

WOMEN **SHiNE**

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Mrs. Sara B Cherian

WOMEN SHiNE



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CHIEF EDITOR'S LETTER

#SHINEON
APARNA MISHRA
Founder , Women Shine

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Dear Readers,

August arrives draped in the colours of freedom, love, and new beginnings. As our nation celebrates **Independence Day**, we are reminded that freedom is not just a political milestone — it is also personal, emotional, and creative. It is the freedom to dream, to build, to express, and to live authentically.

This month also brings **Raksha Bandhan**, a beautiful celebration of the bonds that protect and nurture us. In many ways, WomenShine exists to honour such bonds — the connections between women, families, and communities that inspire us to rise together.

In this issue, you'll meet women whose journeys are woven with courage and purpose — from changemakers restoring confidence through simple acts of kindness, to entrepreneurs redefining success on their own terms. Each story is a reminder that empowerment is contagious — one person's courage can ignite a thousand dreams.

As the monsoon refreshes the earth, may this edition refresh your spirit and remind you: freedom is not just a gift we receive, but a legacy we create.

Happy Reading & Happy Independence Day!

Aparna Mishra
Editor-in-Chief, WomenShine

The Power of a Strand: Sara B Cherian's Mission of Confidence

When compassion meets action, it creates ripples of change — and Mrs. Sara B Cherian is a shining example of this truth. As Trustee of The Cherian Foundation and Campaign Head of Gift Hair Gift Confidence, she has been instrumental in turning a simple gesture — donating hair — into a movement that restores confidence and uplifts spirits. Lets know more about Sara...

WS: From a businesswoman to a philanthropist and breast cancer survivor — what has shaped your journey the most over the years?

SC: Gift Hair, Gift Confidence- signature campaign of The Cherian Foundation, began in 2014 - long before I was diagnosed with cancer. Back then, I felt empathy for patients; today, I feel a deep, personal connection. I can truly say, I know what it feels like.

During my own treatment, I made it a point to live through every stage consciously - to understand what it must be like in a cancer patient's shoes. And I realised something: no matter how progressive society seems, it was still difficult to face the public without hair. I was fortunate to have a wig, which meant most people didn't know I was battling cancer. That experience showed me first-hand what a tremendous confidence boost a wig can be. It strengthened my resolve to take this mission as far and wide as possible - because no woman, man, or child should have to walk this journey alone simply because they cannot afford a wig.



WS: What inspired the “Gift Hair Gift Confidence” campaign, and how has it evolved since its inception in 2014? Tell us about the moments that made this initiative so close to your heart.

SC: When the opportunity to make wigs presented itself, we embraced it wholeheartedly. Our family has been in the hair business for over 50 years, and we were able to draw on the technical expertise of our group concern, Raj Hair, to create beautiful, handcrafted wigs ideally suited for Indian weather conditions.

The Gift Hair, Gift Confidence campaign by The Cherian Foundation began in 2014 as a simple wig donation drive - our very first effort, in partnership with WCC, provided 21 wigs to women undergoing cancer treatment. What started as a small act of compassion has since grown into a movement, touching lives across the country.



In 2017, a turning point came when the Adyar Cancer Institute conducted a study showing that patients who wore wigs responded far better to treatment - not just emotionally, but in their overall recovery - compared to those who didn't. That evidence validated what we had always felt in our hearts.

Soon, we began receiving calls from hospitals and patients across the country asking if wigs were being provided in other hospitals. At that time, our work was limited to Chennai. But with the success of our wig bank and the backing of scientific proof, we decided to replicate the model in other hospitals. That's when **“Gift Hair, Gift Confidence”** truly became a pan-India movement, officially launched at Mount Carmel College in Bangalore in 2018.

In 2023, we made a bold commitment - to provide 10,000 wigs by the end of 2033. From our humble beginnings with one hospital in 2014, we have now grown to 25 partner hospitals across India, including the Tata Group of Hospitals, Safdarjung Hospital in Delhi, and the Gujarat Cancer Research Institute. Today, hair donations pour in from donors across the country and around the globe - each strand gifting with it hope, dignity, and the promise of confidence for someone on their journey to healing.



WS: As CEO of Belle & Homme, how have you leveraged your international education and family legacy to revolutionize India's wig industry?

SC: As CEO of Belle & Homme, I draw on my international education for a global perspective on quality, ethics, and innovation, and on my family legacy for values like trust, resilience, and community service.

Separate from my business role, I lead our social initiative, Gift Hair, Gift Confidence, which provides wigs with a natural partition - designed to suit women from disadvantaged backgrounds who wear a tikka, sindoor, or simply prefer a parting - ensuring dignity and cultural authenticity for every recipient. It is a purely non-profit effort, sustained by the generosity of donors, and runs independently from the work we do at Belle & Homme..

Belle & Homme, launched in 2023, is a retailer of premium hair products. We've carried the same commitment to quality into the fashion and lifestyle space, making high-quality hair solutions accessible to all. Our offerings go far beyond wigs - from toppers and seamless patches to customised hair systems - each designed to meet individual lifestyle needs, whether for managing hair loss, enhancing fashion, or expressing personal style.



By keeping our social impact work and our retail venture distinct - yet both driven by the same values - we've redefined India's wig and hair solutions industry, making it both compassionate and cutting-edge.

WS: You've impacted thousands through social work — what keeps you motivated to serve, especially after beating cancer yourself?

SC: Beating cancer changes you — it strips life down to what truly matters. For me, it deepened my empathy into something more personal. Gift Hair, Gift Confidence began long before my diagnosis, but after walking that road myself, I no longer just understood the struggle — I had lived it.

We receive hair donations from all over, and each packet often carries words of encouragement from the donors — sometimes even a cheque or a small contribution. On hard days, when resources feel scarce or the weight of the work seems heavy, these gestures become lifelines. And when a donor walks in beaming, or a beneficiary looks in the mirror and smiles... those are the priceless moments that keep us going.



Every wig, every strand of hair, every message of hope reminds me why we do this — so that no one walks this journey alone simply because they can't afford it. That belief keeps me moving forward, every single day.



WS: How did your personal experience transform your purpose? You've worn many hats — entrepreneur, speaker, mother, homemaker. What does 'balance' mean to you in today's world?

SC: My personal experience with cancer was a turning point. Before, I was driven by ambition and ideas — after, my purpose became crystal clear: to use every skill, resource, and connection I have to make a tangible difference in people's lives. The work I do now is not just a career; it's deeply personal.

I've worn many hats — entrepreneur, speaker, mother, homemaker — and I've learned that balance is not about giving equal time to everything, but about being fully present in whatever I'm doing.

Some days, the scales tip towards work; other days, towards family or self-care. And that's okay. In today's world, balance is fluid. It's knowing your priorities, setting boundaries, and allowing yourself the grace to adapt without guilt. My cancer journey taught me that life is too precious to strive for perfection — instead, I strive for presence and purpose in each role I play.

WS: What message would you like to share with young women who want to create social impact while building a successful career? What's your mantra for living with courage and compassion?

SC: To young women who want to create social impact while building a successful career, I'd say — you don't have to choose between purpose and prosperity. The two can and should coexist. Start by being clear about your "why," because that will anchor you through challenges. Learn to listen deeply, act with integrity, and never underestimate the power of small, consistent actions to create lasting change.

Gift Hair, Gift Confidence began as a simple wig donation drive and has grown into a pan-India movement. It's proof that you don't need a massive infrastructure or endless resources to start — you just need the courage to take the first step, and the persistence to keep going when it's hard.

My mantra for living with courage and compassion is simple: Lead with your heart, but move with your mind. Courage means stepping forward even when you're afraid; compassion means ensuring that, in your success, you lift others with you. The real measure of achievement is not just what you build, but how many lives you touch along the way.

WS Team

The Power of Financial Independence for Women

In today's rapidly evolving world, financial independence is no longer a luxury—it is a necessity. For women, in particular, financial independence holds the power to transform lives, empower families, and drive societal progress. It is about more than earning money; it's about reclaiming agency, making informed choices, and living with dignity and confidence.



1. Defining Financial Independence

Financial independence means having the ability to support oneself without relying on others, particularly for essential needs such as food, housing, healthcare, and education. For women, this autonomy serves as a foundational pillar for self-respect, personal growth, and freedom from oppressive dynamics.

2. Breaking Generational Cycles

When women are financially independent, they have the means to break generational cycles of dependency and poverty. They can invest in their children's education, healthcare, and well-being, creating ripple effects that uplift entire communities. Daughters who witness financially empowered mothers are more likely to pursue education and careers, creating a legacy of strength.

3. Empowering Choices and Voice

Money gives women a voice in households, workplaces, and society at large. Whether it's leaving an abusive relationship, starting a business, or supporting social causes, having control over one's finances means having control over one's life.

