticed, from luxurious linings to every finishing detail. The brand focusses on creating garments that not only are pleasant to the eyes but as comfortable as well using soft fabrics which are so irresistibly alluring. We believe in exploring the rich craft culture of Lucknow in contemporary silhouettes. The merchandise mix is such that has an offering for every need and taste. We look forward to developing a bond of trust with our patrons with our quality and services.



Saumya Agarwal

Antham by Abhishek is one of the most sought after couture brands based in the city of Lucknow and we provide you with gorgeous options when it comes to your bridal attire. There are quite many ceremonies that happen before and after the main wedding ceremony and each of it demands a unique set of clothing that will add to the thunder of being the lady of the hour and to fulfil your wished and dreams as a bride-to-be, Antham by Abhishek and the designs that we will provide you with will make it a gorgeous affair.

They have the provision to provide you with exclusively customised clothing lines that will not only fit you like a glove with the help of their custom designing team and sample pieces that are made to order, but they will also uphold the traditions and cultural aspects of the wedding ceremonies while making you look absolutely trendy and jaw-dropping beautiful. They provide you with doorstep deliveries within the city.



Suhail

Radana The Fashion Store is the labour of love of the emerging designer Suhail Khan, an alumnus of J D Institute, Lucknow. Within one year of its inception, Radana -The Fashion Store, has served over 2500 clients and has made its presence across 6 shows. Hailing from a smaller city, it has been a herculean effort for the designer Suhail to reach where he is today as he had only dream, ambition, education and passion to rely on. The realisation that all the fashion patrons of his town would travel to metros for their fashion needs, motivated him to introduce good quality yet affordable designer wear to his town with the opening of Radana the Fashion Store, unlike so many young designers who choose to establish themselves in metro cities and bigger towns. He strongly feels that fashion shouldn't remain a commodity confined to certain sections of the society but everyone should experience it and benefit from the confidence it brings to people. His store not only has checked client migration but also is a good source of employment generation for the skilled workers in his town. It takes courage to be the harbinger of change and use your skill for the same.



Sadhvi Suri

Sadhvi Suri is a contemporary womenswear brand dedicated to design modern clothing with an emphasis on functionality and versatility. The brand endeavours to balance between simplicity and individuality through its thoughtful elevated designs. Our modernist approach is balanced by a timeless minimalism offering a refreshing take on womenswear clothing.

At our **Atelier**, we focus on using fine fabrics to create unique silhouettes that emanate a sense of easy sophistication. With a training in design from two very acclaimed design schools- Istituto Marangoni, London and Pearl Academy, New

Delhi, Sadhvi Suri developed a unique set of skills and the luxurious sensibility that reflects in every thought out detail of the garments designed at the atelier. The brand's vision is to create a clothing label that pushes slow, ethical and sustainable fashion by encouraging slower production, unifying sustainability with ethics, and ultimately inviting consumers to invest in well made and lasting clothes.



-Team WS

Happy Children's Day



Womenshine

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ORIGIN OF LOOFAH



Ever heard of the modest-looking Loofah, also called Luffa. It is a simple bath accessory used since time immemorial to clean and exfoliate the skin.

This belongs to the cucumber family. Earlier people thought it was got from the sea, made of sea sponge due to their spongy nature. But these are dried gourds obtained from the cucumber family. It is believed to be an Old World plant having its origins in Asia & Africa. Carbon dating showed it to be the first plant to be domesticated. The Egyptians were the first to use it as a bath sponge.

Being an inexpensive, multipurpose scrubbing and bathing tool people have never bothered to find out its origin or uniqueness. People have come up with synthetic versions which resemble the original loofahs in shape but differ in colour. These nylon versions aren't so good as the original, plant loofahs.

How are these loofahs made–

- These gourds are grown in tropical and subtropical regions.
- The plant produces flowers that are long and gourd-like in shape resembling a cucumber
- The fruits are left to mature on the vines
- Once these fruits change colour and turn yellow or brown they are plucked.
- The tough outer skin is peeled and the seeds are removed.
- Then the sap is washed out of the plant with a strong spray of water.
- These wet sponges are dried in the sun
- It takes around 6 months for them to dry, then they can be stored in cloth bags to prevent them from dirt & dust



Uses of the loofah sponge-

- Helps in exfoliation by sloughing off the dead skin cells from the surface of the skin.
 - Exfoliation brings a glow to the skin and keeps the bacteria at bay
 - Relaxation and peace of mind- showering with a loofah helps to relieve tension and brings about tranquillity in the person.
 - It is made from natural things so doesn't cause any harm to the skin.
 - It is biodegradable so can be used without any fear of the environment
 - Stimulates blood circulation of the body
 - Loofah is even used as a household cleaning product
- Loofah is used in the scrubbing of pots, tiles, sink & showers
 - Loofah fibers are used as medicine. Loofah charcoal obtained after heating of loofah fibers is used to cure shingles of the face and the eye region
 - The dried loofah can be powdered and used in skincare products to detoxify the skin
 - The unripe loofah fruits are eaten as vegetables
 - The dried loofah is used to alleviate arthritic pain, muscle pain, and chest pain
 - It is economical and easy to use.
 - Use a loofah sponge for that soft, clean, and flawless skin



