



UDGAM, an exhibition with a purpose



Dear Readers,

As we step into the second half of the year, I'm filled with a sense of pride and purpose. What began five years ago as a humble digital magazine has now evolved into something bigger — a platform that not only celebrates stories but creates space for women to be seen, heard, and recognized. This July marks the official launch of WomenShine as a personal branding and visibility platform.

While our heart remains in storytelling, our soul now shines through curated features, branding campaigns, Insta Lives, YouTube showcases, and meaningful recognition for women entrepreneurs, solopreneurs, authors, coaches, and creators. We're no longer just telling stories — we're helping women build their personal brands across digital platforms. This month is also about powerful beginnings. Under WCE, we kickstart our free entrepreneurship training in Lucknow and continue our awareness drive around menstrual health through Voices of Change. In every corner of our platform, you'll find action, community, and real women making real impact.

To all the women reading this: your work deserves to be celebrated, your journey deserves to be seen, and your voice deserves to shine. Let July be the month you step forward — not just as a business owner, but as a brand.

Keep shining,

Aparna Mishra
Founder, Editor-in-Chief
WomenShine x WCE

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FROM SMALL TOWN DREAMS TO INSTAGRAM FAME | JASLEEN

Jasleen Kaur Bhatia, a 35-year-old from a small town and now settled in Lucknow, never imagined she'd become a lifestyle and fashion influencer. Her journey began after the first COVID wave in 2019, during a casual afternoon with friends. While taking fun photos, someone suggested she had the aura of an influencer — confident, stylish, and relatable. Though she laughed it off, the thought lingered. A few days later, Jasleen switched her Instagram profile from private to public — a simple decision that would transform her life. She began posting intentionally, sharing her daily routines, modest fashion choices, and real-life moments. Her honesty and small-town charm struck a chord with her growing audience.



Her first modeling opportunity came through a family boutique, and the shoot boosted her confidence. The response online was overwhelming — brands, big and small, began approaching her for collaborations. Today, Jasleen is not just an influencer but a voice for women who believe it's never too late to follow their passion. She balances content creation with family life, bringing authenticity, grace, and confidence to everything she does. Her journey proves that real success starts with showing up — just as you are.



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CHAMPIONING WOMEN IN SPORTS | TARUKA SRIVASTAVA



Taruka Srivastava is a seasoned sports business journalist with over 11 years of experience and a diverse portfolio spanning media, consulting, and storytelling. A former Asian Games tennis athlete (India 2010), she was awarded the prestigious British Council GREAT Scholarship to pursue an MA in Sports Journalism at Sheffield Hallam University, UK. Currently contributing to Stanford University's Sports Equity Lab, Taruka has held impactful roles as a media consultant for Manchester United and UNICEF, and served as the APAC correspondent for The Drum.

Her coverage includes major international tournaments like the FIFA U-17 World Cup (Venue Press Officer) and the 2018 Hockey World Cup (Communications Specialist). She has written for BBC, Forbes, HuffPost, World Economic Forum, and DD Sports, while also serving as the Digital Insider for the UP T20 Cricket League. An alumna of the Australian High Commission and ABC Australia's Women in News and Sports program, Taruka is the founder of The Playknox—a sports business platform known for its industry interviews and insights. She has interviewed 40% of India's Olympians, produced a documentary on women in sports, and runs the YouTube channel Sportsbiz with over 5.1K subscribers, demystifying the business behind the game.



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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.



BREAKING GENERATIONAL CYCLES 2

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

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.



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

Nari Shakti



Union Bank of India has made initiative to support women entrepreneurs of our Country to facilitate women participation in economy towards “**Viksit Bharat**”. For this bank has opened five nari shakti branches all over India and Lucknow city is one of the city where our Nari Shakti branch is operational. Nari Shakti branch at 5/12 Vinay Khand, near Gomti Nagar Station, Lucknow is one of such to attract and support women customers, particularly women entrepreneurs while ensuring a secure and supportive environment for women.

Services: Branch is specialised branch designed for offering financial services, skill development programme and supportive network. Advisory services may cover marketing, business planning, digital literacy, legal aspects in short equip women with financial knowledge etc.

