

VOL 37.0 | JUNE EDITION

Initiative of WE Foundation

WOMENSHINE

A portrait of a woman with dark hair, wearing a grey blazer over a teal top and a pearl necklace. She is smiling and looking towards the camera.

**Priyanka
Acharya**

+

ENVIRONMENT STORIES
UNDISCOVERED INDIA
HEALTHY DIET FOR
MOTHERS
SUMMER DESSERTS

SHE LEADS
दिल से

Womenshine Celebrating



Thank you for showering us with love and support all the time

31-05-2023

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

CHIEF EDITOR'S LETTER

#SHINEON

APARNA MISHRA

Founder , Women Shine

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Celebrating **3 years** of Empowering Women, Inspiring Dreams, and making Voices heard!

Join us as we commemorate the incredible journey of Women Shine Magazine.

From uplifting stories to breaking barriers, we've shone a light on the brilliance and resilience of women everywhere.

Thank you for being part of our empowering community!

Here's to many more years of spreading positivity and empowering women to shine brighter than ever before.

Keep sharing your thoughts, and suggestions at connect@womenshine.in

Wishing you lots of love, light, and the best of happiness.

Aparna Mishra
Founder-Editor, Women Shine
#Shineonwomen

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WOMENSHINE



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WOMEN EMPOWERING THE WORLD: ENVIRONMENT PRESERVATION FOR COMBATTING CLIMATE CHANGE



Climate change has become one of the most pressing challenges of our time, with far-reaching consequences for our planet and future generations. As we seek effective solutions, the role of women in environment preservation and combating climate change has emerged as a powerful force for positive change. Women around the world are playing pivotal roles as leaders, innovators, and change-makers, bringing unique perspectives and contributions to the forefront of environmental sustainability. In this article, I explore the critical role of women in preserving the environment and their invaluable contributions towards combating climate change.

Advocacy and Policy Influence:

Women are increasingly taking on leadership roles in advocating for environmental preservation. They are actively engaging in policy discussions, lobbying for sustainable practices, and shaping the environmental agenda at local, national, and international levels. Women leaders are instrumental in influencing policy decisions, driving climate action, and promoting sustainable development that takes into account gender equality and social justice.





Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security:

Women play a crucial role in agriculture, particularly in developing countries like India, where they contribute significantly to food production and security. With climate change affecting agricultural systems, women are at the forefront of adopting sustainable farming practices, promoting agroecology, and ensuring food sovereignty. Their knowledge of traditional farming methods and resilience in adapting to changing climatic conditions are vital for building climate-resilient agricultural systems.

Conservation and Biodiversity Protection:

Women have been at the forefront of conservation efforts, protecting biodiversity, and preserving natural ecosystems. They are leading community-based initiatives, managing protected areas, and implementing sustainable resource management practices. Women's deep connection with nature, traditional ecological knowledge, and nurturing instincts make them powerful advocates for safeguarding the environment and promoting sustainable conservation practices.

Renewable Energy and Clean Technologies:

The transition to a low-carbon economy heavily relies on renewable energy and clean technologies. Women are playing an essential role in driving this transition by embracing renewable energy solutions, promoting energy efficiency, and championing clean technologies. Women entrepreneurs are leading the way in renewable energy startups and initiatives, fostering innovation and creating a greener future.

Education and Awareness:

Empowering women through education and raising awareness about climate change and environmental issues is a critical aspect of combatting climate change. Women are actively involved in educating communities, empowering future generations, and advocating for sustainable lifestyles. By fostering environmental literacy and inspiring behavioural changes, women are driving a shift towards more sustainable practices at the grassroots level.



Resilience and Adaptation:

Climate change disproportionately affects marginalized communities, with women often being the most vulnerable. However, women demonstrate remarkable resilience and adaptability in the face of climate-related challenges. They are leading efforts in climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and community resilience-building. Women's knowledge, resourcefulness, and ability to mobilize communities are key factors in enhancing adaptive capacity and building climate resilience.

Women's leadership and involvement in environmental preservation and combatting climate change are indispensable. Their contributions are shaping a more sustainable and equitable future. As we work towards combating climate change, it is crucial to recognize and amplify the voices and roles of women in environmental sustainability. By empowering women and harnessing their expertise, we can accelerate progress towards a greener, more resilient, and sustainable world for generations to come.



- Written By : Shalini
Goyal Bhalla

From Waste to Wear: The Innovative Path to Sustainable Fashion

As we celebrate World Environment Day, it's a timely moment to explore the exciting advancements within the textile industry that are shaping our sustainable future. In recent years, textile waste has become an escalating global issue, with the Earth.org reporting in 2022 that an estimated \$500 billion is lost annually due to discarded clothes that are neither recycled nor donated. However, with mounting public awareness and a growing commitment toward a circular economy, this is set to change. The number of times a garment is worn has declined by around 36% in 15 years. The throwaway culture has worsened progressively over the years. At present, many items are worn only seven to ten times before being tossed. That's a decline of more than 35% in just 15 years.

TACKLING THE TEXTILE WASTE CHALLENGE

The fashion industry produces an estimated 92 million tons of textile waste each year, equivalent to a dump truck's worth of textiles being landfilled or incinerated every second. The fashion industry has recognized the problem and is responding with innovative approaches, turning the concept of 'waste to wear' into a reality. This entails giving new life to used and discarded garments, converting them into new textiles and products.



INNOVATIONS IN 'WASTE TO WEAR'

Numerous pioneering companies have turned their focus to addressing textile waste and promoting a sustainable fashion industry.

INNOVATIONS IN 'WASTE TO WEAR'

Swedish company re: new cell has made remarkable strides in recycling textiles. They've developed a unique process, breaking down used cotton and other natural fibres into a pulp which can be transformed into new textile fibres biologically identical to virgin ones. This circular technology has the potential to drastically reduce the carbon footprint of the fashion industry. According to the company's data, their Circulose® material emits 79% less CO2 compared to virgin cotton.

NATURE



Good for the world, good for you

WHATS TRENDING



RE:NEWCELL

Swedish company re: new cell has made remarkable strides in recycling textiles. They've developed a unique process, breaking down used cotton and other natural fibres into a pulp which can be transformed into new textile fibres biologically identical to virgin ones. This circular technology has the potential to drastically reduce the carbon footprint of the fashion industry. According to the company's data, their Circulose® material emits 79% less CO2 compared to virgin cotton.

EVONU

Evonu, a US-based textile innovations company, has developed NuCycl technology that transforms old clothing into high-quality, reusable fibres. These fibres, generated from discarded cotton apparel, are softer, stronger, and have a smaller environmental footprint compared to traditional cotton. A Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) by third-



party analysts indicates that the production of NuCycl fibre uses up to 98% less water and has a 90% lower carbon footprint than the production of virgin cotton.

ADIDAS & PARLEY FOR THE OCEANS

The collaboration between sportswear giant Adidas and environmental organization Parley for the Oceans is another testament to innovation in the 'waste to wear' realm. In 2020, they launched a line of athletic shoes made from recycled ocean plastic. Each pair of shoes prevents approximately 11 plastic bottles from entering the oceans, demonstrating the potential of transforming waste into commercially viable products.

ORANGE FIBER

Innovations in 'waste to wear' are not limited to recycling old textiles. The Italian company Orange Fiber uses byproducts from the citrus industry to produce sustainable fabrics. Using a patented process, cellulose is extracted from citrus peels and spun into a silk-like fabric. This approach represents a new way of conceiving textile production, leading to the creation of valuable raw materials from waste and supporting a circular economy in the fashion industry.



THE FUTURE OF 'WASTE TO WEAR'

While the above examples are inspiring, they still represent a small fraction of the global textile market. Therefore, the role of consumers, policymakers, and the broader industry is crucial in fostering and scaling these solutions.

Fashion Revolution's 2021 Consumer Insights Report highlights that 73% of consumers believe it's important for brands to have a positive impact on the environment. As consumers, we can drive the change toward sustainable fashion by choosing to support brands that prioritize eco-friendly production methods, use recycled materials, and have transparent supply chains.

Simultaneously, policymakers need to encourage circularity in the fashion industry. For instance, the European Union's "New Circular Economy Action Plan" aims to ensure that the textile industry minimizes waste and makes sustainable products the norm.

The 'waste to wear' approach is a beacon of hope in the quest for a sustainable fashion industry. As we celebrate World Environment Day, it's time to reflect upon and act toward embracing these innovative solutions. Through a concerted effort from consumers, brands, innovators, and regulators, we can transform the fashion industry into a model of sustainability and circularity, effectively ensuring that the clothes of today do not become the waste of tomorrow.

**- Written By : Palak
Sharma**



SAY NO TO PLASTIC



In 1970, Leo Baekeland invented the Bakelite- the first plastic. Since then plastics have been widely adopted in various industries. Furthermore, plastic was seen as a viable alternative to many other uses of that era. It was cheap to produce, strong enough and resistant to corrosion.

However, the fact that plastic does not decompose is the main concern. It can take 400-500 years for a plastic bottle to completely decompose. A plastic bag found in a grocery store can take up to 1000 years to completely decompose.

The effects of plastic on animals are very clear. When animals consume plastic, their digestive systems can't break it down. In the marine environment, plastic can cause damage to fish and other aquatic organisms.