4. Economic Contribution and National Growth

Women constitute nearly half of the population, yet their contribution to the economy remains underutilized in many parts of the world. Empowering women economically has a direct impact on GDP, workforce productivity, and inclusive growth. When women thrive financially, nations prosper.

5. Confidence, Mental Health, and Dignity

Financial security is closely linked to mental well-being. Women who manage their own finances often report higher self-esteem and lower anxiety. It fosters a sense of achievement and provides a cushion against life's uncertainties. Knowing that one can stand on their own feet brings unparalleled dignity.



6. Barriers Still Exist

Despite progress, many women still face barriers such as gender pay gaps, lack of financial literacy, limited access to credit, and societal norms that discourage independence. Rural women, single mothers, and women from marginalized communities are often the most affected. Bridging these gaps requires collective action—education, policy change, and community support.

7. The Role of Education and Mentorship

To foster financial independence, girls and women must be equipped with financial education from an early age. Understanding savings, investments, budgeting, and credit empowers them to take charge of their futures. Moreover, mentorship programs and women-led networks play a critical role in sharing knowledge, building confidence, and creating opportunities.

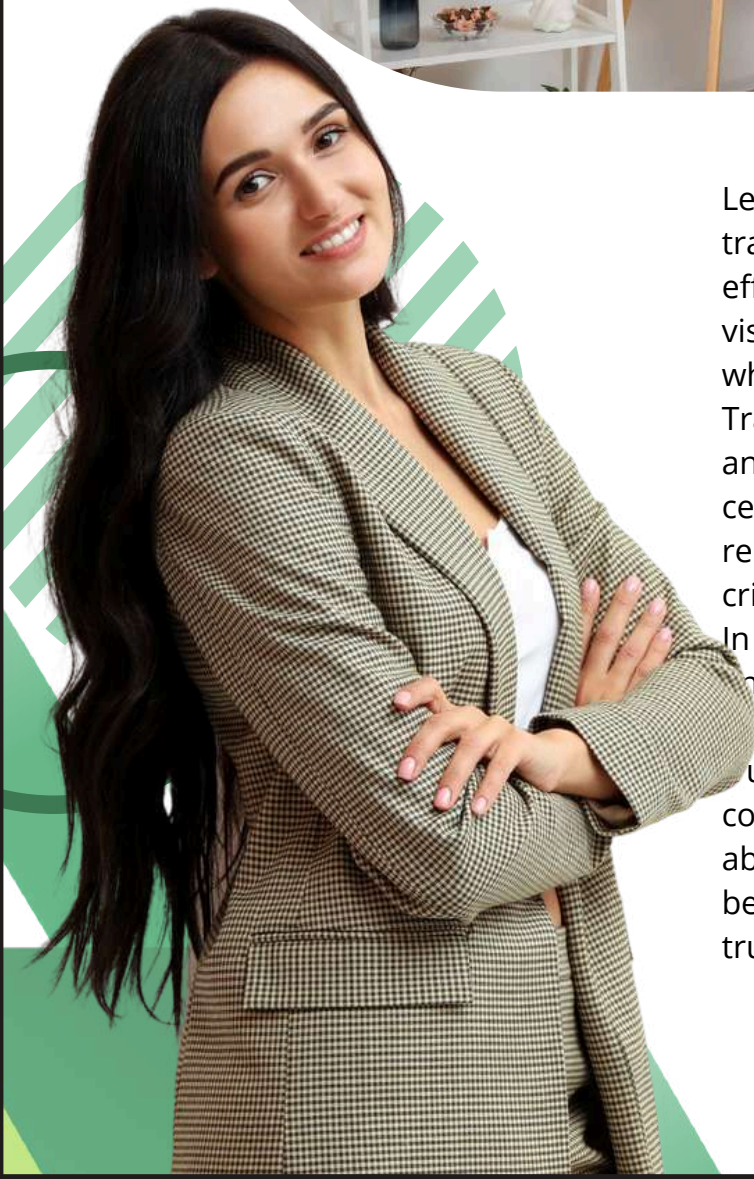
A Step Towards True Equality

It paves the way for equality, justice, and progress. As we move toward a more inclusive future, every woman must have the right—and the means—to be financially free. Because when a woman becomes financially independent, she doesn't just change her own life—she changes the world.



**- Written By :
Sanjeeta Mohta**

Creating Space for Women to Pause and Rise



Leadership today is undergoing a quiet but necessary transformation. It is increasingly clear that effectiveness is not measured only by output or visibility but also by the ability to create environments where clarity, intention, and sustainability can thrive. Traditional frameworks, which often prioritized speed and structure, are giving way to more human-centered approaches. At the heart of this shift lies the recognition that space and reflection are just as critical to leadership as strategy and execution.

In a world where change is constant, pressure is high, and expectations are growing, the concept of pause has gained renewed significance. This is especially true for women in leadership roles, who often face competing demands and heightened scrutiny. The ability to step back, recalibrate, and rise again must be acknowledged as a strength. Leadership, in its truest form, must evolve to support such rhythms.

Creating Space as a Strategic Imperative

Creating space is not about slowing down progress or reducing ambition. It is about enabling thoughtful action and intentional direction. When individuals are given the room to pause, they are more likely to return with a stronger sense of purpose, deeper insight, and renewed energy. This process allows not only for personal recalibration but also for more aligned decision-making across teams and organizations.

For women, the need for such space is particularly important. There remains an unspoken expectation to continuously perform, to remain visible, and to maintain momentum without pause. In many settings, taking time to reflect can be misinterpreted as a lack of commitment. This perception must change. The ability to pause is not a weakness. It is a powerful and necessary step in the leadership journey. Organizations that recognize and institutionalize this understanding are more likely to retain talent, foster innovation, and support sustainable growth. It begins with creating cultures where thoughtful pacing is not just accepted but encouraged. A well-timed pause can unlock a more resilient, focused, and purpose-driven rise.



Shaping Cultures That Prioritize Reflection

Leadership is not confined to delivering results. It is about setting the tone for how results are achieved. Creating cultures that embrace pause requires a shift in how success is defined and how people are supported. When reflection is valued, individuals feel safer, more empowered, and more connected to the mission. Reflection creates the conditions for deeper learning and more authentic engagement. It offers space for innovation to surface and for clarity to take root. This culture must be nurtured through thoughtful communication, flexible policies, and consistent support. It cannot be added as an afterthought. It must be embedded into the way organizations operate every day.

The most impactful environments are those where individuals are not just expected to perform but are also invited to align with purpose. This is especially critical for women who may be balancing multiple roles or navigating underrepresented spaces. A culture that honors pause creates room for women to lead in a way that is both powerful and sustainable. Pause does not mean absence. It means presence in a different form. It means choosing clarity over noise, substance over speed, and meaning over motion. Leaders who hold this space for others are not stepping back. They are setting a stronger foundation for those around them to step forward.

A Leadership Philosophy Built on Intention

Leadership today requires more than ambition. It requires awareness. It is no longer enough to know where to go. There must be clarity on how to get there and who is being included in the process. This calls for a leadership style rooted in intention rather than reaction.

At its core, leadership is about responsibility. Not just for outcomes but for the culture being created along the way. The responsibility extends to ensuring that every voice is heard, that different paths are respected, and that pause is viewed as preparation rather than hesitation.

When teams are encouraged to pause, they are more likely to act from alignment rather than urgency. When women are given the space to reflect, they rise with greater confidence and impact. This is not a theory. It is a practice that has been proven again and again in environments where leadership is humanized and empowered.



The most transformative leaders are not those who never stop moving. They are those who know when to stop, when to listen, and when to wait. In that waiting, something powerful is always unfolding. Pausing is not about indecision. It is about honoring the space between decision and action. The next generation of leadership must be more inclusive, more thoughtful, and more sustainable. Creating space for pause is not just an act of empathy. It is a long-term strategy for resilience. The challenges that lie ahead cannot be solved through urgency alone. They will require vision, collaboration, and the ability to move with both speed and stillness.

The Future of Leadership and the Path Ahead

1 Don't Apologize for the Pause

Taking time for yourself, your family, or your marriage is not a weakness. It's part of a full life. Instead of hiding the gap, own the growth that happened during it — emotionally, mentally, and even logistically. Life experience adds layers to your leadership and your empathy.

2 Start Small, Start Smart

You don't need to re-enter with the biggest title or the heaviest responsibility. You need the right role — one that fits your current life rhythm. Consider consulting, part-time projects, or freelance work if that helps ease you back in.

3 Creating a System, Not a Struggle

Balance isn't about doing everything at once. It's about building systems — reliable childcare, a shared calendar with your partner, defined work hours. The more structure you create, the more freedom you'll find within it.