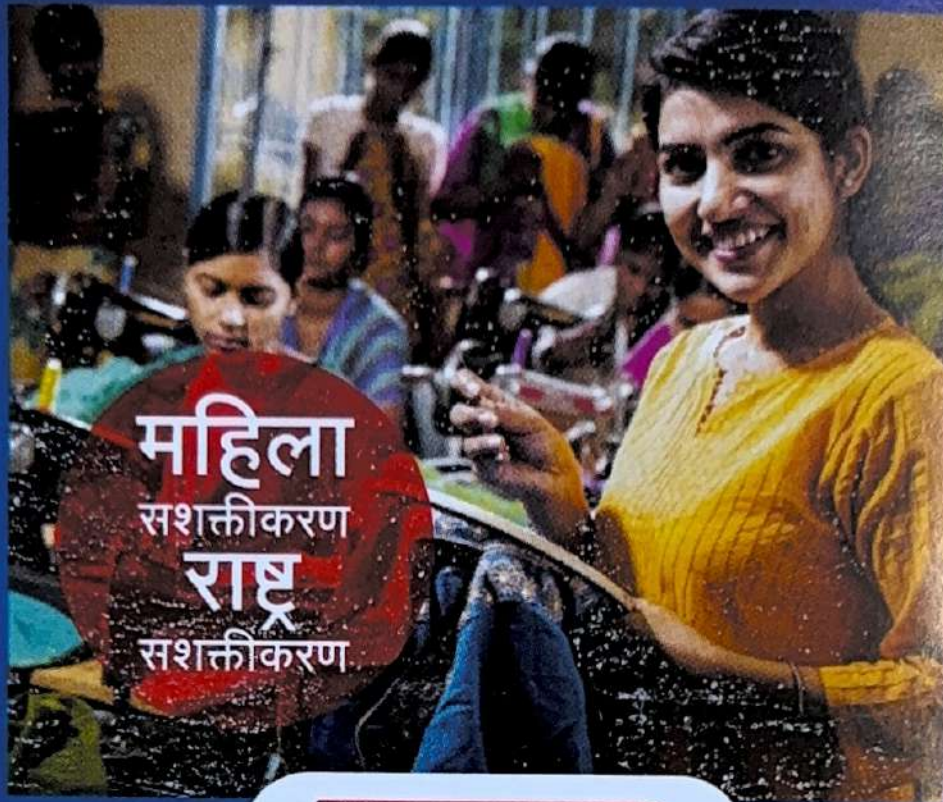
Through Nari Shakti branch our Bank is able to provide benefits of our Union Nari Shakti Scheme wherein women entrepreneurs can avail loans minimum Rs 2 lakh with no ceiling with nominal interest.



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Raksha Bandhan Stories: Real-Life Sibling Bonds That Inspire

Ankita Agarwal

This Raksha Bandhan, we go beyond the ritual of tying a rakhi and exchanging gifts. We dive into the heartwarming, courageous, and sometimes unexpected stories of siblings who've stood by each other through thick and thin.

From sisters who became the pillars of strength for their brothers to brothers who turned into lifelong cheerleaders for their sisters' dreams — these stories remind us that sibling love is more than tradition, it's a

lifetime of shared memories, unspoken understanding, and unconditional support. Here are some real-life stories that beautifully capture the essence of this special bond.



Preeti M. Shah

My brother Jimmy is nine years older than me, and he has always been my guardian, mentor, and friend. Since childhood, he looked after all my needs and ensured that my circle of friends were appropriate. He would share anecdotes to help me understand society and the life lessons I should learn to become a good human being.



From dropping me for parasailing practice to taking me out to buy my birthday dress, he did it all out of love, never because our parents asked him to. Even today, our bond continues to grow stronger. Our discussions have evolved from games and birthday gifts to spirituality, fitness, and mental well-being through yoga and exercise. When I look back at my childhood, I realise that because of him, I never felt the need for a friend to share my thoughts with — my brother was always there, ready to listen with care and patience.



Pooja Srivastava

Love, affection, care & concern are the key ingredients of a great "Sibling bond".

Raksha bandhan is one festival that validates the above bond.

I too, since childhood eagerly waited for this occasion year after year. Tying rakhi, eating mithai and savouries and finally the gift, money from my brother was a delight.

Events turned sour from 1992 onwards when my brother was diagnosed with kidney failure, bringing set back to the family.

In 1994, I donated my kidney for my brother's Kidney transplant (I was just 21 then). This was purely out of care, concerns & love for my Sibling & in reciprocation of his affection and protectiveness for me all through.

Everything went smooth till February 2018.....when he left us for his heavenly abode.

Those fond memories of you my brother will remain in my mind and heart always.

Every Raksha bandhan you are missed profoundly dear bhaiya.

Zodiac & Rain: How the Monsoon Affects Your Sign and Mindset

As raindrops dance on the rooftops and the air fills with petrichor, the monsoon stirs more than just the earth—it stirs our souls. Each zodiac sign experiences this seasonal shift in its own unique way, reflecting deeply in mood, mindset, and energy.