-Written by Dr PREETI TALWAR
aktal2012@gmail.com

CHICKEN PINEAPPLE SALAD ♥

Ingredients

150 gm Boneless boiled and diced chicken
200 gm Pineapple diced
10 Roasted almonds and cashews
1 tbsp honey
1/2 tsp Pepper powder
1 tsp cream
4 tsp hung curd
1/2 tsp english mustard
1/4 tsp salt
1/2 cup Broccoli florets
1/2 cup cabbage
2 lettuce leaves
1 tsp Mayonnaise
1 tsp virgin olive oil

Method

For salad

1. Chop all the vegetables, broccoli, pineapple, and chicken in small chunks In almost the same bite-size.
2. Put into a large bawl
3. In another bowl mix dressing ingredients like Mayonnaise, Olive oil, salt, pepper, mustard sauce, cream and hung curd and mix well.
4. Now pour this dressing into the salad and toss well.
5. Sprinkle chopped nuts over the salad.

Bon appetite.





Aanandini Ramawat 12 years, Amity International School, Gurgaon
She is a National Children's art winner since three years and her paintings have been displayed in India Habitat Centre.



Aanandini Ramawat
12 years
Amity International school
Gurgaon

Save Girl Child

Don't her cries haunt you ,
Doesn't your heart ache
When you give her this unimaginable pain
And kill her before she could even get a chance to be awake .
She takes care of you when she herself is not fine
But her happiness always get jeopardized.
She goes out of her way to make you smile
But still her worth , you fail to realise .
We talk about liberty and equality
But where goes our morality
when we kill her before she could get a chance to become a reality .
Grow up people ,
Change your mentality .
Stop this brutality
Because being a girl is not an abnormality .
Save girl child ,
Let her Shine
Because it's not everyday that God gives You something so divine .



Tanvi Mishra
Class- IX
1st Position

Beti Bachao , Beti Padhao

In my clear Sky of my mind ,
 I was searching for a cloud to find ,
 There I saw a massive cloud of across , of the mission " **Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao** ".
 So , I made my cloud to rain , But that cloud gave me
 lots of Pain ,
 I remember my mother in the memories ,
 Because she gave me no worries
 I thought of girls Starving to learn and
 collecting fee with lots of cuts and burns ,
 So we gave them little Education and
 They learned with perfect dedication .
 These are our beautiful daughters , So let them born .



Sakshi Nigam
XI commerce
206 , Rajendra Nagar
2nd Position



मातृत्व

निम्न मध्यवर्गीय प्राइमरी स्कूल की अध्यापिका सुषमा जी आज पहली बार ट्रेन के ए. सी. कूपे में बैठने के लिये छोटे बच्चे की तरह उत्साहित थीं। उन्होंने सदा कल्पना लोक में विचरण करते हुये ए.सी. कूपे की ठंडक का अनुभव किया था। बेटी की जिद और उसी की अनुकंपा से उन्हें आज यह सौभाग्य मिलने वाला था। वह अपने जीवन की इस उपलब्धि पर गौरवान्वित महसूस कर रही थीं।

उनके मन में अभिजात्य वर्ग के साथ कदम मिलाकर चलने में अपार संकोच का अनुभव हो रहा था। अपनी बर्ध पर पहुंचते ही उन्होंने अपने चारों ओर नजरें घुमाई, वहाँ सभी यात्री अपनी दुनिया में खोये हुये थे। उनके साथ उनकी बेटी मिनी और उसके बच्चे सनी मनी थे, जिनकी उम्र 4 और 6 वर्ष थी।

बच्चे तो आखिर बच्चे थे बस शुरू हो गई धमाचौकड़ी, कभी भूख लगी है तो कभी पानी की प्यास। कभी इधर भाग तो कभी उधर, सन्नाटे को चीरते हुये बच्चों के कोलाहल के कारण वह लज्जा का अनुभव कर रही थीं।

उन्होंने बच्चों को डाँटने के अंदाज में इशारे से चुप बैठने को कहा। आंखों ही आंखों के इशारे से उन्होंने अपनी बेटी से भी बच्चों को शांत रखने को कहा था।

वैसे तो इन बच्चों की बाल सुलभ क्रीड़ायें सभी यात्रियों को मुस्कराने पर मजबूर कर रही थीं। फिर भी शांत वातावरण में बच्चों का शोरगुल उन्हें अटपटा लग रहा था।

सामने की बर्ध पर एक अभिजात्य वर्ग की दक्षिण भारतीय महिला बैठी हुई थीं, उनकी उम्र लगभग 45 वर्ष, पक्का सांवला रंग, गोल्डेन फ्रेम के चश्मे के अंदर से झांकती बड़ी-बड़ी आंखें, नुकीली नाक के बाईं ओर डायमंड की दमकती लौंग, लिपिस्टिक से रंगे हुये होंठ, घने काले घुंघराले केश, गले में लगभग 15 तोले की मोटी लंबी सोने की चेन, और साथ में उतना ही लंबा भारी मंगलसूत्र, कलाई में डायमंड के चमचमाते कंगन, लाल चौड़े बार्डर वाली प्योर सिल्क की साड़ी उनके धनी होने की कहानी कह रही थी। वह फरटिदार इंग्लिश में अपने पड़ोसी यात्री के साथ धीरे धीरे बात कर रही थीं।