Women must be given the freedom to lead without conforming to outdated standards of constant visibility. Success must be defined by alignment, not acceleration. When space is made for reflection, the rise that follows is more authentic and more enduring.

This is the responsibility of leadership today. To ensure that the environments being built are not just productive, but also reflective. That teams are not just performing, but also growing. And that women, in particular, are not just included, but fully supported in how they choose to lead.

When space is created for women to pause and rise, organizations gain more than performance. They gain insight, balance, and long-term vision. This shift is not just beneficial. It is essential.

Leadership is not a destination. It is a practice. And the practice must now include space. Not as a deviation from success, but as a vital part of it.



**- Written By :
Rutvi Sheth**

VOICES OF FREEDOM: WOMEN WHO ARE REDEFINING INDEPENDENCE IN 2025

True independence begins when a woman finds her voice — and uses it to create impact.



As India celebrates another year of freedom, WomenShine shines a spotlight on women who are shaping a new narrative of independence — not through slogans, but through substance. From villages to virtual boardrooms, Indian women are transforming challenges into change.

Ruma Devi, the acclaimed artisan from Barmer, Rajasthan, has empowered over 30,000 rural women through traditional crafts. Her journey from stitching bags in a small village to speaking at Harvard is an inspiring symbol of grassroots leadership.

Chhavi Rajawat, India's first MBA Sarpanch from Soda village, Rajasthan, is revolutionizing rural governance. Her work bridges the gap between technology, policy, and the people — with women at the center.

Chetna Gala Sinha, founder of the Mann Deshi Foundation in Maharashtra, is bringing financial literacy and economic power to thousands of women. From running India's first rural women's bank to hosting business schools for micro-entrepreneurs, her work is changing futures.

Dr. Trinetra Haldar Gummaraju, one of India's first transgender doctors and now a leading voice for inclusion, continues to advocate for dignity, representation, and rights across genders — reshaping the very idea of freedom.

These trailblazers show us that independence today is about economic strength, social equity, political voice, and personal identity.

This August, WomenShine celebrates these modern-day freedom fighters — women who are fearless, future-ready, and fiercely Indian.

FROM PATRIARCHY TO PROGRESS: STORIES FROM GRANDMOTHERS TO GEN Z

What connects a grandmother who wasn't allowed to finish school with her Gen Z granddaughter who's pitching startup ideas at 22?

The answer is **resilience, change, and the silent revolution of generations.**

In Indian households, the story of women has slowly moved — from being silenced to speaking up, from boundaries to breakthroughs. Our grandmothers lived in times where roles were predefined — caregivers, homemakers, quiet contributors. Their dreams often remained unspoken, their sacrifices unnoticed. Yet, they were the first seeds of strength, passing down wisdom in whispers. Our mothers walked the middle path — educated, yet often conditioned to 'adjust.' Many balanced careers and kitchens, voicing change while still navigating the weight of expectations. They broke barriers one step at a time — not always loudly, but with lasting impact.

Today's daughters — the Gen Z — are bold, curious, and unapologetically themselves. They question, innovate, and challenge traditions. They are not afraid to say no, to claim space, to choose differently. But this freedom isn't overnight — it is inherited, nurtured, and fought for across decades.

What's powerful is the growing bond between generations. Grandmothers learning WhatsApp from granddaughters. Daughters choosing career paths their mothers couldn't. Families slowly replacing patriarchy with partnership. Progress isn't just policy change — it's when a girl wears jeans in a conservative town, when a woman files for her own home loan, when a grandmother tells her story without shame.

As we stand in 2025, let's honour the **threads of courage** that connect us. From patriarchal roots to progressive wings — every woman carries a legacy, and every generation adds a chapter. Together, we are writing a future where **equality is not a privilege, but a norm.**



WS Team



Rethinking Hustle Culture: The Key To Boosting Employee Wellbeing and Productivity

The pressure to stay busy has turned hustle culture into a point of pride for countless individuals. The glorification of long hours, constant connectivity, and relentless task endurance often overshadows the fundamental truth: true productivity stems from a healthy mind and body. We've long advocated for a holistic approach to wellness, and it's time we rethink hustle culture to prioritize employee wellbeing as the cornerstone of sustainable success.

I am no stranger to hard work. Starting my career at a young age instilled a drive in me to achieve and excel. While ambition is commendable, I've learned that relentless hustle without rest is unsustainable.

Hustle culture, with its **"grind now, rest later"** mentality, can lead to burnout, diminished creativity, and strained mental health. Fostering a workplace that values wellness isn't just a perk—it's a necessity. Our predominantly female workforce thrives in a work-from-home model that emphasizes flexibility, autonomy, and self-paced workflows.



This approach allows employees to integrate wellness into their daily lives, balancing professional demands with personal care. Whether it's stepping away for a home-cooked meal, taking a short walk between calls, or spending a few minutes with family, our team is encouraged to create a routine that works for them. The result? A team that's not only productive but also fulfilled. Well-being and productivity are two sides of the same coin. When employees are encouraged to prioritize quality sleep, balanced nutrition, and emotional wellness—core pillars of our philosophy to bring their best selves to work.

For instance, our team members, many of whom juggle family responsibilities, benefit from a culture that promotes open communication and results-driven performance over rigid schedules.

Rethinking hustle culture doesn't mean abandoning ambition. Instead, it's about working smarter, not harder. Simple practices like encouraging regular breaks, flexibility, and providing a safe work environment, being a work-from-home job, can transform workplace dynamics. We've moved away from measuring success purely by hours worked or tasks completed. Instead, we focus on impact, creativity, and presence. When people feel rested, heard, and supported, they naturally do their best work.

The results? Better communication, fewer sick days, and higher engagement. More importantly, we see a deeper sense of purpose across teams.

As stated earlier, understanding clients' innate health needs and transforming their lives holistically is our forte. This principle extends to our team. By creating an environment where employees feel cared for, we unlock their potential to innovate and excel. Businesses everywhere can adopt this mindset: invest in your people, and they'll invest in your success.

Let's move away from glorifying overwork and toward a culture that celebrates balance. The future of productivity lies in nurturing wellbeing, not sacrificing it. We're committed to leading this change, one healthy, empowered employee at a time.



**- Written By :
Natashya Phillips**



MONSOON AND IMMUNITY

Tips To Stay Strong During Seasonal Changes

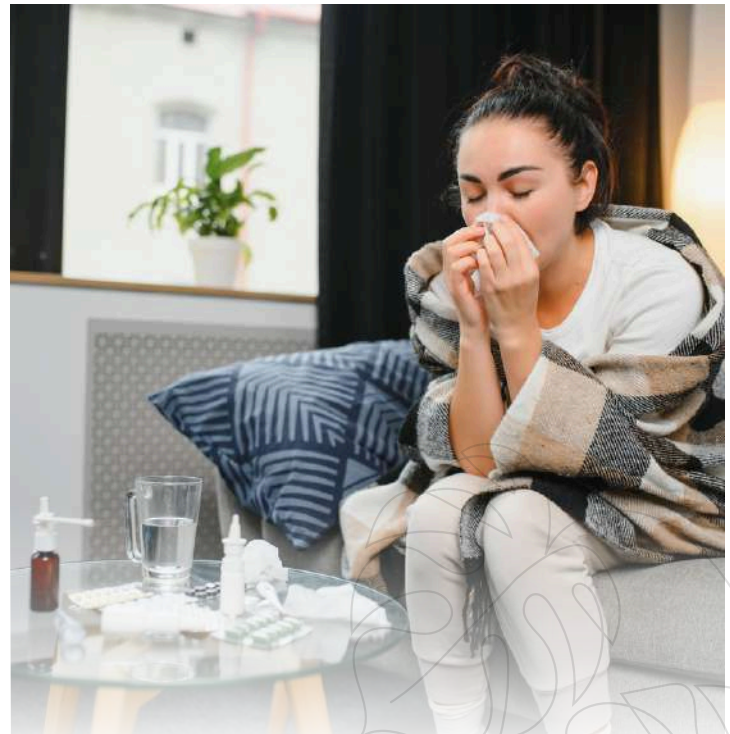
Did you know? Fluctuating weather and constant exposure to infections make the monsoon a true test for the immune system. Understand the warning signs of weak immunity and follow these foolproof tips to strengthen it, especially for people with lifestyle conditions like diabetes and heart disease. So, don't wait anymore, get going! Remember to pay utmost attention to your well-being during the monsoon.