- **Fire Signs (Aries, Leo, Sagittarius):** The monsoon may slow you down, but it's also a call to pause and reflect. Aries might feel restless, but this is a great time to channel energy into journaling or creative pursuits. Leos, usually vibrant, may retreat inward—perfect for self-care and pampering. Sagittarians might feel cabin fever; explore nature trails or plan monsoon getaways.
- **Earth Signs (Taurus, Virgo, Capricorn):** Rainy days feel grounding to you. Taurus finds comfort in cozy spaces and warm foods. Virgo, often anxious, may find the rhythmic rain meditative and calming. Capricorn becomes introspective—great for goal setting or financial planning over chai.
- **Air Signs (Gemini, Libra, Aquarius):** The changing skies spark imagination. Geminis get chatty and curious, ideal for socializing online or exploring new books. Libras thrive in aesthetic settings—monsoon décor and candles lift their spirits. Aquarians get idealistic—this is your season to think big, maybe brainstorm a passion project.
- **Water Signs (Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces):** You feel the monsoon most deeply. Cancer becomes nostalgic, revisiting memories with old songs and hot pakoras. Scorpio taps into emotions, ideal for deep conversations. Pisces swims in dreams—write poetry, paint, or simply let your soul drift.



FROM SMOOTHIES TO SNACKS DELICIOUS YOGURT IDEAS FOR KIDS

Yogurt is one of the easiest and healthiest ingredients to quickly prepare nutritious snacks and meals for kids. It has a wealth of calcium, protein, and beneficial bacteria that aid in digestion. Plus, yogurt is savory, creamy, and pleasing to the palate. For kids, yogurt is something most of them enjoy! Below are a few yogurt-based suggestions that your children will appreciate.

Fruity smoothies: Blend half a cup of yogurt with fruits like banana, mango, or berries. To aid in achieving the preferred thickness, you can include a bit of milk or water. To enhance satiety, a spoonful of oats or peanut butter can also be added. Remember to serve cold in colorful cups with playful straws.

Frozen yogurt popsicles: Combine yogurt with any fruit purée such as strawberry, mango, or apple, and pour into popsicle molds. These are perfect to enjoy during summer and are healthier than store-bought ice creams. Remember to freeze overnight!

Veggie dips: With a pinch of salt, cumin, and some herbs, yogurt can be whisked to form a creamy dip. To add even greater color and nutrition, yogurt can be blended with boiled beetroot or carrots. Yogurt dips go well with veggie sticks or crackers making it a fun way to add more vegetables to the diet.

Yogurt chilla: Incorporate yogurt into besan (gram flour) or moong dal batter, adding in shredded vegetables such as carrot or spinach. Prepare small pancakes and serve with ketchup or chutney. Soft, tasty, and high in protein, these snacks are quite nutritious.

Fruit toast: Yogurt can be spread over toast and topped with banana slices, berries, or dates. For added texture, seeds or nuts can be sprinkled on top. While savory dishes are often overlooked as desserts, this one certainly passes as a healthy sweet treat!

Kids can easily assist by choosing fruits to decorate the toast, making these yogurt recipes even more fun and interactive. Quick and simple to prepare, they are versatile enough to be enjoyed during the school week or on relaxed weekends.

Vietnam: A Vegetarian's Unexpected Love Affair

Vietnam surprised me—not just with landscapes, but with lanterns, laughter, and lotus-root salad. As a vegetarian, I approached the trip with caution, but left enchanted.

In Hanoi, I found harmony in contrasts: colonial charm, incense-filled pagodas, and vegan egg coffee. Early morning tai chi by Hoan Kiem Lake and vegan delights at Uu Dam Chay made the city feel like a dream. Halong Bay was pure poetry—an overnight cruise through misty limestone cliffs felt like floating meditation. The crew served up a multi-course vegetarian feast that rivaled fine dining. Sapa brought me closer to the land. Hikes through rice fields and meals in Hmong homes reminded me that simplicity and sincerity often go hand in hand.

Danang mixed modernity with magic. At Ba Na Hills, I rode a cable car into the clouds and found vegan burgers at Roots Café.

Hoi An was a lantern-lit love story. I floated wishes down the river and feasted on budget-friendly vegetarian food at Quan Chay Dam.

Ho Chi Minh City dazzled with energy—jazz bars, rooftop views, and unforgettable meals at Bong Sung.

Vietnam wasn't just a trip—it was a gentle transformation. A reminder that connection, kindness, and curiosity are the true flavors of travel.



**- Written By
Udit Baijal**



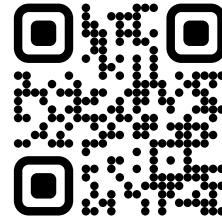
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Uttarakhand - The New Epicentre of Wellness



Ten years back, a long time family friend of ours – Chandan Singh Koranga, a native Kumaoni from Almora in Uttarakhand had predicted about the emergence of Uttarakhand as the next big thing in India's burgeoning tourism industry, to which I paid no attention; only to realise now how true his prediction was.