In humans, plastics can actually enter tissues through the food chain. Large pieces of plastic eventually break down into smaller particles called microplastics. Scientists have found that these plastic particles are carcinogenic, which means they increase the risk of cancer in humans.



Plastic has been introduced into our environment and there is no changing that fact. However, we can contribute to reducing its footprint by recycling and using eco-friendly alternatives. Also, we have to be responsible in disposing of plastic, doing so will create a safer and cleaner environment for all life on earth.



- Written By :
Prof. Pramod K. Singh



PRIYANKA ACHARYA – REDEFINING THE ‘GHAR KI LAXMI’ IDENTITY WITH FINANCIAL EDUCATION



When a woman is asked to introduce herself, she typically answers – I am a housewife, I am an entrepreneur, I am a manager, I am a student or similar! However, there is one significant identity she has – ‘Laxmi’ of the family! However, as prevails in our culture, the woman of the house is either not involved or minimally involved in family finances, making her forget the identity of ‘gruhlaxmi’. With this seed of thought in mind, Priyanka Acharya is on a life purpose to change the face of financial education in India & across the world! From childhood, human conversations and thought processes intrigued her and she had strong aspirations to become a psychologist.



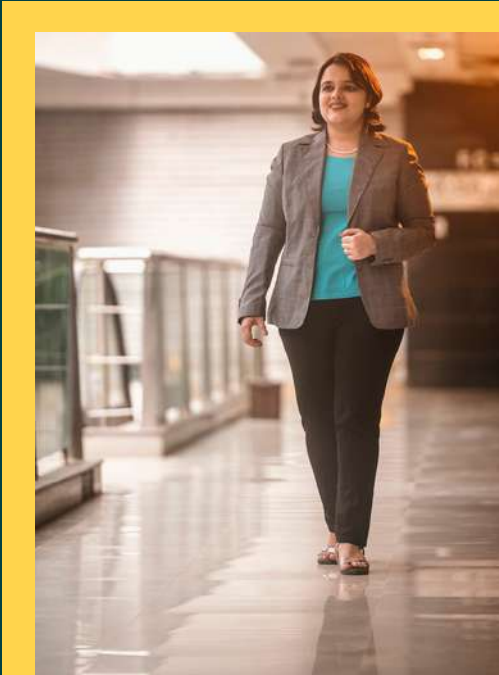
However, being a high scoring student in school, her parents persuaded her to take commerce. She completed her MBA too in Finance specialization. After 5 years of corporate life, she took up a faculty role at Bombay Stock Exchange where she got opportunities to conduct financial awareness programs.

Meanwhile, she found a new passion in creating, publishing and presenting research papers at various management conferences. Her passion with 17 research papers soon turned into a teaching opportunity and brought her back to her first love – psychology. She gave up watching television in mid-2016 so that she could focus on reading, writing and brainstorming for her work. With all of this, she pleasantly realized that thinking, psychology, communication have a deep connection in finance domain too. She was finally thankful to her family to make her pursue a career away from her own decided one!



She carefully experimented various things in financial education and incorporated her own proprietary in 2019! In 2021, she moved further and incorporated an OPC (One Person Company) Private Limited organization with her young dynamic team members boosting her mission. Her brand is named as '**LaxmiGyaanTM**' which presently focusses on 2 core purposes:

1. Financial education for women – the spine of the family! She conducts interesting & innovative theme-based campaigns, festival-based workshops, sessions on beaches & weddings too! She has published a Hindi book '**Laxmi Gyaan se Laxmi Maan**' and hosts 2 podcast shows – Ek Chuski Finance and LaxmiGyaan Library. Families also love Priyanka's unbiased financial consulting which is purely focussed on helping them finetune their finances.
2. Lack of education brings lack of professionalism. To solve this for '**Agents**', Priyanka is India's first health insurance focused professionalism educator with her unique concept of MBA – Mediclaim Business Administration. She conducts online, offline, inhouse batches and has a Playstore App '**LaxmiGyaan**' too!



Apart from her business, she loves to mentor startups, teach students and is actively a content creator on social media. She has earned her spot in the list of “[Top Women in Finance 2023](#)” too!



Other awards bestowed upon Priyanka Acharya are the Inspiring Gem of India, Woman Power in Learning & Development, and more. Her best award is the support of both her families especially her 10-year-old son who constantly encourages her to fulfil her dreams.

Priyanka’s formula for success is Simplicity + Consistency + Love –(minus) Crap! Priyanka has been learning continuously through certifications, courses and many avenues. Priyanka says that true to her name, which means ‘Favourite (Priy) – Episode (Anka), she aspires to be the Favourite Episode of every Financial Story!

-Team WS

FREEDOM & ADVENTURE

“There is no limit to what we, as women, can accomplish.”

RamKripa Ananthan is a name to reckon with. RamKripa Ananthan, also known as Kripa Ananthan, is the world's first woman automobile designer. She is a graduate of BITS Pilani and IDC, IIT Bombay.

Ananthan has been a very active and adventurous person, She has covered the distance from Manali to Srinagar on her Bajaj Avenger bike. Her inspiration from the outdoors helped her enter the car designing industry.

Ananthan was the first woman design chief in India who got the responsibility to lead a project of designing a car. While working on XUV 500, Ramkripa was asked to take inspiration from a cheetah for the design process. And most of the designs are now based on nature.



She has several feathers in her cap from setting up a world-class design facility at Mahindra Design Studio, Mumbai, and handling the design of a wide portfolio, including SUVs, PickUps, buses, trucks, tractors, and construction equipment. Some of the recent products from the studio are Thar, XUV, Marazzo, Yuvo, and Jivo Ananthan is a true gender bender. As she has taken forward the Mahindra Group's design philosophy of 'Freedom and Adventure',



In her words “An automobile designer is an artist with a difference. Using their experience and interests as their palette for inspiration, their creations bring metal to life and lend power to the automaker's aspiration.”

Design is about everything, about every element in the system, talking together”— As the lines & form blend effortlessly with design is about everything, about every element in the system talking together”— As the lines & form blend effortlessly with aerodynamics & manufacturing techniques,

Ramkripa Ananthan is a known face in the automotive industry that helped Mahindra revolutionize the SUV segment.

The former Head of Design at Mahindra & Mahindra, Ramkripa Ananthan led the team that designed the

Mahindra XUV500, XUV300, Marazzo, Thar and XUV700. She also contributed to designing the Bolero and Scorpio. After leaving Mahindra last year, Ananthan has branched out to set up her design studio, and she has now created a concept electric vehicle. This is a small EV prototype, using upcycled materials, for last-mile connectivity. This will help to lessen the carbon footprint by 20%. This 52-year young automotive stylist has revolutionized the automobile industry from SUVs now to EVs.

In Alfred Tennyson's lines an ode to this passionate lady



“For men may come and men may go, But I go on forever.”



- Written By : Dr Preeti Talwar

HEALTHY DIET FOR MOTHERS

A healthy diet is essential for all individuals, but it is especially important for mothers who need to maintain their health and energy levels while also providing adequate nutrition for their growing child. Here are some tips for a healthy diet for mothers:

Ø **Eat a variety of fruits and vegetables:** Fruits and vegetables are a great source of essential nutrients and fibre, which can help to keep you healthy and feeling full. Aim to eat a rainbow of colours to get a wide range of vitamins and minerals.

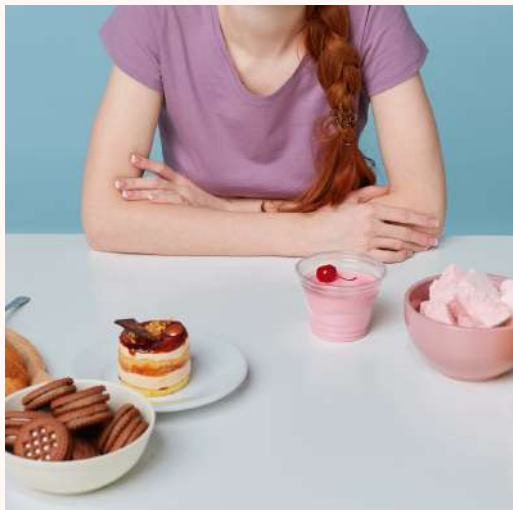
Ø **Choose whole grains:** Whole grains such as brown rice, and quinoa are rich in fibre and other essential nutrients. These can help to keep you feeling full and satisfied, while also providing energy.

Ø **Consume enough protein:** Protein is essential for muscle growth and repair & also important for maintaining muscle mass and preventing age-related muscle loss. Good sources of protein include lean meats, poultry, fish, eggs, beans, and nuts.



Ø **Choose healthy fats:** Healthy fats, such as omega-3 fatty acids, can help lower the risk of heart disease and cognitive decline. Good sources of healthy fats include fatty fish, nuts, seeds, and olive oil.

Ø **Avoid trans fats and saturated fats:** Trans fats and saturated fats can increase the risk of heart disease, so it's important to limit their intake. Avoid processed foods and choose lean proteins and low-fat dairy products.



Ø **Limit processed foods and high-sugar foods:**

Processed foods and high-sugar foods can be high in calories and low in nutrients. Aim to limit these in your diet and instead focus on whole, nutrient-dense foods.