उनके व्यक्तित्व से आतंकित होकर वह स्वयं में ही सिमट कर बैठ गई थीं। अनायास उन्होंने उनके साथ अपनी टूटी फूटी हिन्दी में वार्तालाप आरंभ किया। बातचीत का कारण सनी था। बातों ही बातों में वह

सुषमा जी से घुलमिल गई। वह हिन्दी भाषा समझ लेतीं थीं लेकिन बोलने में कच्ची थीं।

लक्ष्मी अयंगर ने अपना परिचय देते हुये बताया कि वह आई. ए. एस. अधिकारी की पत्नी हैं। वह अपने भाई के पास बेंगलुरु जा रही हैं। वह बार बार अपने पति व्यंकटेश की बातें कर रही थीं। उनकी पसंद नापसंद का जिक्र कर रही थीं। वह सनी और मनी के आकर्षण में बंध गई थीं। वह बच्चों के साथ उन्मुक्त होकर बच्चों की तरह उत्साहित होकर खेल रही थीं। कभी उनके साथ तुतला कर बात करतीं, कभी बॉल खेलतीं। उनके संग वह स्वयं बच्चा बनी हुई थीं।

दोनों बच्चों के साथ खेलते हुये उनकी खुशी और उल्लास देखने योग्य था। सुषमा जी के मन में उत्कंठा हुई और वह लक्ष्मी जी से पूछ बैठी थीं, "आपके बच्चे?"

उनके इन दो शब्दों को सुनते ही उनकी खुशी काफूर हो गई थी, उनका चेहरा विवर्ण होकर सफेद पड़ गया था। ओर वह एकदम गंभीर हो उठी थीं।

वह घबरा गई कि उन्होंने कोई बड़ी गलती कर दी है। वह स्वयं अपराध बोध से पीड़ित हो उठीं थीं, संभवतः उन्होंने उनकी कोई दुखती हुई रग छेड़ दी थी।

कुछ लम्हों के लिये वह एकदम चुप हो गई थीं। उनकी आंखें भीग उठी थीं, थोड़े अंतराल के बाद सामान्य होने की कोशिश करते हुये बोलीं, "वह उच्च शिक्षा प्राप्त गोल्ड मेडलिस्ट धनी महिला हैं। उनके पास कोठी, बंगला, कार, इज्जत, शोहरत, नौकर चाकर सब कुछ है। नहीं है तो एक अदद अपना बच्चा.... एक बार कुछ उम्मीद हुई थी लेकिन एक हादसे में सब कुछ समाप्त हो गया।

ससुराल पक्ष के दबाव में पति बच्चा गोद लेने के लिये राजी नहीं हुये। उनका कहना है कि पराया खून पराया ही होता है। वह कभी अपना नहीं हो सकता। इसलिये मन के किसी कोने में मां न बन पाने का दर्द कचोटता कहता है। धन, पद प्रतिष्ठा सब कुछ होते हुये भी मातृत्व के बिना अपने को अधूरा समझतीं हैं।

अपने अधूरेपन से निराश होकर समाजसेविका बन गई हैं। गरीब बच्चों को पढ़ा कर उनकी सेवा के माध्यम से अपनी कुंठा और अपने अधूरे पन को भूलने का प्रयास करती रहती हैं।" उनकी बातें सुषमा जी के दिल की गहराई में उतर गई थी। वह स्तंभित होकर सोचने को विवश हो गई थीं कि क्या स्त्री की पूर्णता मातृत्व में ही है।



पद्मा अग्रवाल

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CRUISING ALONG THE BRAHMAPUTRA

Having been born and brought up in the gateway city of North East India – Guwahati still evokes images of the mighty Brahmaputra river meandering through much of the city and of those joyful days when as kids we would play beach cricket on the sandy stretches of the river bank every winter. There was also a wild side to this river in that with the onset of the monsoon season, the river's fury and turbulence would inundate large parts of the state of Assam, flooding almost all the riverside towns. The perennial problem of flooding of the Brahmaputra valley still continues unabated despite the best efforts of the conservation authorities.

The Brahmaputra River is no ordinary river and on the basis of the length of the river (2,900 Kms.), it is one of Asia's principal rivers and perhaps the most turbulent. It originates from the icy glaciers of the Himalayas, passes through much of Tibet, the North Eastern states of Arunachal Pradesh and Assam and finally merges with the holy river Ganga and empties into the Bay of Bengal.

When it passes through Tibet, the river is known as Yarlung Zangbo river, the stretch of the river as it passes through the mountainous state of Arunachal Pradesh is referred to as the Dihang river and when it merges with the Ganga, it shapes up the Sunderban delta, which incidentally happens to be the world's largest riverine delta that for centuries has been the exclusive preserve of the rare and endangered Royal Bengal Tigers. Brahmaputra is a mythological river and an important facet of this river is that while most rivers in India and elsewhere in the world are regarded as females, this river stands out as the only male river in the world. The very word – **"Brahmaputra" literally means "son of Lord Brahma"**.