As the rains lash across Mumbai, the arrival of the monsoon brings not just cooler air but also a surge in infections like colds, flu, viral fevers, and stomach bugs (gastroenteritis). These illnesses are often a result of weakened immunity, which tends to dip during seasonal changes and steals the peace of mind. For people already managing lifestyle disorders like diabetes, heart disease, or high blood pressure, poor immunity can mean a longer recovery, more complications, or even hospitalisation. Hence, it is necessary to understand the role of the immune system, especially during monsoon, wherein the constant humidity, pollution, and dietary changes can become a matter of concern.

As the rains lash across Mumbai, the arrival of the monsoon brings not just cooler air but also a surge in infections like colds, flu, viral fevers, and stomach bugs (gastroenteritis). These illnesses are often a result of weakened immunity, which tends to dip during seasonal changes and steals the peace of mind. For people already managing lifestyle disorders like diabetes, heart disease, or high blood pressure, poor immunity can mean a longer recovery, more complications, or even hospitalisation. Hence, it is necessary to understand the role of the immune system, especially during monsoon, wherein the constant humidity, pollution, and dietary changes can become a matter of concern.

Is your immunity low? warning signs you shouldn't ignore

- You fall sick often or take longer to recover from common infections.
- You feel tired and sluggish even after resting.
- You have frequent stomach upsets or loose motions.
- You often catch a cold, a cough, or a sore throat.
- Your skin becomes dry, itchy, or breaks out often.
- You feel stressed, anxious, or sleep poorly.



Follow these tips during monsoon: It is necessary to eat fresh, local, and seasonal foods such as amla, turmeric, ginger, and citrus fruits for natural antioxidants. Ensure to drink at least 2-3 litres of water per day and avoid drinking outside water. Carry your water bottle, and the water should be boiled. Follow hand hygiene, wash hands after coming home or using public transport. Get at least 7-8 hours of sleep every day to reset the immune system. Manage stress with yoga, walking, or even 10 minutes of deep breathing. Exercise indoors or do light home workouts if going out is not possible. Cut down on junk, processed, oily, and canned foods that weaken immunity. Eat fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and pulses. Adhere to these critical tips and stay healthy during the monsoon.

**- Written By :
Dr Tushar Rane**

Nagaland – Discovering India's Forgotten Frontier



A team of Anthropologists from a Paris based NGO was scheduled to visit the Northeastern state of Nagaland. They were on the lookout for a French-speaking guide and made a request to a Kolkata travel management company with whom I was working. Since I knew the language as well as the geography of Nagaland, I was entrusted with the overall responsibility of the tour.



After the team's arrival at Calcutta and one full day of sightseeing in the City-of-Joy we departed for Dimapur by an Alliance Airlines flight from Kolkata. At Dimapur airport we were received by representatives of the Touphema Tourist Village, which was to be our base for our weeklong sojourn in Nagaland. From Dimapur the Touphema Tourist Village is around 100 Kms. and the drive was beautiful.



At the village we were given a traditional Nagamese welcome. The Toupheema Tourist Village is a destination in itself and showcases the very best of Nagaland's tribal hospitality. We had chosen this village so as to appreciate the tribal nuances of the people of Nagaland. In the villages of Nagaland, huts are not merely meant to provide shelter. They signify social status, relevant adjustments to local climatic conditions, judicious use of locally available materials and the age-old cultural traditions all of which are interwoven in a fine blend. The entire Tourist complex is well spread out in one of the highest elevations of the neighborhood, which in Nagaland's tribal folklore are traditionally reserved for highly placed people of society. There was an exclusive reception center with a well-stocked pub and impeccably done up with traditional Nagamese architecture.

The clustered Naga huts are well spread out and the community lobby, kitchen as well as the dining room signify the importance of space and are strategically located on the higher levels of the village. The community kitchen we were told is the central meeting place for guests of the village. It had comfortable seating arrangements and was spacious enough to store the foodstuff. We were absolutely awestruck with the intricately designed goblets and mugs which are undoubtedly organic yet very fashionable. We were offered locally brewed liquor in those designer goblets.

As dusk descended upon the village, the ethereal sight of the red molten ball dipping on the distant mountainous horizon and the high octane cultural performance by the locals in their traditional attire, complete with bows and arrows made for a truly out of the world experience. My discerning French guests had never seen such a raw and animist tribal culture before.

As darkness enveloped the village, the sight of the well spread out clustered huts was breathtaking. We were urged to go up close and explore the huts from a closer range. We found out to our utter amazement that each of the huts was theme based and the bedrooms that we were provided were luxurious with attached toilet and geyser. The solar battery powered lighting in this remote corner of India was something beyond our imagination.

The Toupheema Tourist Village is one of the best places to explore the fascinating tribal culture of Nagaland and the innovative manner in which the Angami Naga culture has been portrayed in this dream Naga village is simply awesome. Kohima, the state capital is located 74 Kms away from Dimapur. The name **"Kohima"** is derived from the Angami word **"Kewhira"** on whose land the township was established.

Kohima, we were told, was designated as the headquarters of the Naga Hills by the then Chief Commissioner of undivided Assam by Colonel Keating largely due to its strategic importance.





This nondescript Naga town was the center of global attention during World War II in the year 1944 when the mighty Japanese Army captured this Naga town for 64 days. Today there is a War Memorial dedicated to those brave soldiers who laid down their lives in the infamous Battle of Kohima. A visit to the War Memorial is a must.

The climate of Kohima is salubrious and is ideally located at an altitude of 1444.12 meters above sea level. It is a year round destination and offers a nice getaway from the humdrum of city life.

A few of my French guests were avid trekkers and couldn't resist the temptation of embarking on a trek in the mountainous neighborhoods of Kohima while the rest of us went for something more sublime – visiting the colorful bazaars that were buzzing with activity. The shops were choc-a-bloc with hi-tech imported goods ranging from cameras to the latest laptop. I got pretty interested in an intricately designed Naga Shawl and seeing my enthusiasm, the rest of the group followed suit.

We were very impressed by Kohima's cosmopolitan air. A typical Kohima marketplace is full of diverse Naga tribes some of whom come even from outside the state to do trading in the bustling bazaars of Kohima. We found Kohima to be an amalgam of diverse Naga tribes like Ao, Angami, and Rengma etc... living in complete harmony with the modern world. The way they have adapted to the new age lifestyle is truly commendable. From high speed Internet connectivity to mobile phones, Kohima is on the verge of a rapid economic growth, particularly at a time when there are rumors doing the rounds in the governmental circles about developing a corridor for trade and commerce with the rest of Southeast Asia. One of Kohima's most enduring landmarks is the magnificent Catholic Cathedral ideally located on the impressive looking Aradurah Hill.

The façade of the church is conspicuous by its geometrical design and is easily the largest cathedral of North East India and also a key place of Christian congregation. Our guide Khaplang took us through a meandering alleyway that extended all the way to the Kohima Local Ground where a traditional Naga-style Wrestling competition was being held. My friends from France were awestruck by the half naked bodies of the wrestlers with just a loincloth for cover. Armed as they were with their Cannons and Nikons, a frenzied clicking of the cameras followed, which would be great take-away-home memories. As a tourist destination the biggest advantage that Nagaland enjoys is that Tourism is still not commercialized. In spite of the onslaught of modernity, Nagaland seems to be in a time wrap and insulated as it were from rapid advancement of science and technology. The sanity of the place is still intact which augurs well for the future. Already there are telltale signs of progress visible in terms of tourism and we saw hordes of tourists from affluent Western countries as well as from mainland India chatting up with the locals over a sip or two of the locally brewed wine in the trendy marketplaces of Kohima. Since we had come with the sole purpose of exploring the anthropological traits of the exotic Naga tribes, the Department of Tourism prepared an itinerary that would cover Mokokchung – Wokha – Zunheboto tourist circuit with a days halt at each of these places where tribal wizardry is still at work.

What amazed us at these remote villages was the innovative manner in which the Government of Nagaland had conceived a novel method of promoting Eco-Tourism whereby the local tribes generate their own income through community holding of tourism assets. At each of these villages we found an exclusive Village Tourism Board that was run and administered by the villagers themselves. In order to provide seamless and efficient services to the discerning world traveler, the government routinely conducts workshops and seminars where the villagers participate to upgrade their skill sets.



Mokokchung is the domain of the Ao Nagas and is conspicuous by its undulating hills that slope tenderly. My anthropologist friends from France began their mission to find out more about the fascinating lifestyle of the Ao Naga tribes and they were helped by a very knowledgeable guide that was provided to them by the Tourism Department. We were told that the smallest social unit of the Ao Naga is the family. After marriage the bride and the groom leave their family of orientation and establish a new family. The Ao Nagas do not practice polygamy. As a family unit they live in complete harmony. If a younger member of the family quarrels with a senior person of the family, it is believed to be ominous not only to the family but also to the village as such.