Last month I was on a visit to Uttarakhand; this time to attend the marriage ceremony of Chandan's sister. With Kolkata experiencing extreme heat waves, an escape to Kumaon Himalayas was just what the doctor ordered. And nothing compares to the joy of being immersed in a traditional “**Pahadi Wedding**” – the ancient rituals, cuisine and the reverberations of joyful vibes that only the Himalayas can offer.

Abode of Gods

Let me inform you, Uttarakhand is India's “**Devbhumi**” or the abode of Gods and is fast gaining popularity as the new global Wellness epicenter of India. The bewildering array of Wellness products like Yoga, Ayurveda, Naturopathy, Siddha and spiritual practices on offer, has catapulted Uttarakhand into the big league of holistic destinations. Apart from Haridwar and Rishikesh, which is referred to as the Yoga Capital of the world, if you move upwards towards the Himalayas, quaint hill stations like Mussoorie, Kausani, Almora, Ranikhet, Lansdowne, Chopta etc....are beautifully evolving as ideal destinations for concepts like Slow Tourism, Carbon Neutral Tourism and Experiential Tourism.



Dalai Lama's Tibetan Connect

Wait a moment! Not many are aware that His Holiness The Dalai Lama, who now resides in Dharmshala in the neighbouring state of Himachal Pradesh from where he monitors the Tibetan Govt. in Exile; he had in fact chosen Mussoorie, renowned for its mesmerizing Himalayan panorama as his first residence in India, as he escaped that infamous Chinese Red Army's persecution way back in 1959.

Thus, from a purely Tibetan Buddhist perspective and Dalai Lama's worldwide acceptability as one of the world's greatest living spiritual ambassadors, the Uttarakhand connection is every bit inspiring; and his love affair with the state's peace loving Himalayan folks continues unabated even today. In Uttarakhand's charming hill station of Mussoorie, there is an exclusive Tibetan zone, popularly referred to as Happy Valley, where the great spiritual messiah The Dalai Lama lived for a year, before relocating to Dharamshala. Countless visitors from across the world come to visit this hill station and walk on the footsteps of His Holiness The Dalai Lama and bask in the spiritual glory of this great soul. Infact, Mussoorie finds a mention in his autobiography, *Freedom in Exile*, in which he described the first year in exile as a time of immense struggle and uncertainty.

Visionary Tourism Policy

What is the power behind this phenomenal evolution of Uttarakhand in the competitive global tourism arena? As a Travel Writer and a diehard Himalayan aficionado, I for one believe that it is the Uttarakhand government's futuristic vision, smart tourism-friendly policies and integration of India's rich ancient spiritual foundations that has been the catalyst of this paradigm shift in the fortunes of Uttarakhand's tourism industry.



In the post COVID era, the demand for eco-friendly surroundings and destinations that prioritize environmental protection are hugely preferred by today's new age travelers and the tourism industry in Uttarakhand under the stewardship of Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami have aligned their resources with the basic tenets of Wellness Tourism. Consider, for instance, a sleepy Himalayan hamlet of Dhamas near Almora. I stayed in a rustic Woods Villa cottage for 3 days and each day was like having a **"Date with Divinity"**, Out here at an elevation of 1424m/4672feet, an eerie silence pervades the Villa landscape. All the windows and balconies offered 360 degree uninterrupted views of the stunning snow covered Himalayan peaks. In the cozy confines of the Wood Villas, the good old times resonate gracefully.



Himalayan Serenity is the USP

As the red molten ball dips across the Himalayan vistas, it is time to huddle together besides the crackling fireplace, strumming your Guitar, and indulge in your favourite tipple. The all pervading peace inside and the snowfalls outside is nature's invitation to you, reminding you yet again those immortal words of Roger Ebert – **“The very fact of snow is such an amazement”**. Uttarakhand's natural beauty and serene environment make it a perfect place for meditation and mindfulness practices.

No wonder that global hospitality giants like The Marriott, Hyatt, The Taj, Six Senses....have all invested aggressively and more investments are on the pipeline.

The best part of Uttarakhand's growth story is that the leading hospitality chains are crafting outstanding immersive journeys by involving local communities, thereby creating culturally authentic Himalayan experiences. The local mountain folks are more often than not, the repositories of deep knowledge of the region's socio-cultural contours and by involving them in the overall tourism phenomenon, ensures access to hitherto exclusive locales that are off the beaten path.



Fusion of ancient wisdom with modern amenities

I for one was absolutely taken aback by the Six Senses Retreat at Dehradun. My love for Tibetan things, especially their ancient traditional system of medicine, which I was familiar with since my childhood days in India's North East, meant that I couldn't resist the temptation of visiting this retreat in Dehradun, renowned for their wide array of Tibetan natural healing therapies.