For decades together, the mandarins of Indian Tourism industry have pondered about the pros and cons of harnessing the true potential of river Brahmaputra as a means of attracting tourists. But nothing much materialised. For years, adventurous rafters from distant corners of the world (USA, UK, Germany) would come with all their logistics and embark on white water rafting, particularly on the lower reaches of the river where the turbulent rapids are ideal for river rafting with very little co-operation from the local government.



However all these deadlocks were brushed aside with the launch of the Assam Bengal Navigation Company in the year 2003, which is an Indo-British joint venture. They started operating high quality river cruises not only in the Brahmaputra River but also on the river Hugli in the neighbouring state of West Bengal, thereby earning accolades from the Tourism industry.

One of the finest moments in the history of North East India's sagging Tourism industry was when the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India conferred the most coveted "National Tourism Award for Innovation" in the year 2004-05 to the Assam Bengal Navigation Company. From then onwards, there has been no looking back and the ABNC has gone from strength to strength with offices not only in India but also in countries like UK, USA, Australia, Canada, Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Germany, France and Italy from where they receive the lion's share of cruise bookings.

As a Travel Writer, I was offered the rare privilege of embarking on a 10 Night cruise covering the colonial town of Dibrugarh, the medieval Ahom capital of Sibsagar, the islands of Majuli, the world famous Kaziranga National Park, the ancient city of Tezpur and the mecca of Assam's burgeoning Silk industry – Sualkochi.

Before I take you on the roller coaster cruise along the river, it would perhaps be apt to mention that the river Brahmaputra along with the Ganga and Hugli rivers used to be the vital transportation channels of the British East India Company.

However with the partition of 1947 and the emergence of the railways, this rather fascinating mode of water transport was laid to the backburner. I reached Dibrugarh town after an overnight's train journey from Guwahati and was escorted to a waiting cab by one of the representatives of the Assam Bengal Navigation Company. A brisk 3.5 hours drive past quaint Assamese countryside and lush green tea gardens brought us to the Neamati Ghat jetty where the magnificent vessel – "Charaidew" was moored. In another half an hour's time the Charaidew began its long voyage all the way to Guwahati and like all long distance cruises, there was excitement in the air. A group of visitors from UK, all IT professionals and two NRI families along with the crew made up the party.

As the vessel meandered its way through the river, I sat on the sundeck with a beer can accompanied by a guest from UK who revealed that he was undertaking the voyage so as to rekindle the memories of his grandfather who had worked in a renowned Tea Garden of Assam and passed away soon after the 1947 partition. He had the address of the graveyard where his grandfather was buried and the ever friendly ABNC staff had promised to take him there so that he could pay his homage to his ancestors.

As the luxury vessel cruised along, the fascinating riverside views dotted with charming Assamese villages and the appearance of small towns made for a truly ethereal sight. I was politely approached by one of the smartly clad crew members of the Charaidew who introduced me to the luxurious ambience of the vessel's interiors. In all there were 12 luxuriously appointed cabins that had all the modern amenities that a discerning guest would look forward to. Along with air-conditioners, each cabin was equipped with a shower cubicle and the interiors were designed ethnically with a harmonious blend of bamboo and wood. I especially liked the indigenously manufactured rattan chairs for their comfort.

The cabins being on the Upper Deck meant that one had access to the panoramic riverside views from the comfortable confines of the cabins viz-a-viz the spacious sliding windows.

I was ushered into the well stocked bar also on the Upper Deck where the choicest of liquors and spirits was readily available. As far as the cuisine is concerned, it can range from the very best of Assamese to the nouveau Indian and Continental. Our first stop was at the medieval city of Sibsagar. In the days of yore Sibsagar was a military bastion of the mighty Ahom rulers who ruled supreme for more than 600 years. Sibsagar is one of Assam's principal centres of tea and oil. It is here that the regional headquarters of the Oil and Natural Gas Commission is located.

Modern day Sibsagar is a town, which is rapidly developing into one of the most vibrant towns of Upper Assam. This charming town which is also a District of the same name has earned the distinction of having the highest number of oil fields in Assam.. After a leisurely bout of sight seeing in Sibsagar, we once again hopped into Charaidew for our onward journey.



On Day 3 our vessel anchored at Majuli – the world's largest riverine island. Here we sampled the very best of Assam's rich socio-religious tradition and heritage viz a viz the monasteries and witnessed the unique dance and drama performance enacted by the locals. According to our well-informed guide, Majuli has been short listed by the UNESCO as a World Heritage Site (Natural) and it is just a matter of time for Majuli to be conferred with that coveted status. As we returned to our vessel we cruised along the river for another two hours before anchoring for our night halt.

Day 4 was largely spent cruising and to break the monotony of the cruise, we made a brief halt at Jamuguri, renowned for its fascinating tribal population. We spent an hour or so going on soft

treks along the narrow winding village alleyways and chatting up with the innocent village folks. The guests from UK especially were taken aback by the richness of the tribal dwellers of Jamuguri and the sight of the tribal womenfolk plying on their indigenous looms to produce exotically designed shawls was a kind of an eye-opener for them as it was for me.