Ø **Limit sodium intake:** As women age, they become more susceptible to high blood pressure, so it's important to limit sodium intake to reduce the risk of hypertension. Avoid high-sodium processed foods and try to use herbs and spices to flavour food instead of salt.

Ø **Get enough calcium and vitamin D:** Women above 40 years of age are at a higher risk of osteoporosis, so it's important to get enough calcium and vitamin D in the diet. Good sources of calcium include dairy products and fortified foods, while vitamin D can be obtained from exposure to sunlight or supplements.

Ø **Choose nutrient-dense foods:** As the body's metabolism slows down with age, it's important to choose nutrient-dense foods that provide a high amount of nutrients for a low amount of calories. Examples of nutrient-dense foods include leafy green vegetables, berries, whole grains, and lean proteins.

Ø **Stay hydrated:** Drinking enough water is essential for overall health, and it can also help to keep you feeling full. Aim to drink at least 8 cups of water per day, and more if you are breastfeeding.



In addition to a healthy diet, regular exercise, stress management, and getting enough sleep are also important for maintaining good health and well-being.

Ø **Exercise regularly:** Regular exercise can help maintain muscle mass, bone density, and cardiovascular health. Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise most days of the week.



Ø **Manage stress:** Chronic stress can increase the risk of chronic diseases, so it's important to find ways to manage stress, such as meditation, yoga, or deep breathing exercises.

Ø **Get enough sleep:** Sleep is important for overall health and well-being. Aim for 7-8 hours of sleep per night and practice good sleep hygiene habits, such as avoiding electronic devices before bedtime.



DO'S AND DON'TS IN FOOD HABITS:

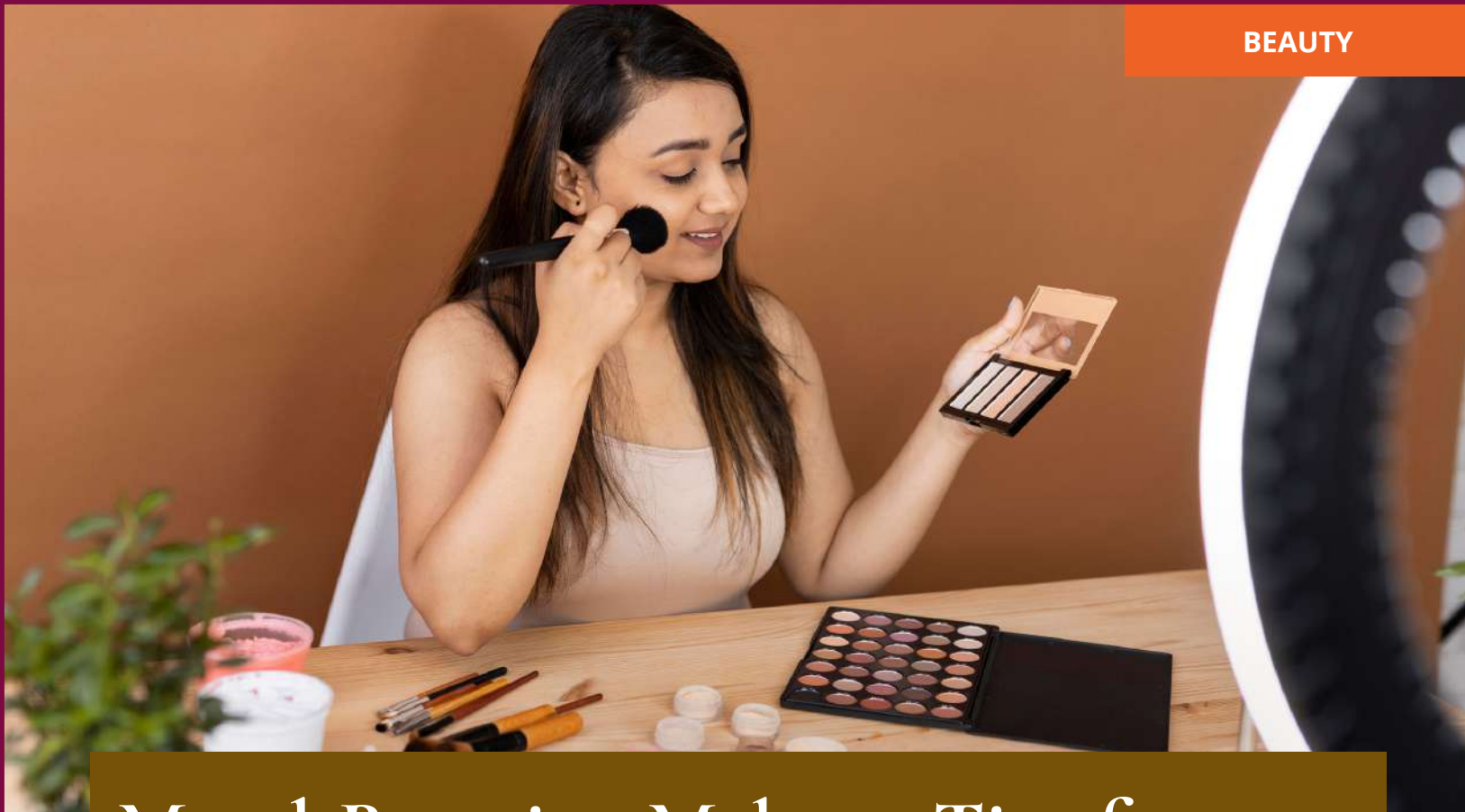
- ∅ Do choose whole, unprocessed foods as much as possible.
- ∅ Do limit caffeine intake, especially later in the day, to promote better sleep.
- ∅ Don't skip meals, as this can lead to overeating and poor food choices.
- ∅ Don't consume high-sugar foods, as they can be high in calories and low in nutrients.

In addition to the above tips. Regular check-ups with a healthcare provider are also important to monitor any health issues and ensure that medications are being taken correctly.

By adopting a healthy diet and lifestyle habits, one can reduce the risk of chronic diseases and age-related health problems. Incorporating these tips into daily life can lead to improved health and well-being.



**- Written By :
Dt. Ranu Singh**



Mood-Boosting Makeup Tips for 2023



As years go by and the makeup and fashion industry are ever-changing their needs and wants. 2023, looks like a fashionable year ahead because of the ever-changing suave styles that have taken over this year miraculously and the top five looks for this year are discussed here.

1. COORDINATE YOUR EYE COLOUR WITH YOUR EYE-MAKEUP -

Eyes are the prime beholders of beauty they say, however certain eye shapes and colours showcase the eye more prominently and when matched with outfits even more! Understanding the hues

of colour that work best is very important and mandatory to understand. For instance, those with brown eyes, have blue eyeliners that make them look beautiful and cool-toned hues such as a light blue eyeliner would make the entire look effortless and casual. For all brown-eyed beauties, pick out your best blue eye pencil to look mesmerising.

2. WARM UP THE EYELASH CURLER -

A beauty hack that has proven astounding wonders is all about heating up the eyelash curler with a blast of hair dryer and wondering what advantage it is. It is similar to how a hair curler would work after it has been heated. It definitely provides more beautifully done-up longer lash lines and looks more elegant and chic making your confidence level boost up.



3. EXFOLIATE YOUR LIPS -

Doing up the lips always and going the extra on the right technique matters the most now. Most of the proper techniques include a whole range of work such as - accurately setting lipstick with a lip liner but however all problems start if the lips are not smooth and are in particular very rough. Therefore, exfoliation is the key to all lip problems and roughness.

While browsing through an online or offline beauty store, ensure that a lip scrub or mask is always around or prepare one with rose petals by crushing them with milk at home for softer and plumper lips. These have more long-lasting effects.

4. MIX PEARLY EYESHADOW INTO YOUR FOUNDATION FOR GLOWY SKIN -

The recent trend with foundations all over the internet includes, luminous and glowy and achieving dewy looks using your foundation, matte went away long ago. To achieve this look, mixing a pinch of pearly white eyeshadow into the foundation stick or sponge would help the foundation look whiter and brighter overall without casting a heavy botched look. The addition of champagne or copper tones can also do miracles to the face and look aesthetically pleasing.



5. POWDERING THE EYE-LASHES DURING MASCARA -

Translucent powder over the eyelashes for a divine look? Never heard of it? Well, this is the time to switch the scene a little and after the application of a single coat of mascara, apply some translucent powder before diving into applying the second layer of mascara. To avoid clumpiness and make the lashes look fuller and long-lasting try this beauty hack. It not only looks voluminous but also much prettier and outstanding.



- Written By :
Sahana Sridhar

EMBRACING A SUSTAINABLE FASHION: MONA B INDIA

Mona B India embarked on its journey with a vision to tap into a less-explored market for sustainable and eco-friendly handbags and accessories. Recognizing the growing demand for environmentally conscious alternatives, we set out to create a brand that offers stylish products without compromising sustainability. By utilizing materials like recycled polyester, felt, and repurposed plastic bottles, we transformed waste into fashionable treasures.

Since our launch, we have experienced a remarkable 70% growth, and we are thrilled to see the Indian market responding so positively to our products and brand vision. It indicates a shift towards conscious consumerism and a greater awareness of the need for sustainable choices. We are committed to expanding our reach, introducing more innovative designs, and inspiring individuals to make a positive impact on the environment through their fashion.