From the moment you step inside this vast **“Sanctuary of Peace”** on the foothills of the Himalayas, you know you are in a fortunate place. Apart from Ayurveda, Yoga and Natural Healing Therapies, I was impressed by their Sowa Rigpa school of Tibetan holistic science. This is perhaps the only retreat in India where guests have access to the Sowa Rigpa school of Tibetan Medicines.



Indigenous and Immersive Experience

Another facet of Uttarakhand's Luxury Wellness landscape that I found very inspiring was their focus on things Indigenous. Embarking on Indigenous Tribal Tours in Uttarakhand Himalayas could be life changing and transformative. Out here, travel is slow. The essence is on immersion and engagement with the local folks. The roads are intimidating, yet, the natural vistas, flora and fauna are just fabulous. Sometimes, you keep hiking for hours together without a soul to be seen! No wonder, the Kumaon Himalayas (Almora & surroundings) blessed as it is with the majestic Himalayan peaks, is also the melting pot of tribal/indigenous people – Tharus, Bhutiyas, Jaunsaris, Buksas and Rajis, whose fascinating lifestyle, belief systems, cuisine, jewellery design and folklore have all endeared themselves within the minds of today's discerning travellers. The new breed of ecologically conscious real estate chalet & wood villa developers are the real game changers for Uttarakhand's long term tourism prosperity. They are combining time honoured craftsmanship with contemporary innovations and thereby delivering properties that are not just robust but stunning to look at from outside. You literally experience this déjà-vu feeling – **"India has arrived on the world stage"!**

A Far-sighted Chief Minister

Uttarakhand's Chief Minister Shri Pushkar Singh Dhami's trip to UK to attract investors was an outright hit and MOUs worth Rs.12,500 crores were signed. The resurgence of India at the competitive global business landscape is very palpable and has a lot to do with the sustained campaigns like "Atmanirvar Bharat, Transforming India, Make in India etc....by dint of which smaller states like Uttarakhand too are able to carve a niche for themselves and create positive imprints on the minds of global investors.

The gung-ho mood of Chief Minister Dhami finds reflection in his press conference – "There are almost no incidents of labour dissatisfaction in the industries operating in the state of Uttarakhand. The loss of human labour in industries due to labour dissatisfaction is the lowest in India. This is the reason why the tagline of the Global Investors Summit has been made "Peace to Prosperity". He further stated that along with "Ease-of-doing business", there is also "Peace-of-doing business" in Uttarakhand.. Uttarakhand's topography is challenging, with the mountainous state of Himachal Pradesh to the Northwest, Tibet to the Northeast, Nepal in the Southeast and the state of Uttar Pradesh in the South. Both the Greater Himalayas and the Lesser Himalayan zones fall in Uttarakhand. It isn't surprising that some of India's highest peaks like Nanda Devi (7817m) and Badrinath (7138 m) too are located in Uttarakhand.

The Austrian Alpine Touch

The stupendous progress that Uttarakhand's Mountain Tourism is witnessing, reminds me of Austria's Tourism industry. Austria's rugged and exclusive Alpine environment has with time evolved marvellously with the quintessential agenda of harnessing the local vernacular architectural grandeur of Old Austria with that of the New. Many of the hütten in Austria employ local carpenters to create outstanding mountain huts that have become the cynosure of mountain aficionados worldwide. Drawing inspiration from Austria's Alpine Tourism, Uttarakhand today is on the radar of hoteliers and hospitality brands; and with a pro-active government offering incentives to investors, there has never been a better time for investments in the state's burgeoning hospitality landscape.

Written By: Subhasish Chakraborty

Why the Right ‘In-Between Snack’ Is Crucial for Your Child’s Growth

Children are very actively engaging in activities like learning and playing, and all these activities require energy. Though meals are essential, what your child consumes during mid-mornings and evenings is crucial to their growth and development. These “in-between snacks” stave off hunger and provide nourishment to the body and brain.

Refuels Energy Quickly:Refuels Energy Quickly:

A child’s energy levels can be revitalized fast. A nutritious fruit yogurt, milkshake, or cheese with multigrain bread aid recovery after school or playtime. These foods provide both protein and calcium, which are needed to strengthen bones and muscles.



Supports Overall Growth:

Calcium, protein, and probiotics, which yogurt contains greatly supports growing children, aid in the overall growth of the child. Instead of chips or other sugary snacks, yogurt with fruits, flavored lassi, or veggie sticks dipped in homemade curd-based dip are delicious options that naturally help boost children’s nutrient intake.