By late afternoon we had reached the outer contours of the world famous Kaziranga National Park, the last remaining habitat of the rare and endangered One –horned Rhinoceros. One of our guests sighted the elusive Rhino and there was a herd of spotted Deers on a marshy stretch that grazed on the lush evergreen grassland. This was just the tip of the iceberg as far as the fascination with Kaziranga is concerned. The best was yet to come. After a good night's sleep, we woke up to a cacophony of bird sounds and after freshening up had our breakfast on the Upper Deck. All the while, our vessel was literally gliding with the flow of the river. Today (Day 5) was to be a big day for all of us as it would be our first real brush with Kaziranga's wilderness. Two 4 Wheel Drive vehicles were waiting to transport us to the Western Range of the Kaziranga National Park.

As we rattled along the meandering jungle trail on our four-wheeled drive through the foggy landscape, there was a nip in the air and as we traveled deep inside the forest we became excited at the sight of untamed One-Horned Rhinos grazing in the grasslands of Kaziranga. As we traversed deeper inside the forest, we spotted varied species like the Hollock Gibbons, Capped Langurs (they are cute), Bristly Hare, Sloth Bears, the Swamp Deer, Sambhar and Barasingha. If luck is on your side, you might even spot the elusive Gangetic Dolphins that are a treat to watch.

After a fun filled day out in the wilderness of Kaziranga, we returned weary and tired to our luxurious vessel. After freshening up and a stimulating pre dinner drinks session we savoured the very best of Assamese cuisine. That night we all slept like logs and the memories of the day's eventful trip in the haunting wilderness of Kaziranga made us enthralled with the mystery that is Kaziranga.

Early next morning, as the vessel had covered enough nautical miles to be in close proximity to Kaziranga's Central Range meant more wildlife adventures awaiting us for the day. Apart from the early morning elephant rides and jungle safaris, visits to the neighbouring Tea Garden Estates was truly a very rewarding experience.

We undertook a leisurely trek along the border of Hathikuli tea estate, which belongs to Tata Tea accompanied by a naturalist. The breathtaking sight of hundreds of tribal women plucking tealeaves on to their cane baskets hanging at their backs was straight out of the "Garden of Eden".

The last three days were spent hopping and sight seeing in places like Tezpur, Guwahati and Sualkochi, each one more interesting than the other. While Tezpur with its lush green tea gardens and its proximity to Orang National Park was terrific so was the capital city of Assam – Guwahati, with the holy Kamakshya Temple perched atop the Nilachal Hills. For the quintessential Tantrik believers, this temple is the ultimate.

As the gateway city of the North East India, Guwahati has indeed come of age. Trendy multi cuisine restaurants, neon lit bars, deluxe hotels and a youth brigade which is constantly evolving to the demands of the new age are characteristic features of the city.

For shopping, Guwahati has numerous centrally located markets like the Fancy Bazaar, Paltan Bazaar, Ulubari, Ganeshguri and GNB Road. A popular haunt of the tourists to Guwahati is the Assam State Emporium and we purchased a few Bamboo and cane products. The guests from UK were more interested in the traditionally manufactured shawls, wall hangings and fancy Assamese hats.

Traveler's Fact File:

Getting There:

Guwahati the capital of the state of Assam is well connected by air, rail and road to the rest of India.

Spice Jet offers direct flights to Guwahati from Delhi and Kolkata.

Guwahati is also well connected by Rail and is linked to Delhi by Rajdhani Express, North East Express etc. There is also a direct Express Train linking Guwahati to Mumbai vis-à-vis the Dadar Express, to Chennai by Coromandal Express, to Calcutta by Kamrup Express and Saraighat Express.

For any further information and reservations on long distance river cruises in the Brahmaputra, please feel free to contact –

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Mandovi Apartments,

1st Floor, GNB Road, Ambari,

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MONGOLIA THRILLS AND CHILLS



The trip to Mongolia is definitely the road less travelled. It is a country of incredible natural beauty that still preserves the traditional nomadic way of life.

We travelled to Mongolia on the Trans-Siberian rail route from Russia, catching a train that took us from far eastern Siberia to Mongolia's capital Ulaanbaatar. The Mongolian steppe completely captivated our sense of adventure and the simpler way of living. Mongolia doesn't even have a beaten track. A trip here guarantees running on vast land with no signs except the keen sense of navigation skills of the driver. Horses, cows, camels, sheep and goats roam the countryside freely in Mongolia.

Staying in Ger camps is an amazing experience. The gers are made up of wooden columns and felt covers held together with rope. They are usually painted in vibrant colours with intricate patterns. The visibility of sky from the tent roof is mindblowing.

The fifth largest desert in the world, the Gobi Desert spreads across both China and Mongolia.

Sand dunes Khongoryn Els is popularly known as the "Singing Sands". The sands have attractive curves which end in a sharp edge, making wave like patterns on the sand. They continually change shape due to wind and reflect yellow-white colours as the intensity of light changes during the day. The Flaming Cliffs site, also known as Bayanzag. They are famous for being the site of the very first dinosaur egg discovery.