Ao Nagas also have clans and they are patriarchal and exogamous. The '**Morung**' or Bachelor's Dormitory plays a vital role in the social life of the Ao Naga village. Most '**Morungs**' are fine works of craftsmanship. It serves both as a guardhouse as well as a clubhouse. The women are forbidden to enter inside a '**Morung**'. The young boys are admitted into the '**Morung**' every three years to get trained practically in order to become a perfect man in all spheres.

There is no village chieftain as such and the village is run on democratic principles and each individual gets an opportunity to take part in the administration of the village.

Our trips to Wokha and Zunheboto were equally rewarding as we discovered many hidden secrets of the Naga tribes. We found out that every Naga tribe has a dialect of their own. The culture too varies with each tribe. The language is basically '**Tibeto Burman**'. We found the local tribals to be very hospitable. What's more, the Naga tribes attach great importance to friendship. The tribal people of Nagaland are traditionally adept in handloom and handicrafts products. Increasingly the indigenous Naga fashion designers are blending modern design patterns with the traditional style, thereby creating a completely new set of designer clothes and apparels. A visit to the Nagaland Emporium in Kohima can be a very rewarding experience for those obsessed with tribal fashion.

Visitors who are constrained for time would do well to visit Nagaland during the annual Hornbill Festival, which is a week-long celebration showcasing the very best of Nagaland's tribal culture and heritage. The Festival is held in the month of December at the charming village of Kisama. The theme of the festival is very apt – '**Window to Nagaland**'. Apart from the Hornbill Festival, there are year round festivals celebrated by the many tribes that reside in Nagaland. Check out with the Tourism Department for exact dates.

There is a sense of mysticism associated with Nagaland, which has been further heightened by its remoteness and geographical isolation. One can not only savor the ancient animist practices, but if for instance, one were to embark on a jungle expedition, the lure of bonding with some of the most fascinating tribes on planet earth would invigorate even the most jaded traveler. Mother Earth has blessed this land with awesome natural grandeur and had Nobel laureate Rabindra Nath Tagore been alive today, he surely would have written a whole lot of poems highlighting the element of exoticism prevalent in this part of the world.

The Naga tribes are a breed apart. It is one of the best places to clinically observe how these fascinating tribals depend on supernatural beliefs. How they react to thunder, earthquake, drought, floods, life and death. The sheer joy of observing how the Naga tribes socialize in traditional age old kinship groups like family, lineage, the clan as also their reactions to modern institutions like club, society, school, college, governance etc...

The ethereal joy that a visitor experiences as he/she steps inside a quintessential Naga village and the tribal code of honor that he/she is bound by as a result of the visitor's intrusion into the village and the consequent tribal hospitality that is extended to him/her is something which the jet set modern traveler is unaccustomed to. It is this element of unacquainted tribal generosity that awaits you here in Nagaland.

TRAVELER'S FACT FILE

Getting There:

The only airport in the state of Nagaland is located at Dimapur. There are regular flights to Dimapur from Guwahati and Kolkata, which in turn are well connected by flights from other parts of India and abroad. From Dimapur, the capital of Nagaland – Kohima is 74 Kms. away.

Dimapur also has a railway station and is well served by a number of trains from Guwahati, the gateway city of North East India. By road, both Dimapur and Kohima, two of Nagaland's most popular towns are well connected by buses from Guwahati.

One of the most convenient ways of reaching Kohima from Guwahati is either by traveling on train or air to Dimapur and from Dimapur by road to Kohima. Taxis and cabs can be easily hired at both Dimapur Railway Station and Airport. For the up market tourist, there is always the option of driving non-stop from Guwahati to Kohima. The distance can be covered in about 5-6 hours and the drive is beautiful as one passes by quaint tribal villages, stretches of tropical forest, undulating hills and good wayside amenities.

ACCOMMODATION

As far as quality accommodation in Kohima is concerned, the best option is the super luxurious - The Ultimate Travelling Camp (TUTC).TUTC are pioneers in "Luxury Camping" in some of India's most remote locales .

The 2021 Hornbill Festival will commence from 1st December and will go till 10th December 2021. which is going to be a riot of colors. This Festival has carved a niche for itself in the global tourism market and interestingly coincides with Nagaland Statehood Day.



**- Written By :
Rutvi Sheth**



TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR HEALTH: CERVICAL CANCER CAN BE PREVENTED



With highly advanced screening methods and the promising option of vaccination, Cervical cancer is one of the very few cancers that are now preventable. Yet, it is not uncommon to find a regrettable reluctance to engage in discussions on this topic. This reluctance is triggered by unfortunate inhibitions that must be overcome and replaced by informed decisions dictated by the numerous options available in the modern context, to pre-empt and defeat this disease with the aid of regular screening and early intervention.

The cervix is a small part of the female body reproductive organ, tucked away and easy to forget — until it starts causing trouble. Cervical cancer often begins quietly, with slow changes in the cells of the cervix. Over a period, with nonspecific complaints, making it easy to overlook. This unobtrusive element is what makes regular screening so pertinent

Screening is the simplest defence against a condition that does not announce itself early. A routine Pap smear or HPV DNA test can detect abnormal cells long before symptoms appear. It's a simple painless outpatient procedure which can be effectively utilized in a resource crunch nation like ours (India)

This preventive approach will lead us to HPV detection — the virus that's almost always behind cervical cancer. It's more widespread than most people realise, and spreads through skin-to-skin contact, as for example, in sexual activity. Most of the time, the body clears it out of the system through natural defence mechanism. But in some cases, it remains in the system and causes changes in the cervix that may eventually turn cancerous. The HPV vaccine becomes an extremely relevant option in this context. A simple preventive shot it is most effective when administered at a younger age, ideally before the woman becomes sexually active. Even for older women, the vaccine offers valuable protection. However, vaccination should not be considered a substitute for regular screening. While the HPV vaccine significantly reduces the risk of cervical cancer, it does not offer complete protection against all cancer-causing strains. Screening remains essential, as it allows for the early detection of any abnormal changes, even in those who have been vaccinated. Ideally, regular screening and the HPV vaccine should be employed in conjunction, to ensure comprehensive protection.

Some women do experience symptoms when even early changes begin — bleeding between periods, or after sex, or unusual discharge. These are not observations to be embarrassed about or to ignore. When your intuition suggests that something is amiss in your body. It's always best to check and be told it's nothing, rather than to ignore a warning sign and discover too late that your body has been attacked by disease.

Prevention doesn't stop with tests and vaccines. Your lifestyle choices play a part too. Smoking, for example, weakens the body's immune response and makes it harder to fight off HPV infections. A healthy immune system is your natural defence; hence, ensure that you support it with balanced nutrition, personal hygiene, and stress management. Every small habit adds up.

Conversations about reproductive health can induce embarrassment; but avoiding them doesn't help. Your doctor's office is a judgment-free zone.



The medical fraternity is trained and committed to answer your questions, dispel your fears and guide you without pressure. If you're unsure about when to get screened or whether the HPV vaccine is relevant for you; simply ask. Don't allow inhibitions to keep you from getting the care you deserve.

Cervical cancer doesn't have to be part of your story — not when we have the power to stop it before it starts. The tools are in our hands: screening, vaccination, and awareness. What's needed is timely and appropriate action on your part. Don't wait for a symptom to drive you to a clinic. Start the conversation today. Speak with your doctor, understand your options, and take that first step toward protecting your health — not just for today, but for every year ahead.

If you've been putting off a check-up, now's the time. If you're not sure about your screening schedule, enquire about it. If your daughter is nearing the right age for the HPV vaccine, speak to a specialist. Prevention starts with awareness, and it continues with simple, informed actions.

**- Written By :
Dr Vikash Nayak**

Menstrual Nutrition 101: What to Eat for a Healthier Period

Periods are not just a monthly event — they're a reflection of your body's overall balance, and nutrition plays a key role in how smooth or painful that experience is.

Many women experience symptoms like cramps, fatigue, bloating, mood swings, or acne during their menstrual cycle. What's often overlooked is that food can either ease or intensify these symptoms. The right nutrition helps regulate hormones, reduce inflammation, and support energy levels during your cycle.

So, what should your plate look like?

Iron-rich foods: Blood loss during menstruation can lead to fatigue or even anemia. Add leafy greens like spinach, methi, and amaranth, along with beetroot, pomegranate, jaggery, and dates to boost iron levels naturally.

Magnesium & zinc: These minerals help reduce cramps and improve mood. Include nuts (especially almonds and walnuts), seeds (pumpkin and sunflower), and legumes in your daily diet.

Omega-3s: Found in flaxseeds, chia seeds, walnuts, and fatty fish — these help reduce inflammation and may ease PMS symptoms.

B-complex vitamins: Found in bananas, eggs, whole grains, and dairy, they help stabilize mood swings and support hormonal balance.