Keeps Them Full and Focused:

Snacking on dairy helps to sustain children for a longer period of time. Their attention spans during homework or evening activities is greatly enhanced when nourished with Greek yogurt or a smoothie with milk and dry fruits, as these protein-rich snacks provide energy gradually.

**Builds Healthy Food Habits Early On:**

Snacking doesn't have to mean junk food. By choosing simple and nutritious options, parents can guide children to enjoy foods that are both tasty and good for their bodies. Over time, this builds a strong foundation for lifelong healthy eating habits.

Easy and Fun to Eat:

Many healthy snacks are quick to prepare and fun for kids to eat. From frozen yogurt popsicles on hot days to curd-chillas or fruit parfaits layered with yogurt — they're both exciting and nourishing.

Parent Tip:

Get creative with traditional snacking options and dairy products! Add fresh fruits, seeds, or even a drizzle of honey to make snack time enjoyable. Keep a few single-serve yogurt tubs handy in the fridge — they're the perfect grab-and-go solution for busy school days.

In-between snacks are small but powerful. With smart and creative choices, you're not just filling their tummies — you're feeding their future.



Writer Name
Yogitha Jahavi

निर्णय

शिवि मल्टीनेशनल कंपनी में काम करती थी। वह अपने बॉस रुद्र को पहली नजर में ही पसंद करने लगी थी। कॉफी के प्यालों के साथ दोनों के बीच में नजदीकियां बढ़ती गई। लगभग दो साल तक मिलना जुलना, घूमना फिरना आई लव यू तक पहुंच गया और किन्हीं कमजोर पलों में दोनों अपना होश खो बैठे वहां तक तो ठीक था लेकिन जब कुछ दिनों के अंतराल में उनके प्यार का अंकुर उसकी कोख में सांसे लेने लगा तो शिवि के होश उड़ गये ... जब उसने रुद्र पर शादी के लिये दबाव बनाया वह नानुकुर करने लगा और उससे इस मुसीबत से छुटकारा पाने के लिये जबरदस्ती करने लगा। उसके पैरेंट्स को भी रुद्र नहीं पसंद आया क्योंकि उन लोगों को अपने ब्राम्हण होने का बड़ा गुर्रर भी था। और रुद्र तो पिछड़ी जाति का था, उसने आरक्षण कोटे से पढ कर उसी कोटे का लाभ उठा कर नियुक्ति पाई थी। इस बात को ध्यान में रख कर उन्होंने शादी से साफ इंकार कर दिया था।

प्यार में डूबी हुई शिवि, ने अपनी कोख के अजन्मे बच्चे की सांसों के लिये रुद्र के साथ कोर्ट मैरिज कर ली। एक प्यारे से बेटे की मां बन, वह बहुत खुश थी। घर में पिता के समान रिटायर्ड ससुर और मां की तरह प्यार करने वाली सास थीं। सब कुछ बहुत अच्छा चल रहा था।

मातृ अवकाश के बाद जब उसने ऑफिस ज्वायन किया तो घर में मम्मी जी प्यारे से गोलू की देखभाल के लिये थी, इसलिये उसे किसी तरह की कोई परेशानी थी।

कुछ दिनों से वह देख रही थी कि रुद्र अपनी नई सेक्रेटरी मेहुल के साथ कुछ ज्यादा ही हंस हंस कर बात करते हैं ... कभी कॉफी की चुस्कियां तो कभी मीटिंग के बहाने देर देर तक बाहर रहने लगे थे। उसे अपने पुराने दिनों की मस्ती याद आ गई तो मन में कुछ संशय के बादल मंडरा उठे उसने रुद्र से टोकाटाकी की तो वह उस पर चिल्ला पड़े और उससे नाराज होकर दूरी बना कर रहने लगे वह एक क्लायंट के साथ मीटिंग कह कर 5 दिनों के लिये शिमला गये। मेहुल उसके पहले से ही मेडिकल लीव पर चल रही थी। अब तस्वीर पूरी साफ थी ... दोनों बीच कुछ खिचड़ी पक रही थी।

वह भी कम नहीं थी फोन के जी.पी. एस. से लोकेशन पता करके उसने दोनों को रंगरेलियां मनाते हुये रंगे हाथों पकड़ लिया था लेकिन रुद्र घर लौटने के बजाय मेहुल के साथ लिव. इन में रहने लगे थे। उसके अपने माता पिता ने तो उसके साथ रिश्ता ही तोड़ रखा था इसलिये और साथ में नन्हा गोलू उसकी कमजोरी और मजबूरी दोनों ही थी। उसने नियति मान कर परिस्थिति के साथ समझौता कर लिया। वह अपने बूढ़े सास ससुर की देखभाल करती रही परंतु रुद्र के धोखे के कारण वह अंदर ही अंदर टूट गई थी। उसने अपनी नौकरी भी बदल ली। वह चार वर्षों तक अकेली रहते रहते अपनी जिंदगी से निराश हो गई। उसके मन में आत्महत्या का विचार हावी होता जा रहा था। वह चिड़चिड़ी और गुमसुम रहने लगी थी। वह बिना मतलब बेटे गोलू पर झुंझला उठती कभी कभी थप्पड़ भी लगा देती, बाद में बहुत पछताती लेकिन उसका अपने पर से कंट्रोल हटता जा रहा था।