The sunrises and sunsets blaze like fire on these cliffs and at these magical times of day you will see fifty shades of red and orange in the rocks. Yol Valley (Vulture Valley): is situated in the east north part of ZuunSaikhan mountain. It is very wide at the entrance, it narrows gradually into a remarkable gorge a long spring winds its way through.

Lastly, we explored Ulaanbaatar and visited the Gandan Monastery. A drive to Hustain Nuruu National Park to see rare and endangered Przewalski's Horse. Mongolia gave us a good balance of adventure and Thrill



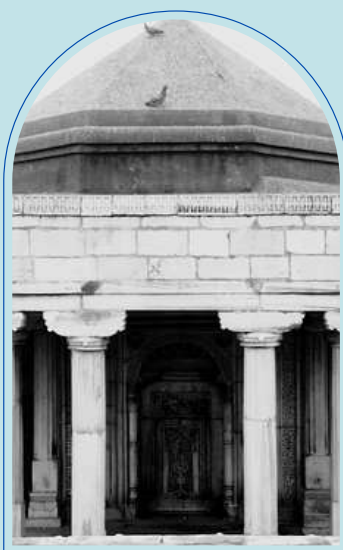
-Written by Anita Singh

Sultan Ghari: A Historical Monument Trapped In Time

Not far from one of Delhi's most-visited monuments is one of India's best-kept secrets. Almost 800 years old it is also oldest surviving Islamic tomb in India – The mausoleum of Nasir ud-din Mahmud brother of Razia Sultan and eldest son of Sultan Shams -ud-din Iltutmish (1167-1236). Sultan Ghari was built in 1231-1232, the only earlier royal mausoleum is of Qutub-ud-din Aibak's tomb in Lahore.

Built in the form of a fort, this mausoleum is the only one, in India and (as gleaned from unconfirmed sources) in the world, (which houses' a prince or a king) that does not have a tomb covering the burial chamber.

A mausoleum is an external free-standing building constructed as a monument enclosing the interment space or burial chamber of a deceased person or people. A monument without the interment is a cenotaph. The word 'mausoleum' derives from the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus (near modern-day Bodrum in Turkey), the grave of King Masuolus, the Persian Strap of Caria, whose large tomb was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.



The fort like Mausoleum

Sultan Ghari is located in an isolated area and is an octagonal structure sunk within a courtyard on a high square plinth, enclosed by stone walls with circular corner bastions. The octagonal platform set within the courtyard forms the roof of the subterranean crypt below, an arrangement not found again in India until the 17th century. The tomb is built on the site of a Hindu temple and incorporates Hindu masonry, including lintels and sculpted 7th-century panels.



Viewed from inside and also from the entrance, even today, Sultan Ghari gives an impression of a fortalices than of a mausoleum. The bastions give an impression of guardhouses protecting the monument. Made of red sandstone, they still stand proudly, protecting their master.



The Sultan Ghari complex is a square, walled enclosure built of sandstone, which gives it a beautiful burnished hue. The monument has strong bastions topped by shallow domes in each of its four corners.

The Mausoleum Of A Warrior or a Pir

No one knows how and when it happened but, over the centuries, Nasir-ud-din's tomb accured the status of a dargha and the locals believe it holds the remains of their Pir Baba. People of all faith go there on every Thursday to offer their prayers.



As the legend goes, the prince's days might have been rough, but his nights were a "bed of roses". Every night, he slept on a bed laid with rose petals. A slave girl was tasked with arranging the petals just so.

One day, they say, the girl succumbed to temptation and decided to see what it felt like to lie down on the said bed. The prince was scheduled to return late, so she climbed into the bed, which was so comfortable that she drifted off to sleep—only to be woken up by an angry

prince five hours later.

Nasir-ud-din dragged her from the bed and ordered her to be flogged. While under the lash, the girl laughed hysterically. The more she was flogged, the more she laughed. An irate prince commanded that she be whipped harder, but it did nothing to halt her mirth.

Finally, completely bewildered, Nasir-ud-din put a stop to it and asked her what exactly it was that she found quite so funny.

The girl brazenly replied that if sleeping on his bed for a mere five hours could leave her feeling so vulnerable, how much weaker it must leave him, who slept on it all his life!

The baffled prince stood silent. For a man known as Malik-us-Sharq (king of the east), acknowledged for bravery and grit, to be called a weakling was outrageous.

She then told him, "You will never be a king of the land but will be the king of souls."

Her prophecy eventually came true—today, centuries later, largely unaware of this story, the locals from Sultanpur, Rangpur, Masoodpur and Mahipalpur in South West Delhi, visit to offer prayers and address him as Pir Baba.



The chamber where Nasir-ud-din and two other unnamed tombs lay is a sight of deep devotion and is steeped in the aroma of incense, oil lamps and candle wax. The floor is covered in flowers, oil, turmeric and other ritual offerings. Such is the aura of the place that one can hear the prayers of the faithful.

Every day with the sunset, this monument in the posh locality of Vasant Kunj in South West Delhi yearns for the attention it deserves. Not only is it a resting place of a great warrior of huge importance in Indian History but also it happens to be the first known Islamic tomb built in India. In the world map (Some Historians believe) is the only Mausoleum of a Prince without a tomb covering the burial chamber. The prince who died young still waits for his moment of glory.