At Mona B India, our business idea revolves around bringing a unique design vision to the forefront while maintaining sustainability as a core value. We believe that fashion can be both aesthetically appealing and environmentally responsible. By combining innovative design techniques with eco-friendly materials, we offer customers a stylish range of products that reflect their individuality while reducing their carbon footprint, that was the idea behind launching. Our aim is to challenge the notion that sustainable fashion compromises on style, and instead, provide customers with a distinctive and conscious choice in the market.



Mona B India is a pioneering brand that brings to you a range of eco-friendly products including handbags, duffel bags, messenger bags, and decor accessories. Our unique selling point lies in our commitment to sustainability and innovation. By utilizing materials such as recycled polyester, felt, canvas, and even repurposed plastic bottles, we transform trash into treasure. Our products offer consumers sustainable alternatives like vegan leather and other eco-conscious materials.

Through our deliverables, we aim to provide stylish and functional accessories that not only fulfil your needs but also align with your values. We expect our audience to embrace the concept of conscious consumption and make a choice that is not only fashionable but also contributes to a greener planet. By supporting Mona B India, you join us in our mission to create a more sustainable future, one bag at a time.



In the coming times, we envision Mona B India evolving as a frontrunner in sustainable fashion and accessories. We will continue to push boundaries and innovate, exploring new materials and design techniques that minimize environmental impact. Our brand will expand its product range, offering a wider variety of eco-friendly options to cater to diverse consumer needs. Through strategic partnerships and collaborations, we aim to increase our brand visibility and reach a larger audience, inspiring more people to embrace sustainable choices and contribute to a greener future.

Website : <https://www.monabindia.com/>

Instagram : <https://www.instagram.com/monabindia/?hl=en>

-Team WS

Embracing a healthier lifestyle: Hebbevu



Hebbevu Fresh is a premier supermarket that takes pride in offering a wide range of organic produce sourced directly from our own farm. Our deliverables include a variety of pulses, oils, ghee, and other organic products, all of which are free from additives and chemicals. We prioritize the quality and freshness of our products, ensuring that they are grown and harvested using sustainable and environmentally friendly practices.

Our expectation from the audience is to embrace a healthier lifestyle by choosing organic foods that promote overall well-being. We aim to provide our customers with the highest quality organic produce, fostering trust and satisfaction. By supporting Hebbevu Fresh, our audience can contribute to sustainable agriculture and support local farmers. We invite everyone to experience the goodness of pure, additive-free organic products and join us in promoting a healthier and more sustainable future.

In the coming times, we envision Hebbevu Fresh evolving into a trusted and leading brand in the organic produce industry. We strive to expand our range of products, strengthen our farm-to-shelf supply chain, and establish a wider network of satisfied customers. By emphasizing quality, sustainability, and customer satisfaction, we aim to become a go-to destination for those seeking organic, additive-free, and ethically sourced food options.

Website : <https://www.hebbevufresh.com/>

Instagram : <https://www.instagram.com/hebbevufresh/>

EKATTVA: Environment-friendly natural skin & hair



Ekattva is a natural skin & hair care brand which borrows beauty wisdom from Ayurveda & its Vedic concepts. Our main aim is to finally give you complete control over what you put on your skin. With all-natural and organic beauty products that are 10x more Effective & Safe, we take

pride in having individually hand-picked each ingredient for its ultimate benefits for the skin. Since these products are freshly made at home in small batches, they are cruelty-free, preservative-free, and environment-friendly.

Started in Oct 2020 with the only aim of simplifying skin & hair care routines for modern women who are leaving no stone unturned in their motherhood & professional front. They were not getting time to do the basic self-pampering sessions for themselves in the hustle-bustle of daily lives.

I've worked with leading local and international brands before leaping into entrepreneurship.

Troubled with skin and hair problems, I went on the lookout for natural solutions. A conversation with my mother introduced me to organic ingredients that are being used by my mother and my grandmother for years. From the effectiveness of these homemade products was born Ekattva, an organic skin & hair care brand that has been used and loved by thousands of women across India.



I believe I simplified the skincare & haircare for most women by giving them the freedom of putting the most natural plant-based ingredients onto their skin & hair.

Today, I have Ekattva lovers not only in India but also in Dubai, Doha, Singapore and Paris and I'm so proud of myself that I've achieved this milestone in just three years despite juggling between different roles of a woman in life.



Born and raised in Rishikesh, Uttarakhand, I already have a love for mountains and all the pure, local goodness that people used in their homes, on their skin and in their food. Living in different cities, I somehow lost that touch, that goodness and fell into the trap of city life. But in 2019, when I visited my hometown, I truly observed how the local people are far away from artificial beauty - facials, derma skin care, LED facials and whatnot. They were still drying orange peels, using multani mitti instead of face wash and drying neem leaves to treat acne as their daily skincare routine. These sights not only mesmerized me but also generated curiosity about their sources. A big city girl who used routine facials and skincare only from big brands was now introduced to the luxury in simplicity -- the greatest luxury of all in my opinion.

And being a city girl, I wanted to bring them to women in the city and make them realize what wonderful and magical products they are and you don't have to pay a hefty amount to buy a natural, 100% pure skin care product.

In the future years, I want to be true to the brand's philosophy of sustainable luxury and commitment to the source. All the ingredients are non-formulated and pure, carefully sourced, extracted, and packaged to retain their essence. So I aim to nurture it at a slow and steady pace while staying true to the brand's essence and offering high-quality products.



I am also planning to launch some new formulations with some exciting ingredients - 100% plant-based - either fruit peels, leaves, roots or stems which aim to solve various skin & hair concerns faced by women in their daily life.

Being an All-Natural & Organic brand has always been our top priority since Day-1.

After researching, conceptualising, experiments trying & numerous failures, I finally succeeded in launching 10 of the finest skin & hair care products.

All our ingredients are sourced from Rishikesh, Uttarakhand and have been organically grown and then hand-pounded, and grounded to give you that 100% quality straight to your doorstep.

Not all days are rosy & blossomy. Some days are slow. There are no orders and no enquiries but there is one thing that keeps me going is - **'why I started?'**



To all my lovely readers, if you love skincare that is simple, effective and doesn't need a 7-step process and of course 100% natural, and plant-

based then Ekattva is FOR YOU! Which is light not only for your self-care routine but also light on your pocket too! We don't charge hefty prices just in the name of NATURAL & ORGANIC. We bring you simple solutions and promise to do so because we understand your routine and time crunch while handling so many responsibilities.

Website : www.ekattva.in

Instagram :

https://www.instagram.com/ekattva_homemadeskincare/



5 Reasons Why Travelling as a Family is the Best Way to Bond



Life gets busy and travel often takes a backseat. For young parents travelling with infants and toddlers can get stressful and when kids go on to higher grades in school, their schedules become tighter to accommodate frequent and longer travel itineraries. Where is the time to travel?

I once heard on a parenting podcast that we have just 18 summers with our kids. This perspective totally blew me away as I realised, we have just 18 opportunities to spend quality, undisturbed time as a family and make memories for a lifetime.

Think about it, sometimes all we need is a different perspective.

From then on, we have consciously made the decision to travel as a family as much as possible.

Some of the top-level benefits we have got so far are:

Shared Experiences:

When we travel together, we have shared experiences of witnessing new sights, interacting with local people, and trying different activities. Some of our travel has had challenges too and when we resolve it, we have grown stronger together as a team who did it. We often have different memories to share from a trip together or remind each other of the situation and reminisce about it.

Quality time:

I absolutely love that when we travel together, we are away from the daily routine and the usual surroundings. We then have meaningful conversations or simply experience something together that is just unique to us.

Knowledge and wisdom:

Experiencing new environments encourages curiosity, allows the family to be open to different foods, smells, and sounds, encourages adaptability to the environment, and most importantly develops a broader understanding of the world. These shared learning experiences have allowed us to appreciate the uniqueness of the world and be more tolerant.



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Strengthening communication:

Traveling as a family often requires planning, decision-making, and problem-solving together. Thanks to the pandemic and online education, most kids do have decent searching skills on Google. So, tapping on their existing skills, we enlist their help in areas such as finding out entry prices for attractions, knowing more about activities they can do, or even finding out the history of the location we are visiting. This shared responsibility has improved communication skills and enhanced the family's ability to work together effectively.

Creating traditions:

From our experience of travelling together we have adopted some unique flavours in our food habits. We have also learned some songs during our travel that we hum together. This gives us to show up as a single unit and create a sense of belonging with each other.