वह अवसाद से पीड़ित होती जा रही थी। उसके अकेलेपन और उसकी तकलीफ को उसके सहकर्मी मलय ने महसूस किया। उन्होंने आगे बढ़ कर उसे सहारा दिया। मनोचिकित्सक के पास उसे लेकर गये, उसका इलाज करवाया, उन दोनों की दोस्ती धीरे धीरे प्यार में बदल गई क्योंकि मलय भी इसी तरह वासु से धोखा खा चुके थे, इसलिये वह भी उसी पीड़ा से गुजर रहे थे। लगभग दो सालों के बाद एक कदम आगे बढ़ाते हुये उन दोनों ने शादी के बंधन में बंधने का निर्णय ले लिया।

शिवि अपने सास ससुर, जिन्हें अब वह अपने माता पिता समझने लगी थी, उनसे मिलवाने के लिये अपने साथ मलय को लेकर आई। उन दोनों की अनुभवी निगाहें मलय को देखते ही सब समझ गई थी।

अगली सुबह ही उन दोनों की नजरों में, और उनकी बातचीत में अंतर आ गया था ... वह तरह तरह से दूसरी शादी की ऊंच नीच समझाने लगे, पत्नी धर्म की दुहाई देने लगे। यहां तक तो सब ठीक था, अब वह मलय से दोस्ती तोड़ने के लिये उस पर दबाव डालने लगे, 'शिवि तुम अपना भला चाहो तो नौकरी बदल लो मलय सही आदमी नहीं है, वह तुम्हारा इस्तेमाल कर रहा है आदि आदि.... वह तनाव में रहने लगी थी ... वह क्या निर्णय ले, इसी पशोपेश में कुछ समझ नहीं पा रही थी।

मलय उसे अपने माता पिता से मिलवाना चाहते थे। यद्यपि कि वह स्काइप पर उन लोगों के साथ अक्सर बात करती रहती थी। परंतु उन लोगों का कहना था कि शादी करने से पहले एक बार उनका घर परिवार और रिश्तेदारों से मिलकर एक दूसरे को समझना आवश्यक है। उसके बाद ही निर्णय लेना उचित होगा।

वह इसी ऊहापोह में थी, तभी एक दिन रुद्र लुटे पिट्टे से लौट कर घर आ गये थे ... उसे ये कहानी सुनाई गई कि उन्हें बेटे की बहुत याद आ रही थी ... मालूम हुआ कि उनकी तथाकथित गर्लफ्रेंड ने उन्हें अपने घर से बाहर का रास्ता दिखा दिया था और उनकी अपनी हरकतों के कारण उनकी नौकरी भी छूट चुकी थी।

अब वह फिर से उसके साथ जिंदगी की नई शुरुआत करना चाहते हैं... रुद्र के प्यार की चाशनी में डूबे हुये शब्दों को सुनकर और नई डायमंड रिंग की जगमगाहट में एक क्षण को उसका मन डगमगा उठा और रुद्र के साथ बिताये हुये प्यारे पलों की स्मृतियां ताजा हो उठीं लेकिन जब उसने गंभीरता पूर्वक विचार किया तो समझ में आया कि दरअसल सच्चाई यह है कि उन लोगों की आंखों के सामने उसकी 90,000 की सैलरी से होने वाली ऐश और ठाटबाट तैर रहे थे क्योंकि रुद्र भी मातापिता को फुसलाकर रकम ले जाया करते थे।

उसके मन में अभी भी बहुत हिचकिचाहट थी कि एक बार जीवन में धोखा खा चुकी है, उसे कहीं फिर से न धोखा मिले अच्छा यही है कि जैसे चल रहा है चलने दे और फिर से रुद्र को एक मौका दे

लेकिन जब उसने मलय की सूनी आंखों में झांक कर अपने प्यार की गहराइयों को देखा तो उसे तुरंत समझ में आ गया कि मलय के बिना अब उसका जीवन अधूरा है ...