Avoid: Processed, salty, or sugary foods can cause water retention, bloating, and sudden energy crashes. Caffeine may worsen anxiety and breast tenderness for some women.

Hydration is key too — sip on warm water, herbal teas (like chamomile or ginger), and coconut water to stay balanced.

Ultimately, menstrual health starts in the kitchen. Eating mindfully throughout the month — not just during your period — builds a stronger, more resilient body.

Let's normalise talking about periods and food — because nutrition isn't just about looks, it's about **feeling well, every day of the cycle.**





6 Subtle Breast Changes That Are Not Cancer, but still worth a doctor's visit

Breast health is not just about spotting cancer. Subtle shifts can hint at benign, but important, conditions that deserve a closer look. In the spirit of self-care, here are six breast changes you should not overlook:

1. Unexplained, Persistent Pain

Breast tenderness is often hormone-driven and harmless. However, pain isolated to one area, especially if it lingers beyond your menstrual cycle, deserves a professional opinion.

2. New Skin Textures

An unexplained patch of redness, thickening, or a dimpled “orange peel” texture could point to inflammation or infection. Elegant rule of thumb: when in doubt, check it out.

3. Nipple Changes

Nipples can become inverted, scaly, or unusually sensitive for reasons other than cancer — including benign skin conditions and rare disorders like Paget's disease. A sudden change is worth your physician's — or your breast specialist's — attention.



4. Newly Discovered Lumpiness

Your breasts' internal architecture can shift with age, resulting in benign cysts or fibroadenomas. Even if a lump feels soft or moves easily under the skin, new findings always warrant a clinical exam.

5. Unusual Discharge

Fluid from the nipple — especially if spontaneous or blood-stained — can signal infections or benign growths within the milk ducts. Healthy living is about taking care of details, and this one's important.

6. Asymmetry or Size Fluctuations

Hormonal swings, weight changes, or even infections can cause one breast to enlarge. If the change is sudden, persistent, and not related to your menstrual cycle, it's important to get an expert opinion.

Key Takeaway: Not every breast change is a siren's call for panic. Most breast changes aren't cancer. But your doctor can help you sort out the harmless from the serious. Early evaluation keeps you healthy — and gives you peace of mind.



**- Written By :
Dr. Karishma Kirti**

Hormonal Health in Your 30s and 40s: What No One Talks About



In the whirlwind of career, family, and life goals, most women in their 30s and 40s tend to ignore one crucial aspect of their well-being — hormonal health. Unlike our 20s, this phase is marked by subtle but significant shifts that impact mood, energy, weight, skin, and even mental clarity. Yet, it's rarely talked about.

As women enter their 30s, estrogen and progesterone begin to fluctuate, often leading to irregular periods, increased PMS, and fertility concerns. By the 40s, perimenopause quietly begins, sometimes 8–10 years before actual menopause, bringing symptoms like fatigue, anxiety, hot flashes, low libido, and sleep disturbances. What makes this more challenging is the lack of awareness and open conversations. Most women attribute these changes to stress or aging, without realizing their hormones are trying to tell them something. Nutritionist and hormone health expert, Dr. Dimple Jangda, stresses, **“Your hormones are messengers. Listen to them. Don't just treat symptoms — find the root cause.”**

Small lifestyle changes like a balanced diet rich in healthy fats, strength training, quality sleep, stress management, and regular health checkups can make a big difference. Monitoring thyroid, insulin, cortisol, and reproductive hormones yearly becomes essential.

According to Mr. Rohit Waghmare, Nutritionist "you'll experience some hormonal changes that will gradually affect your metabolism, mood, and overall sleep. The good news is that you should have a balanced nutrition involving an adequate amount of protein, healthy fats, and micronutrients will help manage these changes for you to feel energized regularly. Consistency! It's about making small choices day to day"

Most importantly, women need to talk — to their doctors, their friends, and their daughters. It's time we normalise conversations about perimenopause, PCOS, mood swings, and mid-life changes — not just in clinics, but at coffee tables and community spaces.

Your 30s and 40s don't have to feel like a hormonal roller coaster. With the right information and support, this phase can be one of the most empowered and self-aware chapters of a woman's life.

The gradual reduction and change in hormone levels, particularly after 35, results in a reduction in muscle mass and a slowdown in metabolism. Unfortunately, the reduced metabolism not only slows down, but it also makes it easier to gain weight, sometimes even with a consistent diet. Staying active and incorporating strength training significantly helps in minimizing these effects, says Kanikka Malhotra, Clinical Dietitian



Dr. Malini Saba, psychologist says, "No one really tells you what hormones do to your mind in your 30s and 40s. You hear about the physical side — the weight changes, the hot flashes, the irregular cycles - but not about that strange moment when you suddenly don't feel like yourself anymore. One day you're calm, the next you're on edge for no reason, or you find yourself overthinking at 3 a.m. As a psychologist, I know this isn't you 'losing control.' It's your body's chemistry changing, and it affects everything — your moods, your patience, mindset and even how you see yourself. The sad part is, so many women go through this quietly, thinking it's something they should just 'handle' on their own.

Let's break the silence. Hormones matter.

AUGUST VIBES: WHAT THE STARS SAY ABOUT YOUR NEXT MOVE

August 2025 brings with it a vibrant cosmic energy — a perfect mix of reflection, movement, and realignment. With Leo season ruling the skies until August 22nd, followed by Virgo's grounded energy, the universe is nudging us to step into our light — with clarity and confidence.

August is about reclaiming your personal power. Whether in your career, relationships, or inner self — the stars are encouraging bold, heart-led decisions."

Here's what August has in store for your next move:

Aries to Cancer:

You're being called to express boldly. Whether it's pitching your ideas, asking for what you deserve, or starting something creative — take the lead. Don't wait for permission.

Leo to Scorpio:

This is your time to restructure and recharge. The Leo sun boosts your visibility, while Mercury retrograde (from Aug 5 to 28) invites deep introspection. Think before making big financial or emotional commitments.

Sagittarius to Pisces:

You may feel an urge to pivot — personally or professionally. Trust it. August's energies are setting the stage for realignment. Listen to your intuition and let go of what no longer fits.

A rare full moon in Aquarius on August 19th sparks breakthroughs, especially in community, collaborations, and self-worth. This is a powerful time to speak your truth and detach from limiting beliefs.

As the month ends in Virgo, focus shifts to planning, healing routines, and making practical progress.

Whether you're launching a new project, ending a toxic pattern, or just learning to rest — trust the timing. The stars are aligned to help you grow with grace.

August is not just a month — it's a message. Are you ready to move?



मुक्त

थोड़ी थोड़ी आजाद हो गई हूँ
 मैं थोड़ी थोड़ी जिम्मेदारियों से आजाद हो गई हूँ
 अब मैं 60 पार कर सारे जहाँ की अम्मा बन गई हूँ
 बालों में चाँदी यहाँ – वहाँ उतर आई है , आँखों पर ऐनक चढ़ गई है
 नजाकत दूर कहीं होती जा रही है , कहते हैं सब मोटी हो गई हूँ
 सुबह जल्दी नहीं होती है , उठने की , रात की भी नहीं चिंता है होती
 नये नये पकवानों की अब फरमाइश भी नहीं होती
 परिदे उड़ान भर कर दूर जा बसे हैं
 अब तो रोज बस उनके फोन का इंतजार बना रहता है
 चिड़ियों और पौधों से बातें करके मन हल्का कर लेती हूँ ,
 पौधों को नहलाती धुलाती रहती हूँ
 रोज शामों को विचरने के लिये निकल जाती हूँ
 आवारगी से , यहाँ वहाँ विचरती रहती हूँ
 मैं अब किसी से नहीं डरती हूँ
 कहते हैं वो भी ... अब मैं बदल सी गई हूँ
 थोड़ी थोड़ी जिम्मेदारियों से आजाद हो गई हूँ
 लिखने लगी हूँ कहानी ,
 करने लगी हूँ टूटे फूटे शब्दों को जोड़ कर कवितायें
 फिर भी आइने में खुद को देख कर , जब तब सँवरती हूँ
 वक्त नहीं था पहले , अब पहले सा वक्त नहीं ..
 खोजती रहती हूँ नित नये दोस्त ,उन्हीं में मशगूल रहती हूँ
 थोड़ी थोड़ी जिम्मेदारियों से आजाद हो गई हूँ
 मन सबल हो गया है मेरा लेकिन अब एहसास हो गया है निर्बल
 पीड़ा देख कर हर किसी की , मैं मन ही मन सिसक उठती हूँ
 सिर्फ माँ थी पहले... अब नानी बन गई हूँ
 थोड़ी थोड़ी जिम्मेदारियों से आजाद हो गई हूँ.