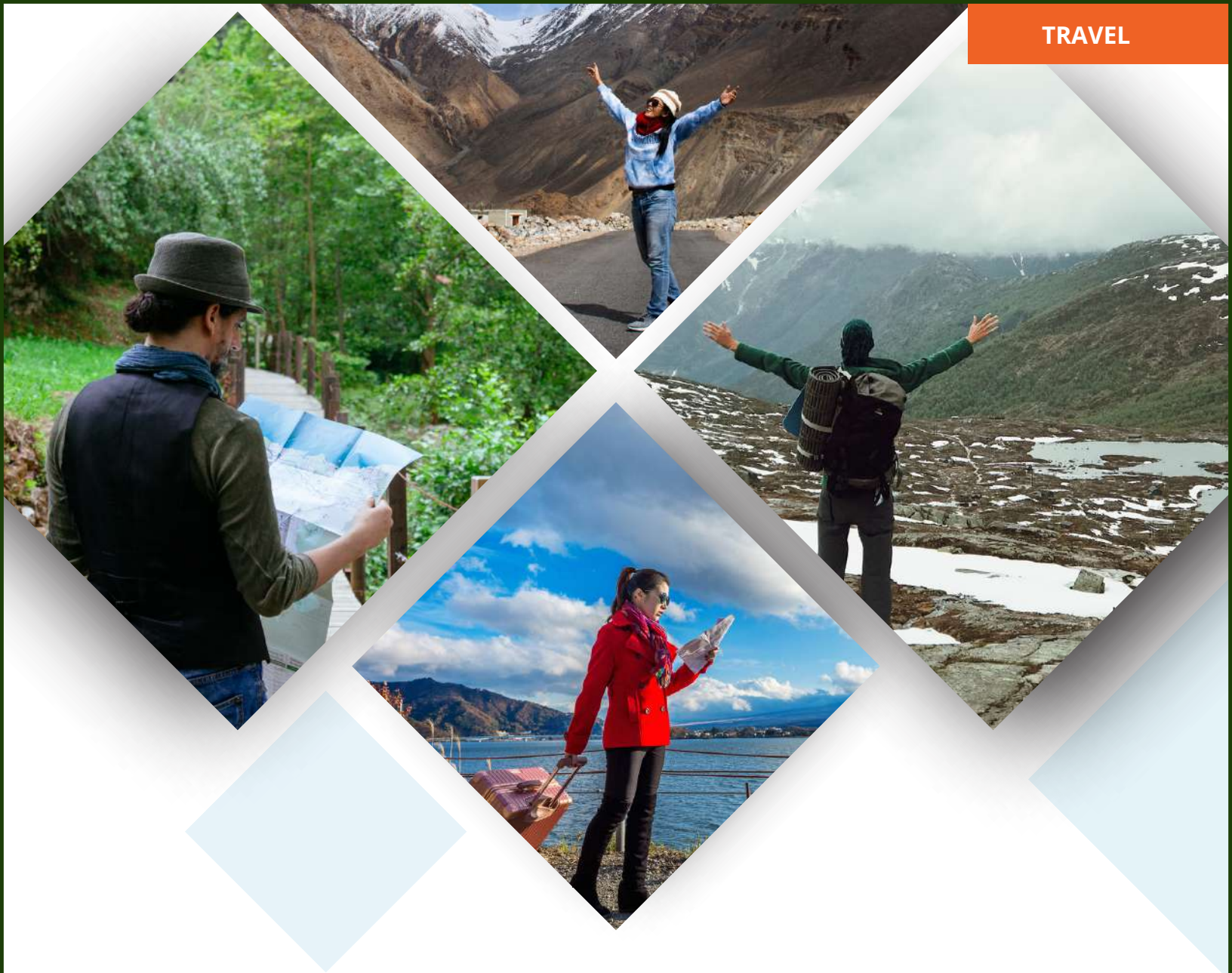
Travelling needs a lot of planning, budgeting, and time too. This can be made easy when it is a team effort. Kids as young as 5 years can be involved to identify places to visit on the world map or a country map. Besides, travelling is

way less complicated today because of the Internet and influencers. In our experience, planning a trip together has always been a conversation at the dinner table which rolls over into different activities, and then the excitement begins. A journey of a thousand miles sure starts with the first step.

Are you ready to take your first step?



- Written By : Surbhi Dedhia



UNDISCOVERED PLACES IN INDIA

India is a plethora of destinations that is explored by many. Whether it is located in the east, west, south or north, these are destinations wanting to get explored no matter what and how. However, side by side, there are untouched regions that have not yet been explored. These are places such as - Gurez valley, Phutgal, Damro, Jawai, Kila Raipur and least explored. This article explores such untouched and pristine places around India.

1. Gurez Valley in Jammu and Kashmir -

It is filled with breathtaking and surreal landscapes, backdrops that are jaw dropping and sounds of the gushing river which are common around Gurez valley. It feels like the forest in which Bambi lived and is located strategically because below this valley lies the line of control making it a protected valley within India. Since it is having constant vigilance and patrolling, it is a safe region to visit and enjoy. May to September are the best months to visit. Attractions nearby would be Wular Lake, Razdan Pass and Peer Baba Shrine.



2. Phugtal Gompa in Jammu and Kashmir -

The most isolated and remotely located monasteries around Asia. This is located in the mountain cave of Zanskar. After reaching atop the monastery the views of the Tsarap river are breathtaking from here. To get to this unseen place, one needs to trek for one to two days to get here. This is a good getaway for solo or couple travelers. The best time to visit is between June to September. Attractions near this place are - Drang Dung Glacier and Nun-Kun Khasif.

3. Chopta in Uttarakhand -

Chopta is the prettiest place and is offbeat located up in the Himalayas, having terrific views such as the snowcapped mountains, thick forest trails and the mystical meadows would leave one enchanted and wanting for more. The best time to visit is March to May. the attractions nearby include - Koteshwar Mahadev Temple and Kartik Swami Temple.



4. Kanatal in Uttarakhand -

Located 80 kms past Dehradun, Kanatal is a pretty village for the romantic lot. It has stunning views, hospitable people and rooms for staying. They offer special terrace stays and are ideally perfect for couples in a romantic getaway.

Best time to visit is between April to June and places nearby are - Surkanda Devi Temple and Tehri Dam.



5. Damro in Arunachal Pradesh -

Damro is the base of the tallest hanging bridge (1000 feet) located in Arunachal Pradesh. It is a hidden route in heaven with thatched bamboo huts, swaying suspended bridges and a lazy slow lifestyle amongst people. It is a rural area for chilling amidst all the city dwellers who come for a break. Harvested crop fields, not so wild bison and meadows are a sight for awe. Around this area is the Damro Labookellie Tea Garden. The best time to visit is October to April.



- Written By :
Sahana Sridhar

Kerala God's Own Country



*W*hen it comes to travelling I choose Kerala known as God's own country.

Although I had travelled to many places like Ooty ,Darjeeling, Cherrapunji ,Sikkim,Manali with my lovely family but Kerala was the best among them.Kerala was the most beautiful and green state in South India.

The things which I loved about this place is its cuisine (especially fish and prawns which was my favourite) and positive nature , stunning views surrounded by coconut trees, temples were the reasons to visit Kerala which always takes me to my old and beautiful memories which I collected from that place.

I had travelled Kerala from Gorakhpur about 2603 km not by train or flight but through roadways . The journey was a bit hectic because i was traveling almost three days ,we booked hotel rooms for staying in and sometimes we slept in our cars too because in those days we also kept on traveling without stopping. We had very delicious food in dhaba's,chai,Maggi.and it was too much fun because by roadway trip only I can explored places, food,people and many more thing...



Then after 3 days I finally reached Kerala the heart of South India the hotels in Kerala was surrounded by water and stones and that was the first amazing thing my eyes sees..

In evening when I came out for dinner I experience heavy rain during the summer in gap of every 10 minutes it rains and rainy season is my favourite climate especially when I am in Kerala they serve fried fish on Banana Leaf in rainy season which work as a cherry on a cake...They serve best sea food.The nature of Kerala's people is very polite, calm and positive too.. The worst thing I experience is South Indian food like dosa, rava, idli...

I love the hair and skin of Kerala women's both are very Shiny then I travel in many historical Temples, Click photos on Kerala beach at the end I travelled to Kanyakumari till Sri Lanka border it was a beautiful experience in Kerala but I missed to drink coconut water next time I will surely drink...

Shared By : Shweta Chaudhary

Summer Treats to Beat the Heat and No Bake



Too hot to turn on the oven this summer? There are tons of no-bake desserts to switch over from the chilly winter to the blazing summer. There is always room for desserts and for all those with a sweet tooth this desert option would be most fuss free and a good to go option.



Key Lime Cream Pie -

Ingredients -

- 1 package (11.3 ounces) pecan shortbread cookies, crushed (about 2 cups)
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup butter, melted
- 4 cups heavy whipping cream
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup confectioners' sugar
- 1 teaspoon coconut extract
- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup key lime juice
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sweetened shredded coconut, toasted
- Optional - Maraschino cherries with stems and sliced Key Limes



Directions

1. In a small bowl, mix crushed cookies and butter.
2. Press onto the bottom and up side of a greased 9-in. deep dish pie plate.
3. In a large bowl, beat cream until it begins to thicken.
4. Add confectioners' sugar and extract; beat until stiff peaks form.
5. In another large bowl, beat cream cheese, condensed milk and lime juice until blended.
6. Fold in 2 cups whipped cream. Spoon into the prepared crust.
7. Top the remaining whipped cream; sprinkle with toasted coconut. Refrigerate until serving, at least 4 hours.
8. If desired, garnish with cherries and limes.



2. Ice Cream Sandwich Cake

Ingredients –

Preparation time - 10 minutes + freezing

- 10-½ ice cream sandwiches
- 1 jar (12 ounces) caramel ice cream topping
- 1 carton (12 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed
- ¼ cup chocolate syrup
- 2 symphony candy bars with almonds and toffee (4-¼ ounces each), chopped
- Maraschino cherries, optional



Directions

1. Arrange 9 ice cream sandwiches in a single layer in an ungreased 13x9-inches dish.
2. Cut 2 of the remaining sandwiches in half lengthwise and the last 1 widthwise; fill it in spaces in the dish.
3. Spread with caramel and whipped toppings. Drizzle with chocolate syrup.
4. Sprinkle chopped candy bars.
5. Cover and freeze for at least 45 minutes before serving.
6. If desired, top it up with the cherries.