अंततः उसी क्षण उसने निर्णय ले लिया और वह गोलू की अंगुली पकड़ कर मलय के साथ उसके मातापिता से मिलने के लिये एयरपोर्ट के लिये चल दी थी।



पद्मा अग्रवाल



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dwarikajeweller



DEEPA SINGH

Brand- Name
Ajora Ethnic
Instagram
ajora_ethnic



MANISHA

Brand- Name
Hastkala
Manjusha
Instagram
hastkalamanjusha



POOJA SRIVASTAVA

Brand- Name
Crafted by Pooja
Instagram
craftedbypooja



MALVIKA GUPTA

Brand- Name
"Sindoori - Sarees"
Instagram
sindoori_fashions



VARSHA SHUKLA

Brand- Name
Varsha Fame
Instagram
varshafame



SURABHI KESWANI

Brand- Name
Shrinathji Gujarati
Namkeen
Instagram
shrinathjigujaratinam
keen



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Brand- Name
Prasan Mittal
Instagram
pragatimittel



DR. NEERAJ MOHAN SRIVASTAVA

Brand- Name
SriRatnam



APEKSHA BAGGA

Brand- Name
Cresto Products
Doree - Tying Traditions
Instagram
doree_tyingtraditions



PRIYA AHUJA & BIBA BHATIA

Brand- Name
Timeless Threads
Instagram
priya.ahuja.503



STUTY GUPTA

Brand- Name
Doha
Instagram
dohabystuty



ARPITA SUGAM PURI

Brand- Name
"First Impressions"
Instagram
firsstimpresion



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Instagram
urrrbanbagiya



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Brand- Name
Zohrii jewelry
Instagram
zohriijewelry



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Brand- Name
Mistic Jewels
Instagram
mistic.jewels



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soulbliss.life



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Instagram
numoncreation



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paridhaanbyjaishree



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Instagram
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ranjan



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Instagram
aaramya.official



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Brand- Name
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By gehna
Instagram
glitzz2025



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Brand- Name
Silver Star
Instagram
silver_star__fashio



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Instagram
dastoorclothing

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Nakhre
Instagram
tewari.ratna

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Brand- Name
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Instagram
navrasa_foods

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(FLUTE ARTIST)**

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Shri Bird House

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Instagram
@kritisi_collections

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Brand- Name
Naval Creations
Instagram
priyankagupta0730

**MAHIMA SINGH**

Brand- Name
Heritage Cosmic
Blessings.
Instagram
Cosmic.tarrot

**VASUNDHARA
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Brand- Name
Amber Dhara
Instagram
Kalakart360

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Brand- Name
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Chikankari
Instagram
@handmadechikankari

**MENKA SHREE**

Brand- Name
Shree Collection
Instagram
Menka5808

**AYUSHI
WADHAWAN**

Brand- Name
Threads.by.ayushi
Instagram
threads.by.ayushi

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KHANDELWAL**

Brand- Name
Angelic Threads
Instagram
@angelicthreadsbyra
shmi

**NISHTHA
SRIVASTAVA**

Brand- Name
Nish Art &
Creations
Instagram
nishart_creations11

**NEELAM SINGH**

Brand- Name
Better Fashions
Instagram
betterfashions

**VAREESHA SACHAN**

Brand- Name
Wink&Wish
Instagram
winkandwish

**RAKHI
BHARGAVA**

Brand- Name
Tanmayi
Instagram
Tanmayi_gifting



POOJA SANWAL

Brand- Name
Treasury
Instagram
pooja_sanwal_
official



NEERU AGARWAL

Brand- Name
Shrinika Premium
Silver Jewellery



ANKITA AGRAWAL

Brand- Name
Koffeco
Instagram
koffecoofficial



SHIVANI ARORA

Brand- Name
Nest Interiors Home
And Wall Decors
Instagram
nestinteriorshome
byshivani



PRACHI RASTOGI

Brand- Name
Eclipse
Instagram
eclipse.evolutionof style



JUHI AGRAWAL

Brand- Name
The Nail Wizard
Instagram
juhi_agarwal_m
akeovers



RATNAM KHARE

Brand- Name
Gaon Treats
Instagram
gaontreats



RAJNI CHOPRA

Brand- Name Sitaara
Boutique
Instagram
Sitara Boutique



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MANCHANDA**

Brand- Name
The Silk Chariot
Instagram
thesilkchariot



SUCHI RASTOGI

Brand- Name
Beads Instyle



DEEPA HASIJA

Brand- Name
D-Ethic



NANDA RAJESH

Brand- Name
Divine Urja



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Brand- Name
Zo's Kitchen
Instagram
Kitchen.zos



ANUPAMA OSWAL

Brand- Name
Vridhhi
Instagram
Vridhhi_chikankari



ANSHUL SHARMA

Brand- Name
Anshul'sCreation*
Instagram
anshul_creation\



NEENA

Brand- Name
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and ethnics
Instagram
ananta.fabrics_
ethnics



**ANURADHA BISHNOI
& SHALINI SINGH**

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