-By Narendra Tripathi

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Source: <http://www.monumentaltrail.com>

Patriarchy wins every time.....



When the home she is born into, is suddenly not her home anymore.

When despite giving her all, the house she is married-into is still not her home after years.

When she is shown the way out, each time she voices her opinion in 'her parent's house' or 'her husband's house'.

When a woman feels empowered, showing the daughter-in-law 'her place'.

When a girl is expected to hold all 'fun' for the time till she is married, and then take on responsibilities as soon as she is!

When a woman dies needing rescue, because the family she is born into does not 'interfere', as she belongs to a different family!

When a victim is suggested to keep quiet to keep her image clean!

When the most-used verbal abuse terms centre around females (and females use these terms feeling equal!)

When a girl feels empowered every time she behaves like boys.

When the workplace recognises male counterparts, despite women counterparts being more efficient, sincere, and multi-tasking.

When women shy away from voicing their opinion, just to 'gel-in'.

When despite all the welcome changes in society, the man 'helps' in the house chores - they are not his primary duty.

When a half-naked man chastises women for their choice of wear.

I choose to challenge!!

Will that help? Maybe, maybe not...

Should that stop me? Definitely Not!!



- Kavita (musings and meraki)

GRANDPARENTS-A BOND BEYOND WORDS



While I watch my child swim like a mermaid, a lady came and wished me. She shared, "I have attended a few parenting sessions of yours and we are fascinated to hear about your real-life incidents and the ease with which you bring on the shelf the issues pertaining to child development." She continued with a slight grin and told, "We have many

times tried to google your topics but the information you share is seldom on it!" I smiled and felt humble. I had no reply except to thank her for the encouraging compliment. She went, leaving behind a stream of memories that crawled me back to a terrain that sinks deep inside, I seldom visit. My google is my grandmom, a fair and lovely lady whom I lost some 13 years back when she left the world blissfully at 82. When I entered my motherhood, I tried to replicate the way she brought me up, absolutely carbon copying her ways. She has been my guidance and reference book for upbringing my daughter and to help mothers' like me to bring up theirs' without any whims, fancies, and frills. Going back to the traditional way is the best. It's rightly said for a leap you have to move a few steps backward.

I vividly remember my first career stint at New Delhi 16 years back from my holy city-Amritsar. Before that, except for a few college trips, I had hardly ventured alone away from home for so long. Hence, working in a new city was challenging. Every fortnight the homesickness would thump and my peon knew exactly when to book my home ticket. I was the only Punjabi in my office and somehow my colleagues had a fascination for Amritsar, its delicious food, mithai, and traditional phulkari and gota suits, not to miss the famous Punjabi juttis. I always received special treatment at the office and most of them looked forward to my Amritsar visit. I still remember, just before leaving, my workstation would have paste slips with orders written. A huge list of paparh, vadhiya, motichoor laddus, patisa, suits, and dupattas. Uff ! It was an endless list. I would carry a single bag and would return with 3 bags full. It was fun. Shatabdi would mostly reach Amritsar an hour late. Dad was always waiting near my coach and we would drive back amidst the pin-drop silent Amritsar roads that would otherwise be bustling during the day.

The tranquility of midnight was a respite from the Delhi madness. Everything would look so small against the gigantic capital. And the most delightful of all was entering our beautiful campus that had only 8 spacious homes. The fragrance of Madhu Malti and Raat ki rani would wipe away the tiredness of the journey. The road towards my lovely home would be filled with amaltus. In the night the yellow would emanate meditative energy and optimism. Our home was magnificent, the comfort and ease of living in government accommodation is unmatched, even the luxurious, too perfect apartments of metros stand nowhere close to them. The royalty of having big lawns and verandahs was enchanting.

I distinctly remember our entrance gate was very small, probably in those days, people had open hearts and neighbours lived together like extended families. I would open the gate for dad to park the car in the adjacent driveway. Overlooking the lawn and the verandah was my grand mom's room. Biji would always be awake till I reached home. For her waking up at this hour was too late. She would sneak outside from her window. I was welcomed with her charming smile. Her child-like excitement was indescribable when I would keep my luggage in her room and she would hug me. I would often argue with her for not sleeping on time as I would have met her in the morning. But her embrace said it all! I knew how desperately she waited for me. The next two days would be an amusement for both of us. I often felt sad to see her crippled movements and how small her space was, her room, and a few walks with a cane in the lawn. Winter afternoons and summer evenings, she would spend sitting in the verandah watching passers-by. Hence, I rejoiced to break her monotony. We would envelop into our car for what we called 'our weekend gehris'. Mom dad while sipping their evening tea in our lush green lawn would laugh as they knew we are unstoppable when together.