- Written By :
Sahana Sridhar

The Gomti

Our Identity

The Gomti is Lucknow's lilting, soulful Raga,
Different from the eternal, majestic Ganga.
And yet...

On its curling folds, whispers our distinctive history
While wrapped in a gossamer of mystery.
Like the leisurely Nawabs, it meanders through the city.
Its rippling waves sing in unison
a harmonious rhapsody.

This little insular river from the 'bhabhar'
Perhaps emerges only to be our saviour.
Protecting the land of Kathak, Urdu and luscious mangoes.
Its core-pervasive sweetness just flows and grows.

Dancing like literary couplets,
Wearing lyrical anklets,

It nimbly moves like the needles of Chikankari's artistic rites,
Almost matching the vibrancy of our soaring kites.

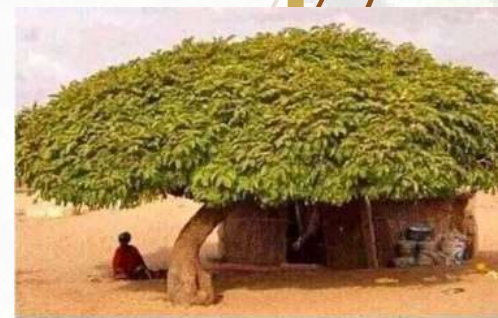
The modern lazy city reluctantly welcomes the rising Sun.
But the famous 'Shaame- Awadh' is still a star attraction.

On its vast watery canvas, various hues write inscriptions
of Hope, Faith and Peace like the Sun's Benediction.

Much water has flown down this blessed river.

But it's a soothing, magical identity
stands steadfast like a pillar.

Our lifeline and a living symbol of peaceful fraternity
Let's perpetuate the benevolent legacy of Ma Gomti



- Written By :
Divya Shukla

A MOTHER'S VIEW ON

— 'THE KERALA STORY' —

As a mother, the recent movie " **The Kerela Story**" indeed shook me. It makes you think a thousand thoughts while leaving the theater.



It wasn't as if I was unaware about the facts shown in the movie. But many a times, inspite of knowing certain things, we hardly dig deeper to discover the roots or aren't fully aware about the disastrous impacts. Movies are said to be a reflection of the society. But since past so many years the film industry had largely diverted from it. The common storyline of making the protagonist **"larger-than-life"** and empowering him with cult dialogues, inhuman action sequences, half aged heroine for romance, few hook steps in dance and done was the recipe! Or if not this, then we had posh colleges with crowd

who resembled more of models and less of students, entering the colleges in swanky SUVs with Gucci bags, partying, dating, flirting and aping the western culture to the 'T'. A common youth who couldn't relate to such characters, couldn't have any takeaway, except for distorted self-perception, from these movies.



But a movie, which slowly rose to popularity solely based on viewer's word of mouth, without resorting to high-cost promotional tactics attempted to showcase a totally unexpected and difficult side of the society. Despite of being devoid of any stars, the powerful content coupled with stellar performances stole the show.

The plot where a simple innocent girl from a normal family is brainwashed in becoming dangerous suicide bomber is full of twists and turns that are shocking. How the situations are artificially "**formed**" around the girl which traps her further shook us. It's easy to sit in AC theater and judge or slam the behavior of the girl and have a debate on what alternatively she could have done or

behaved. But let's not forget the vulnerability which arises out of young age, inexperience, peer pressure and staying away from a family.

It further highlights a very important point of communication with children. An open communication, where the children feel safe to confront their life happenings is the



need of today. The balance of being a disciplinarian as well as friendly confidant is a challenge. Parenting today is the most challenging than it was ever. Neither can you be a strict taskmaster whom they avoid and seek solace somewhere else and nor can you be friends to the extent of being taken for granted.

Parents today need to be flexible enough to apologize for their mistakes, not hurt their egos for disobedience, give the children their space but at the same time be aware about their whereabouts, their peers, without being **"helicopter parents"**, genuinely be interested in child's interests, make them aware about our culture and traditions with their significance from an early age. Set aside those screens, spend quality time with them. No reels instead read out to them, go for a walk, practice being a listener, learn a new hobby along with them, tell them about the world beyond academics. Take a weekend trip to a fort, narrate the story of valour with pride. Think twice before losing your patience on their mistakes as it would pave a way for them to either approach or avoid you when they commit one.

The outside world is unpredictable and it's impossible to keep children in a comfort shell. The best shield is the values you instill in them, the time you give to them, the communication you have with them, the genuineness of your listening to them, the traditions you celebrate with them.

Movies are a powerful medium. And with great power comes great responsibility. Such a powerful tool, must be used to create awareness amongst the youth by showing the reality with more such strong storylines.



- Written By : Ritu P.

सोनिया के एक्सीडेंट की खबर सुनते ही रोहन घबरा उठा था

सोनिया के एक्सीडेंट की खबर सुनते ही रोहन घबरा उठा . वह सीधे सिटी हॉस्पिटल पहुंच गया था , वहां पर सोनिया की नाजुक दशा देख कर उसकी आंखें बरस पड़ी . अभी तो सोनिया उसे बाय करके अपने ऑफिस के लिये निकली थी ... उसे एमर्जेंसी में ऑपरेशन के लिये ले जाया गया था पेपर्स पर साइन करते हुए उसका हाथ कांप उठा था वह सोनिया की मां जया जी का बेसब्री से इंतजार कर रहा था ... वह फैक्ट्री के काम से कलकत्ता गई हुई थीं ... वह शहर की जानी मानी धनाढ्य महिला थीं और सोनिया उनकी इकलौती बेटी

जया जी को आता देख , वह तेजी से उनकी ओर बढ़ा और उनके कंधे पर अपना सिर रख कर काफी देर तक फूट फूट कर रोता रहाउन्होंने उसके आंसू पोछे और अपने बैग से बॉटल निकाल कर उसे दी , लो पानी पियो ...

माँ, प्लीज सोनिया को बचा लीजिये ..

सोनिया ठीक हो जायेगी , तुम फिक्र मत करो डॉक्टर क्या कह रहे हैं

डॉक्टर कह रहे हैं कि हम पूरी कोशिश कर रहे हैं.... आगे ऊपर वाले की मर्जी

जया जी ये सुनते ही विचलित हो उठीं थीं और वह अपने परिचित डॉक्टर टंडन जो इसी मेडिकल कॉलेज में रीडर थे उनसे मिलने के लिये उनके केबिन की तरफ चल दीं थी ... वह अपने केबिन में कुछ छात्रों के साथ डिस्कशन कर रहे थे लेकिन जया जी का कार्ड देखते ही उन्होंने सबको विदा किया और स्वयं बाहर आ गये थे..

अरे जया जी आप यहां कैसे ... सोनिया का सीरियस एक्सीडेंट हुआ है , उसका ऑपरेशन चल रहा है

तुमने मुझे पहले क्यों नहीं बताया ...

मैं तो बाहर थी कोई अपरिचित यहां ले आया था ...वह एमर्जेंसी में एडमिट हुई थीफिर रोहन ने पेपर्स साइन किये तो उसका ऑपरेशन शुरू हो पाया ...

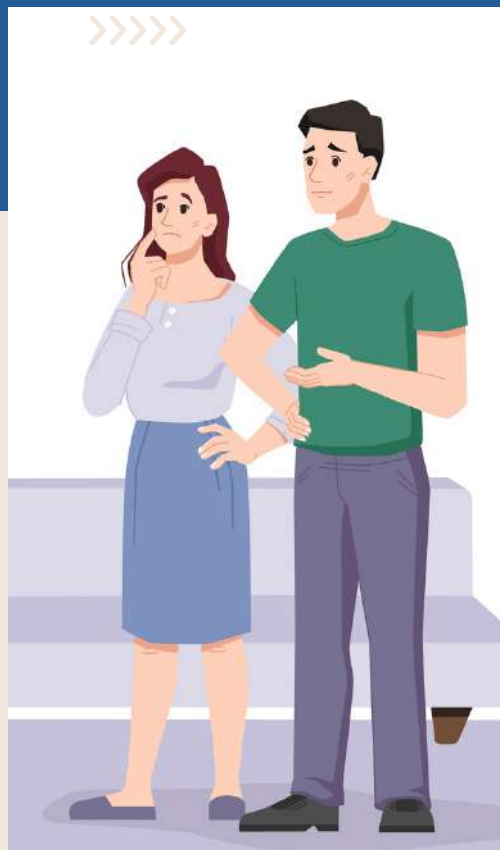
ओ. के. मैं देखता हूँ ... उन्होंने बताया कि डॉ. वत्स बहुत काबिल और सीनियर सर्जन हैं वही इसका ऑपरेशन कर रहे हैं

डॉट वरी जया जी सोनिया बेटी को कुछ नहीं होगा ... कहते हुए वह अंदर चले गये और उन्हें अंदर आने से मना कर दिया था

बाहर खड़े होकर जया जी और रोहन दोनों ही बेचैनी से उनके लौटने का इंतजार कर रहे थे ...