- पद्मा अग्रवाल

पति पत्नी के रिश्ते में मजबूती लाने के लिये प्रयास आवश्यक हैं

शादी सात जन्मों का बंधन है ... जोड़ियाँ ऊपर से बन कर आती हैं ...वर्तमान समय में ये कहावतें अर्थहीन होती जा रही हैं क्योंकि दिन प्रति दिन तलाक और ब्रेक अप की खबरें हमारे आस पास सुनाई पड़ती रहती हैं . रिश्तों में कड़वाहट या दूरियाँ आते ही आपस में गलतफहमियाँ जड़ जमाने लगती हैं और आपसी संवाद कम होने लगता है तो स्थिति बिगड़ते देर नहीं लगती है . किसी भी रिश्ते में मजबूती लाने के लिये दोनों तरफ का प्रयास जरूरी होता है . जिंदगी भर का साथ निभाने का वादा करने के बावजूद रोजमर्रा के झगड़े , मनमुटाव धीरे धीरे रिश्ते को कमजोर कर देते हैं . कई बार छोटी छोटी बातें बड़ी बन जाती हैं और रिश्ता टूटने की कगार पर आ जाता है .

सबसे आवश्यक बात है कि एक दूसरे पर भरोसा और विश्वास रखें. एक दूसरे के साथ दोस्ती वाला व्यवहार. बनाने का प्रयास करें. पति या पत्नी दोनों आपस में कंफर्टिबिल अनुभव करें . पत्नी को भी स्पेस मिले जिससे वह अपनी बात कहने में हिचके नहीं.. नीला के बॉस उसे अक्सर देर शाम तक रोकते फिर वह अपनी गाड़ी में उसे ड्रॉप करने के लिये कहते . उसे बॉस की यह बात नागवार लगती , उसने पति रवीश से कहा तो उन्होंने कहा, यदि तुम्हें ठीक नहीं लगता तो साफ साफ मना कर दो . वैसे तुम मुझे रिंग कर देना , मैं पिक करने आ जाया करूँगा . तुम्हारे बॉस समझदार होंगे तो तुरंत समझ जायेंगे . यदि नीला पति से इस बात को छिपाने का प्रयास करती तो संभव था कि पति रवीश के मन में शक का बीज पनप कर रिश्तों में दूरियाँ पैदा कर देता . पति पत्नी के खुशहाल रिश्ते में आपस में सम्मान की भावना रखना जरूरी होता है . एक दूसरे के प्रति इज्जत का भाव रहने से आपसी मनमुटाव अपने आप समय से दूर हो जाता है . कई बार देखा जाता है कि पति पत्नी एक दूसरे की समस्या सुनना समझना ही नहीं चाहते . ऋषि के ऑफिस में छटनी चल रही थी ,उसके मन में हर समय नौकरी जाने का खौफ छाया हुआ था . इधर पत्नी अंजली अपनी शॉपिंग और पॉर्लर , किटी की दुनिया में मस्त थीं . ऋषि ने कई बार अपनी समस्या इशारों इशारों में बताई लेकिन उन्हें इन बातों से कोई मतलब ही नहीं था ... जब नौकरी चली गई तो अंजली ने रोना धोना और झगड़ा शुरू कर दिया . ऐसी स्थिति में रिश्ते में दरार आना स्वाभाविक ही है . इसलिये ये जरूरी है कि एक दूसरे की शारीरिक , आर्थिक या मानसिक परेशानी को सुनो समझो और महसूस करके उसके समाधान का प्रयास करें तभी रिश्ते बने रह सकते हैं .



पति पत्नी दोनों ही एक दूसरे की कमियों को देखने के बजाय उनकी कोशिशों पर गौर कीजिये . हर समय दोष देने की बजाय उसे समझने का प्रयास कीजिये. आपके सकारात्मक कदम रिश्तों को बेहतर और और अच्छे पार्टनर बन कर रिश्तों में निखार ला देंगे . आशा निराशा , हार जीत तो जीवन की दिनचर्या का आवश्यक हिस्सा है . उसके लिये किसी व्यक्ति विशेष को दोष देना समझदारी नहीं है . रिलेशनशिप कोच इला जैन कहती हैं कि आपस में ब्लेमगेम खेलने से रिश्ते खराब होंगे . इसलिये साथी के प्रयास को सराहें , संभव है कि वह अगले प्रयास में सफल हो जाये . उसे बेहतर करने के लिये आप प्रेरित करें

हम सभी अपने बचपन से सुनते आये हैं कि पति बाहर के काम करते हैं और पत्नी घर के अंदर का.. परंतु आज के समय में सब सीमायें टूट चुकी हैं . आजकल पति पत्नी दोनों ही बाहर काम करते हैं तो पति का कर्तव्य बनता है कि पत्नी के घरेलू कामों में मदद करे . जब पति पत्नी साथ में मिल कर काम करते हैं तो दोनों के संबंध में प्रगाढता आती है . निष्ठा और विशेष दोनों ही आईटी कंपनी में कार्यरत हैं . विशेष अक्सर पत्नी से पहले आ जाते हैं और निष्ठा जब घर आती है तो पति के हाथ की चाय पीकर उसकी थकावट छुमंतर हो जाती है और फिर दोनों मिल कर डिनर बनाते हैं . .



इला जैन कहती हैं कि अब वह समय नहीं है कि आप यह कह कर पल्ला झाड़ लें कि यह मेरा काम नहीं है .. जब पत्नी घर चलाने में सहयोग कर रही है तो आपसी तालमेल के साथ एक दूसरे का हाथ बँटा कर रिश्ते में मजबूती ला सकते हैं . कई बार हम ऐसे शख्स के साथ रिश्ते में होते हैं जिसकी नजर केवल साथी की कमियों पर ही लगी रहती है और वह मौके बेमौके आपकी कमियों पर नजर टिकाये रखता हो और कमेंट करता रहता हो ,तो रिश्ता निभाना मुश्किल हो जाता है . यदि आपके साथी में कोई कमी या व्यवहार में खामी है तो आपको यदि उससे परेशानी है तो सही मौके पर सही तरीके से उसे उसकी कमी से अवगत करायें , यह भी ध्यान रखें कि आपके अंदर भी कई कमियाँ होंगी जिसे आपका साथी नजरअंदाज करके आपके साथ निभा रहा है इसलिये आप भी उसकी कमियों को नजरअंदाज करने की आदत डालिये . रश्मि को पढ़ने लिखने का शौक था, उसके कमरे में पेपर और मैग्जिन बिखरी रहतीं ... पति अखिल जब ऑफिस से आते तो चारों तरफ बिखरी किताबें देख कर उनका मूड ऑफ हो जाता , वह बहुत बार रश्मि को किताबें समेट कर रखने को कहते लेकिन आदत से लाचार वह एक कान से सुनती दूसरे से निकाल देती .. उसकी इस आदत के कारण कई बार आपस में कहासुनी भी हो जाती थी . आखिर में अखिल ने आते ही सबसे पहले बिखरी किताबों को समेट कर रखना शुरू कर दिया तो रश्मि ने पति के आने से पहले ही समेट कर रखना शुरू कर दिया . इस तरह से धैर्य से रिश्तों में मजबूती लाई जा सकती है .

यदि आपका साथी ओवर वेट हो रहा है तो आप उसके साथ वॉक पर जाना शुरू करें या एक्सपर्ट डायटीशियन की सलाह से आप स्वयं भी साथी के साथ अपने खाने पर भी कंट्रोल करें . आप अपने फैसले अपने साथी पर मत थोपें , संभव है कि वह आपकी बात आपके दबाव में मान लेता हो परंतु रिश्तों में यह कड़वाहट पैदा कर सकता है . आपको अपने साथी की भावनाओं का भी ख्याल रखना होगा . अपने साथी के सपनों को पूरा करने में सहयोग करें . मीना को लेखन का शौक था .. वह कहानी और लेख लिखतीं पति मिहिर उसको कोरियर करते , उनके लिये कॉपी पेन आदि सबका ख्याल रखते , आज मीना जी पति के सहयोग के कारण प्रतिष्ठित लेखिका बन कर लेखन जगत में अपना विशिष्ट स्थान रखती हैं. मनोरोग विशेषज्ञ उन्नति कुमार का कहना है कि जब हम पार्टनर चुनते हैं , उस समय तो हम केवल दो ही लोग हुआ करते हैं परंतु सच्चाई यह है कि रिश्ते निभाने में ससुराल , दोनों के दोस्त और कैरियर जैसे अनेक पहलू होते हैं , जिन्हें अक्सर नजरअंदाज किया जाता है . यदि इन सबके साथ सामंजस्य नहीं बैठ रहा तो आपसी रिश्ते में खुशी नहीं मिल सकती . इसलिये सिर्फ अपने बारे में ही न सोचे वरन् अपने साथी की प्राथमिकताओं को भी इज्जत दें .