Me and biji would wander around our famous Lawrence road and devour the famous gol gappas, chaat, and finally our favourite faluda kulfi. Finally, Sunday would rush away and Monday 5 AM was the time to be back to the pavilion. Biji would always insist me to sleep with her so that she could wake me up on time. Her pat on my forehead would never rest until I would fall asleep. She would hug me and send me away with her comforting smile. I used to give her fortnight pocket money. She would take it with utmost pride. Many years later, it was the same money that she gifted me back as my marriage gift! Meanwhile, a splash of water brought me back to the poolside, where I sat waiting for my daughter to come out. That day, I travelled into my subconscious that I rarely visit. Today when I hold the mike, stand in front of a jubilant audience, the moment I speak, the words randomly keep coming from somewhere in the cosmos. No books, qualifications' or technology can teach the best lessons of life. To sound interesting, you have to experience life in a subtle, delicate way. I strongly feel, she helps me with ideas so captivating that people can't find them on google. I looked up in the sky, tearing apart the smoggy Gurgaon air, a cool breeze passes through me. I feel the same pat on my head. While driving back to our cosmetic apartments, no verandahs, and lawns overlooking the entrance. No one peeps out of the window anymore. No wrinkled faces out there to wait. I carry my city in my heart and my grandma in my Sanskars, unfolding the plethora of knowledge she left for me that I spill over wherever I can!



- Shared by Meenu Chopra,
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DARE ANYBODY INSULTS MY BELOVED ALTO



This was a few days ago when I was driving down to my bank in my Mercedes Benz. I mean my Alto 800. I can only dream about owning a Mercedes till Ambanis or Tatas decide to own me. Kya zindagi hogi tab! Ek dum Jhakaas!!

While everybody in the family gets to inherit or buy decent cars, I get to inherit only Alto 800. It's been ten years now! Not that I am complaining. I honestly love the car. I am very happy with it. It is small. It is light. It is easily manoeuvrable. I don't have to worry about its parking also. If I want, I can take it straight into the safal dairy and park it there, without any hassles. It is so compact and hence manageable. Most importantly, it gives a great mileage. Mileage is THE criteria for us Indians. Isn't it? Even for a marriage. Marriage too should give a great mileage to be qualified for a good marriage.

Jokes apart. Alto is an easy peasy car. Unfortunately it drives a very low respect on the roads. People think nothing of you if you are driving an Alto and tend to bully you. Although, for not a very confident driver like me, it perfectly serves the purpose.

If you ask me, I actually always wanted a yellow Nano. I would find it very cute. I would call it 'Little Nimbu'. Would dream of just me and my doggie driving away in our "Little Nimbu". I wanted a yellow one specifically because yellow is strikingly visible even from a long distance. It would have saved me a lot of hassle while driving. Other drivers on the road would have spotted a swinging car on the road from far also and given me way. Hence, saved their lives and mine too.

However, my family did not let me buy it.

Anyhow bygones are bygones. Why hold on to the nano past.

The other day when I was driving down to my bank, I noticed a Fortuner owner trying to bully me. I was on a busy service road, which had cars parked on both it's sides. Honestly, I get really pissed when I see service roads being used as parking lots. Sooo not done! I had no where to go except for moving straight. However, this guy kept honking at me.

I initially tried to ignore him. Phir usko Mann hee Mann dilli waali khoob gaaliyaan dee. Finally, popped my head out of my car window and screamed, "kya hae... Udd ke jaaon kya...!!!" But no, the arse didn't budge. I understood. All he was trying to do was bully me. I had to fix that guy some how. Badi gaadi hae to kya. Road iske pita ji ki ho gayee...!! Alto ki koi izzat nahin..!!

I stopped my car right there in the middle of the service road and turned my radio on. As it is it was my favorite Kishore da singing. I just wish it was "aa dekho zaraa. Kis mein kitna hae dum..." It have been the most befitting song for that situation.

Anyways, bugger kept honking but I did not budge. Finally, he got down from his elephant. I mean his Fortuner. He came and I pretended that I was not able to start my car.

"Kya madam, can't you hear I have been

Honking for long.." he said in a very rude tone.

"Bhaiya, I can hear your honking very well. But it seems, you have a weak eyesight and you are not able to see what's going on in here. Something has gone wrong and I am not able to start my car..." I said.

"Ab teen lakh ke gaadi leke ghoomoge to yahi hoga.." he was sarcastic.

O Teri. How dare he said that! How dare he insults my beloved Alto! My Dhanno! My jeevan sathi! I have spent more time with my Alto than I have with my miyan. I have such beautiful memories of going veggie and grocery shopping in my Alto. Picking up and dropping my son for his endless classes in my Alto. Going for my yoga classes in my Alto. How dare he look down upon my Alto (although technically from a Fortuner, he will have to look down only).

After all, gaadi ke bhee sentiments hote hain!

"Ooooooh hellooo... aapki gaadi tees lakh ki hae na...?" I was annoyed.

"Haan ji madam ji." He responded with a very nasty smile and tones of annoying arrogance on his face.

"To aapki gaadi aur meri gaadi mein sirf ek "zero" ka difference hae aur yahi teen (3) lakh ki gaadi ne aaj aapki tees (30) lakh ki gaadi ko beech sadak mein rok diya! Woh haathi aur chinti ki kahani suni hae na...!! Ya suna doon yahin pe?" I lashed out.

The guy quietly got back into his truck.



- written by Somali Bammi
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See you in the next edition