लगभग आधे घंटे के बाद वह लौट कर आये तो उनके चेहरे पर चिंता की लकीरें साफ साफ दिखाई पड़ रही थी.

जया जी साफ शब्दों में कहूँ तो सोनिया इज क्रिटिकल 24 घंटे यदि निकाल लेती है तो फिर हम लोग उसे निश्चित रूप से बचा लेंगे ...अभी वह आई . सी. यू. में ही रहेगी ... डाक्टर उसकी मॉनिटरिंग करते रहेंगेउसकी इनर ब्लीडिंग लगातार हो रही है उसकी आंते कुचल गई हैं , थोड़ी काट कर निकाल दी गई है लेकिन अभी भी वह रेस्पॉंस नहीं कर रही है ...



आप लोग बाहर बैठें, डॉक्टर पूरी कोशिश कर रहे हैं

सोनिया के एक्सीडेंट की खबर फैल गई थी इसी वजह से जया जी का फोन लगातार बज रहा था उनके परिचित और रिश्तेदारों की भीड़ बाहर इकट्ठी हो गई थी ... सभी लोग एक्सीडेंट के बारे में जानना चाह रहे थे जया जी को घेर कर सब लोग सोनिया के बारे में जानकारी ले रहे थे ... वह एक कोने में थक कर बैठ गया था उनके परिचित और रिश्तेदारों की निगाह में उसके प्रति हिकारत की भावना थी क्योंकि वह साधारण परिवार से था और सोनिया रईस मां की इकलौती संतान थी ... जया जी भी उसे पसंद नहीं करती थीं इसी वजह से सब लोगों की धारणा थी कि उसने सोनिया के पैसे की वजह से शादी की है जब कि वह दोनों स्कूल के दिनों



से ही एक दूसरे को पसंद करते थे उसने तो सोनिया के लिये अपने माता पिता तक से संबंध समाप्त करने में एक क्षण के लिये भी नहीं हिचका था इस समय उसे अपने अम्मा पापा और छोटे भाई रोहित की बहुत याद आ रही थी ... इस मुसीबत की घड़ी में वह अम्मा के कंधे पर अपना सिर रख कर जी भर कर रो लेना चाहता था . मेरी अम्मा क्या इस मुश्किल घड़ी में भी बेटे के साथ नहीं खड़ी होगी ... इस समय उसकी जीवन रेखा सोनिया अपनी एक एक सांस के लिये संघर्ष कर रही है



बेचैनी के कारण मानसिक तनाव अपने चरम पर था ... वह कभी चहल कदमी करता तो कभी किसी स्टाफ से सोनिया की हालत के बारे में जानकारी लेने की कोशिश करता वह दूर से देख रहा था जया जी कभी अपने फोन पर बात करतीं तो कभी किन्हीं लोगों से बात करतीं दिखाई पड़ रही थीं ...

तभी अकस्मात उसे अपनी आंखों पर सहसा विश्वास नहीं हो रहा था उसकी अम्मा पापा और रोहन को अपनी ओर आते देख उसकी आंखें भर आई थीं सब कुछ भूल कर वह अम्मा के गले लग गया , "लल्ला सोनिया कैसी है ?" अभी ऑपरेशन चल रहा है , वह क्रिटिकल है ... कहते हुए उसकी आवाज रूंध गई थी

फिकर मत करो , भगवान् पर विश्वास रखो ...

तभी ओ.टी. की हरी लाइट जलते ही रोहन ने राहत की सांस ली थी ... तेजी से लपक कर जया जी और रिश्तेदारों की भीड़ भी उनके साथ आ गई थीं ... डॉक्टर वत्स बाहर आये ... उन्होंने बताया कि सोनिया अभी बेहोश है , इनर ब्लीडिंग लगातार हो रही है ... पेशेंट अभी रिपेक्ट नहीं कर रही है दो यूनिट ब्लड का आप लोग इंतजाम कर लें .. अभी जरूरत है ... जो देना चाहे वह सिस्टर को बता दें , ... कहते हुए वह तेजी से चले गये थे ... जया जी के परिचित और रिश्तेदार एक दूसरे की बगलें झांकने लगे लेकिन रोहन और रोहित सिस्टर के पीछे चल दिये थे जब वह दोनों ब्लड डोनेट करके आये तब तक सोनिया को उस कमरे में शिफ्ट कर दिया गया था जहां शीशे से उसे देखा जा सकता था ... सोनिया को ब्लड चढ़ रहा था , जया जी बेटी के पीले चेहरे को देख कर अपने को नहीं रोक पाईं और वह फफक पड़ीं ... रोहन की माँ



पद्मा अग्रवाल

दक्षिण भारत तुम्हें सलाम



दक्षिण भारत तुम्हें सलाम

लालिमा ऑफिस से लौटी तो बहुत खुश थी , "माँ , मेरा प्रमोशन हुआ है , मुझे चेन्नई जाना है ". "नहीं , इतनी दूर और तमिल बोलने वाले लोगों के बीच तुझे बहुत परेशानी होगी ? इसलिये अपने बाँस से मना कर दो . तुम हिंदी बोलने वाली हो वहाँ तुम्हारी बात को कोई नहीं समझेगा और फिर डोसा इडली साँभर से क्या तुम्हारा पेट भरेगा ? नहीं .. नहीं मैंने कह दिया तुम्हें नहीं जाना... तो नही जाना..."

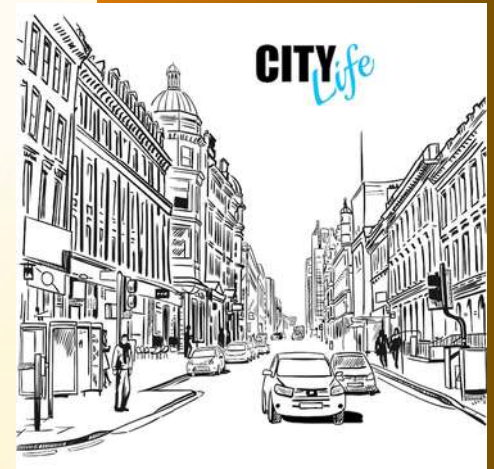
मां को घबराया देख उसने उन्हें समझाने की बहुत कोशिश की लेकिन वह अपनी जिद्द पर अड़ी रहीं .

लालिमा को दक्षिण के मंदिरों की वातुकला बहुत लुभाती थी वह चाहती थी कि वह समुद्र के किनारे लहरों को अठखेलियाँ करते देखे . वह उत्तर प्रदेश के हिंदी भाषी शहर में पैदा हुई , वहीं पली बठी और अब नोयडा में सर्विस कर रही थी ... इसलिये वह किसी भी हालत में अपने जीवन में मिले इस अवसर के रोमांच को नहीं छोड़ना चाहती थी . जब वह ऑफिस में अपने मित्रों से बात कर रही थी तो उसकी सहेली निया बोली," चेन्नई बिल्कुल मत जाना, न अपनी बोली बोलने वाला और न ही अपनी तरह का खाना मिलने वाला . तुझमें टैलेंट है तो बहुत सारे मौके मिलेंगे ..."

वह समझ नहीं पा रही थी कि आखिर चेन्नई जाने से सब लोग इतना क्यों मना कर रहे है ... सबका एक ही कहना था कि वहाँ हिंदी न कोई समझेगा और न ही बोलेगा .. अपने ही देश के एक भाग के बारे में इतनी नकारात्मक बातें सुन कर उसका निश्चय और भी दृढ़ हो गया था. उसने अपनी माँ को समझा दिया था कि मैं कुछ दिनों तक रह कर आती हूँ , यदि ठीक नहीं लगेगा तो मैं रिजाइन करके पुरानी जॉब ले लूँगी .

मेरी माँ जो उत्तर प्रदेश के उन्नाव में रहती थीं और हिंदी के सिवा कुछ नहीं जानतीं उन्होंने आँसुओं के साथ मुझे विदा किया था . वह जोर से हँसते हुए बोली , " ऐसा लग रहा था कि वह जेल की सजा काटने जा रही थी , " सब हँस पड़े थे .

"नहीं मान रही हो तो जाओ दुखी होकर लौटना पड़ेगा "



लालिमा आई टी प्रोफेशनल थी. वह मन ही मन थोड़ा घबरायी हुई थी लेकिन उसके मन में नई जगह को जानने के प्रति सुलभ उत्सुकता थी. वहाँ की कुछ विशेष बातें जो देखने को मिलीं.