हर व्यक्ति के मन में अपने साथी के लिये अनेक सपने और ख्वाहिशें होती हैं कि वह ऐसा हो ... वैसा हो ... वह उसकी सारी अकांक्षाओं पर खरा उतरे ... और जब वह आपकी आशाओं तो पूरा नहीं कर पाता तो आप उसको बदलने की कोशिश न करना शुरू कर दें वरन् वह जैसा है वैसा ही उसे स्वीकार करें . आपको यह ध्यान रखना जरूरी है कि आप उसकी खुशियों का ख्याल रखें . पति या पत्नी कितना सहज है ,दूसरों के सामने उसके मान और इज्जत का ध्यान रखना जरूरी है . शादी शुदा रिश्तों में कई बार पति पत्नी एक दूसरे की फैमिली को ज्यादा पसंद नहीं करते लेकिन आपसी रिश्तों को ठीक रखने के लिये परिवार के लोगों के साथ संबंध बना कर रखना जरूरी हो जाता है . शादी शुदा कपल्स ज्यादा तर आपसी रिश्तों इमोथशन्स जाहिर करना बंद कर देते हैं और मशीनी सी जिंदगी जीने लगते हैं तो रिश्तों में बासीपन आ जाता है इसलिये कभी डिनर तो कभी कोई ट्रिप जरूर प्लान करते रहना चाहिये ताकि आपसी रिश्तों में ऊष्णता बनी रहे

जब कभी आपस में बहस हो जाये तो ध्यान रखें एक दूसरे को अपशब्द या दिल दुखाने वाली बात न कहें अपनी भाषा पर कंट्रोल रखें . कहावत है कि तलवार का जख्म भर जाता है लेकिन जुबान से निकले शब्दों का घाव कभी नहीं भरता .

यदि आपकी गलती है तो माफी मांगने में संकोच न करें .जब क्रोध आ रहा है , कोशिश करें कि मन शांत हो जाने के बाद ही बात चीत करके मामले को सुलझायें . यदि इन प्रयासों से भी सामंजस्य नहीं हो पाता तो ऐसा रिश्ता खुशी नहीं दे सकता , इसलिये केवल अपने बारे में ही न सोचें वरन् अपने साथी की प्राथमिकताओं को भी इज्जत दें . दूसरों के सामने उसके मान इज्जत का ध्यान रखना होगा .अच्छा रिश्ता तभी हो सकता है जब निराशा या असफलता के पलों में एक दूसरे के आत्मविश्वास और खुद पर भरोसा बढ़ाने में सहयोग करें .



- पद्मा अग्रवाल

कृष्ण जन्माष्टमी

हर व्यक्ति के मन में अपने साथी के लिये अनेक सपने और ख्वाहिशें होती हैं कि वह ऐसा हो ... वैसा हो ... वह उसकी सारी अकांक्षाओं पर खरा उतरे ... और जब वह आपकी आशाओं तो पूरा नहीं कर पाता तो आप उसको बदलने की कोशिश न करना शुरू कर दें वरन् वह जैसा है वैसा ही उसे स्वीकार करें . आपको यह ध्यान रखना जरूरी है कि आप उसकी खुशियों का ख्याल रखें . पति या पत्नी कितना सहज है ,दूसरों के सामने उसके मान और इज्जत का ध्यान रखना जरूरी है . शादी शुदा रिश्तों में कई बार पति पत्नी एक दूसरे की फैमिली को ज्यादा पसंद नहीं करते लेकिन आपसी रिश्तों को ठीक रखने के लिये परिवार के लोगों के साथ संबंध बना कर रखना जरूरी हो जाता है . शादी शुदा कपल्स ज्यादा तर आपसी रिश्तों इमोथशन्स जाहिर करना बंद कर देते हैं और मशीनी सी जिंदगी जीने लगते हैं तो रिश्तों में बासीपन आ जाता है इसलिये कभी डिनर तो कभी कोई ट्रिप जरूर प्लान करते रहना चाहिये ताकि आपसी रिश्तों में ऊष्णता बनी रहे

जब कभी आपस में बहस हो जाये तो ध्यान रखें एक दूसरे को अपशब्द या दिल दुखाने वाली बात न कहें अपनी भाषा पर कंट्रोल रखें . कहावत है कि तलवार का जख्म भर जाता है लेकिन जुबान से निकले शब्दों का घाव कभी नहीं भरता .

यदि आपकी गलती है तो माफी मांगने में संकोच न करें .जब क्रोध आ रहा है , कोशिश करें कि मन शांत हो जाने के बाद ही बात चीत करके मामले को सुलझायें . यदि इन प्रयासों से भी सामंजस्य नहीं हो पाता तो ऐसा रिश्ता खुशी नहीं दे सकता , इसलिये केवल अपने बारे में ही न सोचें वरन् अपने साथी की प्राथमिकताओं को भी इज्जत दें . दूसरों के सामने उसके मान इज्जत का ध्यान रखना होगा .अच्छा रिश्ता तभी हो सकता है जब निराशा या असफलता के पलों में एक दूसरे के आत्मविश्वास और खुद पर भरोसा बढ़ाने में सहयोग करे . वैसे तो सावन का महीना भगवान् शिव को समर्पित है परंतु मथुरा वृंदावन में सावन में राधा कृष्ण के हिण्डोला दर्शन की भक्तिमय धूम रहती है . अद्भुत मनमोहक हिण्डोला दर्शन के लिये दूर दूर इलाकों से राधा कृष्ण को आराध्य मानने वाले वैष्णव और साधूसंतों की टोली आने लगती हैं . फूल बंगला के दर्शन कर भक्त अपने को धन्य मानते हैं और ठगे से रह जाते हैं . सामान्य दिनों की अपेक्षा सावन भादों के महीने में भक्तों की संख्या दो से तीन गुना तक बढ़ जाया करती है.

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सच तो यह है कि सावन के महीने में बृजभूमि में आने पर न केवल देश के अलग अलग हिस्सों के साधू संतों के दर्शन होते हैं वरन् भक्ति और आस्था का महाकुंभ को भी यहां पर देखा जा सकता है .

ऐसा भी लोगों द्वारा कहा जाता है कि पहले के दिनों में कृष्ण जन्माष्टमी के दिन अंधकार को प्रतीकात्मक रूप से दूर करने के लिये पूरी रात घी के दीपक जलाये जाते थे , जिसके कारण लोग कृष्ण जन्माष्टमी को मथुरा वृंदावन की दीपावली भी मानते हैं . अब दीपक के स्थान पर तमाम मंदिरों और घरों को बिजली की रंगबिरंगी रोशनी से सजाया जाता है . जन्माष्टमी की रात विशेष रूप से बिजली की आपूर्ति अबाधित रहे , सरकार की ओर से इसकी व्यवस्था की जाती है . चूंकि यह सूचना तकनीकी का दौर है , विजुअल क्रांति का समय है इसलिये जन्माष्टमी के दिन मंदिरों के बाहर ओबी वैन का जमावड़ा देखा जाता है , जो यहां के कार्यक्रमों को पूरे देश में ही नहीं वरन् पूरे विश्व में सीधा प्रसारित भी करती हैं . इसलिये जन्माष्टमी का त्यौहार अब काफी हद तक ग्लोबल बन चुका है . भले ही यहां गुजरात और महाराष्ट्र की तरह दही हांडी का भव्य कार्यक्रम नहीं होता है परंतु जन्माष्टमी के अवसर पर पूरे बृजभूमि में भक्ति और श्रद्धा में ओत प्रोत भक्तों की टोलियां भक्तिभाव में सराबोर होकर मनमोहक नृत्य और गीत प्रस्तुत करते रहते हैं .

सामान्य दिनों में जहां 2-3 लाख श्रद्धालु समूची बृजभूमि में पहुंचते हैं , वहीं जन्माष्टमी के अवसर 20 से 25 लाख तक भक्त पहुंच जाते हैं . इस कारण से कई बार वहां की सारी व्यवस्थायें चरमरा जाती हैं परंतु भक्त किसी तरह की शिकायत नहीं करते वरन् बृजभूमि पर आकर स्वयं को धन्य मानते हैं . इन सबको जीवंत रूप में देखने के लिये जन्माष्टमी के अवसर पर मथुरा वृंदावन आयेंगे तो आप भक्तिभाव के पवित्र ठंडी हवा के झोंके से मन प्रसन्नचित्त हो उठेगा .



- पद्मा अग्रवाल

WOMEN **SHiNE**

See you in the next edition