चेन्नई की तपती उमस में महिलायें की नाइटी सबसे प्रैक्टिकल ड्रेस दिखाई देती है . यहाँ की हर उम्र की महिला बालों में गजरा लगाती हैं . अधिकांश दुकानों के बाहर जूते उतारने का रिवाज वहाँ मैंने देखा . मुरुगन इडली रेस्टोरेंट में आपके पहुँचते ही आपके ऑर्डर देते ही चटनी साँभर , बड़ा, इडली , डोसा, रसम की विविधता मिनटों में परोसी जाती है , जो काबिले तारीफ है , समुद्र तट की हवा , चंचल माहौल , चाँद की रोशनी आपके मूडको तरोताजा महसूस कराते हैं . यहाँ पर राजनेताओं के लिये बड़े बड़े कटऑउट सड़क के किनारे दिखाई पड़ते हैं . यहाँ की जनता अपने नेताओं को जी जान से प्यार करती है . यहाँ पर प्रत्येक गली में कम से कम एक नृत्य और संगीत एकेडमी है . यहाँ नृत्य और संगीत से लोगों को बहुत प्यार है . यहाँ पर लोगों के पास बहुत पैसा है काँजीवरम् साड़ी यहाँ की पहचान है और चेन्नई में सोने की खरीदारी के बारे कौन नहीं जानता . ये तो चेन्नई की सूक्ष्म विशेषतायें ... अब हिंदी भाषा के अपने अनुभव पर चर्चा करती हूँ . एक डरी सहमी उत्तर भारतीय के जीवन का खुशनुमा अनुभव ...



जब चेन्नई के हवाई अड्डे पर उतरी तो भाषा को लेकर थोड़ा नर्वस थी परंतु एक तमिलियन के साथ मेरी बातचीत सबसे पहले मेरे कैबड्राइवर के साथ एयरपोर्ट से मेरी कंपनी के गेस्टहाउस तक जाते समय हुई थी . मैंने डरते हुए इंग्लिश में उससे गूगल पर सर्च करते हुए रास्ता समझाया , जो उनके पल्ले नहीं पड़ा था . उन्होंने कहा , "हिंदी में बोलो , मुझे थोड़ा हिंदी समझौता हु "(हिंदी में बोलें , मैडम , मैं हिंदी थोड़ा समझ सकता हूँ) एयर पोर्ट से गेस्टहाउस की लगभग 40 मिनट की यात्रा मैंने हिंदी में बात करते हुये की . और आप सब मेरा विश्वास करिये कि उनकी टूटी फूटी हिंदी सुनना वाकई सुखद और संतोष जनक अनुभव था .

अगली सुबह जब मैं अपने बॉस के पास रिपोर्ट करने पहुँची तो वह महोदय भी तमिल थे. हमने उनसे नमस्कार किया तो वह हिंदी में बोले , "हेलो , ज्यादा मुश्किल तो नहीं आईना ऑफिस सर्च करने में (मुझे उम्मीद है कि ऑफिस खोजने में ज्यादा कठिनाई तो नहीं हुई होगी) यह सिर्फ मुझे सहज बनाने का उनकी ओर से किया गया प्रयास था . . उन्हें भी ज्यादा हिंदी नहीं आती थी ये मुझे बाद मालूम हुआ . लेकिन वह मुझसे अक्सर हिंदी में बात करने की कोशिश करते रहते हैं यद्यपि कि वह अपने प्रयास में असफल हो जाते हैं , इससे कोई फर्क नहीं पड़ता परंतु उनके हिंदी बोलने और सीखने के प्रयास को देख कर मुझे बहुत खुशी होती और हिंदी भाषा की स्वीकार्यता देख उसका भविष्य उज्ज्वल समझ कर मेरी अंतरात्मा को संतोष के साथ खुशी का अनुभव होता ... मेरी माँ जो उत्तर प्रदेश के उन्नाव में रहती थीं और हिंदी के सिवा कुछ नहीं जानतीं उन्होंने आँसुओं के साथ मुझे विदा किया था . वह जोर से हँसते हुए बोली , " **ऐसा लग रहा था कि वह जेल की सजा काटने जा रही थी ,** " सब हँस पड़े थे . " **नहीं मान रही हो तो जाओ दुखी होकर लौटना पड़ेगा "**

वहाँ रहते हुए मैंने बहुत सारे दोस्त बनाये जो हिंदी नहीं जानते थे लेकिन मुझे कोई समस्या नहीं हुई बल्कि वह लोग मेरे साथ रह कर टूटी फूटी हिंदी बोलने और समझने लगे थे . मुझे सबसे अच्छा लगता था कि जब वह मेरी हिंदी में कही बात को नहीं समझ पाते थे तो वह खीझते नहीं थे वरन् मुस्कुराते थे . वह सिर्फ मेरे लिये एक वाक्य बनाने के लिये कुछ हिंदी के शब्दों को एकसाथ रखने की कोशिश करते हैं , उसका कारण है कि हिंदी का उनका शब्दकोष बहुत सीमित है .

मेरा अनुभव रहा कि यह सिर्फ मेरे ऑफिस के लोग और मेरे दोस्त नहीं हैं जो तमिल हैं , यहाँ के स्थानीय दुकानदार, ऑटो चालक ,सब्जी विक्रेता भी आपकी बात को समझने का पूरा प्रयास करता है . वह आपके लिये जो कुछ भी कर सकते हैं वह करने की पूरी कोशिश करते हैं . यह देखते हुये कि आप उनका सम्मान करते हैं तो वह भी आपका सहयोग और सम्मान करते हैं . यह हिंदी , तमिल , तेलुगू, कन्नड़ या किसी अन्य भाषा की बात नहीं है , यह तो आपसी सम्मान देने और लेने की बात है . पिछले एक साल में मैंने तमिल लिखना और पढ़ना सीख लिया और अपने ऑफिस और आस पास के बहुत से लोगों को हिंदी बोलना भी सिखा दिया है . और जब भी मैं तमिल में लिखा हुआ कुछ भी पढ़ती हूँ तो वहाँ पर बैठे लोगों के चेहरे पर जो चमकीली सी मुस्कान दिखाई पड़ती है , वह लोग मेरे प्रयास की सराहना करते हैं वह मुझे आनंद की अनुभूति से भर देती है . वैसे ही जब वह लोग हिंदी बोलने या पढ़ने सीखने की कोशिश करते हैं तो मुझे अपना चेन्नई प्रवास सार्थक और उपयोगी प्रतीत होता है .



जब आप हिंदी बोलते हैं , तो वह आपसे प्यार करते हैं और जब आप उनसे उनकी भाषा में संवाद करने की कोशिश करते हैं तो वह आपसे बहुत ज्यादा प्यार करते हैं. जब मैंने तमिल थोड़ी थोड़ी सीख ली थी और एक दिन मैंने अपनी दोस्त को मेसेज किया ,**“दोपहर का भोजन पोलामा ? (क्या हम दोपहर के भोजन के लिये जाते हैं) ”**

दोपहर के भोजन के दौरान , मुझे जो उत्तर मिलता है ,**“ वह है , पाँच मिनट में चलो (हम 5 मिनट में चले जायेंगे) ढेर सारी स्माइलीज के साथ ”**. जब मैं कॉफी काउंटर पर महिला से पूछता हूँ , **“रेड कॉफी एक्का (दो कप कॉफी , बहन)”** वह जवाब देती है , **“सर 5 मिनट प्रतीक्षा करेगा, दूध उबालो हो रे अबी (सर ,कृपया 5 मिनट प्रतीक्षा करें , दूध उबाला जा रहा है) ”**

यदि आपके मन में यह सोच है कि आप हिंदी में बात कर रहे हैं , इसलिये आपके साथ बुरा व्यवहार किया जायेगा , या वहाँ आपको अपमानित किया जायेगा तो मैं कह सकती हूँ कि आप गलत सोचते हैं . यहाँ मैं सीख सकती थी

“त्रि मरप्पदु नत्रत्रु नत्रल्लदु

अत्रे मरप्पदु नत्रु ”

(किसी की सहायता को भूल जाना अच्छा नहीं है , बुरी घटना को भूल कर भी उसी क्षण भलाई करना अच्छा है , जिसमें उसे फँसाया गया हो) बहुत जल्दी ही मैं चेन्नई से बाहर जाऊँगी , अपने साथ लेकर जाऊँगी यहाँ के लोगों की अद्भुत यादें , मेरी टूटी फूटी तमिल और उनकी टूटी फूटी हिंदी और ढेर सारी खुशियाँ और लोगों के खुश चेहरे , चाहे मेरे सहकर्मी साथी हों या दैनिक ऑटो चालक , या मेरे पानी की आपूर्ति करने वाला लड़का , या मेरे फ्लैट के बगल में होटल में काम करने वाला लड़का , उनसे मैं बार बार हिंदी में बात करती थी , उन लोगों ने मुझे कभी भी अपमानित नहीं किया और न ही अस्वीकार किया . **“हिंदी वजह , तमिल वजह और हर दूसरी भाषा वजह ”** दक्षिण भारत में इतने साल बिताने के बाद मैंने एक स्मार्ट नवयुवक जो कन्नड़भाषी है , उसके साथ शादी कर ली . मेरे जीवन में खुशियाँ लाने के लिये दक्षिण भारत तुम्हें मेरा सलाम .

मैं सोचती हूँ कि हिंदी दिवस की शोशेबाजी से बच कर , हिंदी भाषा को जबर्दस्ती थोपने के बजाय जन सामान्य अर्थात् हम सभी मिलकर हिंदी की स्वीकीर्यता के प्रति ईमानदारी से प्रयास करें और हम दूसरी भाषाओं को सम्मान की दृष्टि से देखें ओर सीख कर उनके उत्कृष्ट साहित्य को हिंदी भाषियों को उपलब्ध करवायें, तो वह दिन दूर नहीं जब हिंदी सर्वग्राह्य बन कर असलियत में राष्ट्र भाषा बन सकेगी .



पद्मा अग्रवाल



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