

VIVIDH

Verse

A Vedanta Group Initiative

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20
26



India Inc.
Rising
AI Aspirations

Travel
The New
Pilgrimages

Economy
Culinary
Entrepreneurs
Take Charge

The Many Worlds of India

THE FUTURE IS MADE OF YOU, AND THE FUTURE IS MADE OF US

THE FUTURE IS MADE OF TRANSFORMATION.
AND ENERGY, THAT POWERS IT.

THE FUTURE IS MADE OF IMAGINATION.
AND METALS, THAT GIVE IT FORM.

THE FUTURE IS MADE OF CURIOSITY.
AND TECHNOLOGY, THAT BRINGS IT TO LIFE.

We are Vedanta,
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As we look towards the future,
we see one simple truth:

The future is made of you.
And the future is made of us.

DESH KI ZAROORATON KE LIYE

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ENERGY

OIL & GAS RENEWABLES & POWER

TECHNOLOGY

ELECTRONICS & DISPLAY GLASS



प्रस्तावना

आप सभी ने बचपन में अपनी स्कूल की किताबों में "गांधी जी का जंतर" या "GANDHI JI'S TALISMAN" पढ़ा होगा? है न?

समाज को समझने का कितना बेहतरीन सुझाव था उसमें।

*"जब भी तुम्हें कोई संदेह हो या तुम्हारा अहं तुम पर हावी होने लगे,
तो जो सबसे गरीब और कमज़ोर आदमी तुमने देखा हो,
उसकी शक्ल याद करो और अपने दिल से पूछो:
जो कदम उठाने का तुम विचार कर रहे हो,
क्या वह उस आदमी को कोई लाभ पहुँचाएगा?"*

विकसित भारत की आकांक्षाओं की ओर बढ़ते भारत में यह जंतर वाकई उपयोगी है।

मेरे विचार से भी, देश बनाना सिर्फ़ बड़ी इमारतें खड़ी करना या करोड़ों-अरबों का बिज़नेस करना नहीं है।

देश बनाना है - मौके बनाना, इंडस्ट्रीज़ को बढ़ावा देना, महिलाओं को सशक्त करना, बच्चों तक सही पोषण और शिक्षा पहुँचाना।

और सबसे ज़रूरी - हिंदुस्तान की काबिलियत पर भरोसा रखना, उसे मंच देना।

Vividh Verse उसी भरोसे से जन्मा है। इस विश्वास से कि कहानियों में सोच बदलने और भविष्य गढ़ने की ताकत होती है। हमारी यह मैगज़ीन उन लाखों भारतीयों को समर्पित है जो दिन-रात अपनी मेहनत से, चुपचाप... देश को आगे बढ़ा रहे हैं, आज को कल से बेहतर बना रहे हैं।

कभी छोटे शहरों में, कभी महानगरों में, क्लासरूम में और फैक्ट्री फ़्लोर पर, खेतों में और स्टार्ट-अप में।

आज हम इस पत्रिका की शुरुआत ऐसे समय में कर रहे हैं जब दुनिया असमंजस में भी है।

और उम्मीद से भरी भी। ऐसे समय में हमें शोर का कोहरा नहीं, **विचारों की स्पष्टता चाहिए।**

यह मैगज़ीन उसी स्पष्टता की ओर एक कोशिश है। पिछले दिनों ज़िंदगी ने फिर एक सबक दोहराया कि इंसान की असली सफलता, असली पूँजी वही है जो समाज के

उद्धार में काम आ सके। आज मेरी अपनी यात्रा भी तेज़ी से सेवा की ओर मुड़ रही है, खासतौर पर भारत के युवाओं को सशक्त बनाने की ओर, हमारी बेटीयों को आत्मविश्वास से भरकर विकसित भारत का बराबर भागीदार बनाने की ओर।

तो आइए, इस मैगज़ीन को अपनी कहानियों, अपने सुझावों, अपनी बेबाक राय से सजाइए। मुझे यकीन है अगर एक भी लेख, एक भी विचार, किसी नौजवान सोच को प्रेरित करे,

किसी नई शुरुआत की चिंगारी बने, या किसी पाठक को मंज़िल की ओर बढ़ा सके,

तो इस मैगज़ीन का उद्देश्य पूरा होगा।

आपका,
अनिल अग्रवाल
चेयरमैन, वेदांता समूह

VIVIDH Verse

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About the cover

In the heart of bustling Mumbai, ancient walls stand tall, witnessing the vibrant urban life rush by. Here, the old and new come together as India's rich past meets its fast-moving present, weaving a story of timeless tradition and unstoppable progress.

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India

The Next Big Energy Opportunity

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500 kboepd
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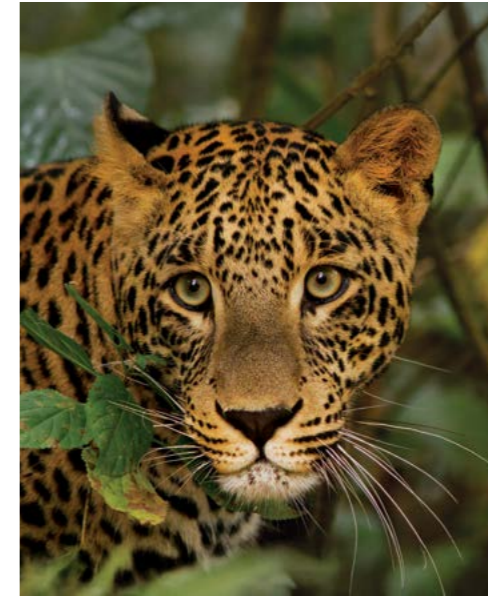
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Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal

Hon'ble Union Minister of Law and
Justice, Government of India

From a weaver's home in rural
Rajasthan to the nation's highest
legal office, Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal
reflects on how India's Constitution
transforms modest beginnings
into meaningful public service,
embodying opportunity, dignity and
democratic possibility.

✉ @arjunrammeghwal



Padma Vibhushan Dr. Sonal Mansingh

Eminent Classical Dancer
and Cultural Thinker

Dr. Mansingh writes of India
not merely as a nation, but
as a living civilisation shaped
by consciousness. She calls
upon the youth to inherit its
wisdom, values and purpose,
carrying forward a legacy
that remains vibrantly alive.

✉ @mansingh.sonal



Pankaj Tripathi

National Award-Winning Actor

In a candid reflection,
Mr. Tripathi contrasts
digital validation with lived
experience, urging young
Indians to value depth over
display. His article reminds
readers that authenticity,
struggles and real-world
learning shape character far
more than fleeting applause.

✉ @pankajtripathi



Manu Bhaker

Olympic Shooter

Manu Bhaker explores how
sporting excellence today is
no longer privilege-bound but
policy-enabled. With initiatives
like Khelo India and ASMITA,
structured pathways and
national support empower
young athletes to dream boldly
and compete confidently,
irrespective of background.

✉ @bhakermanu

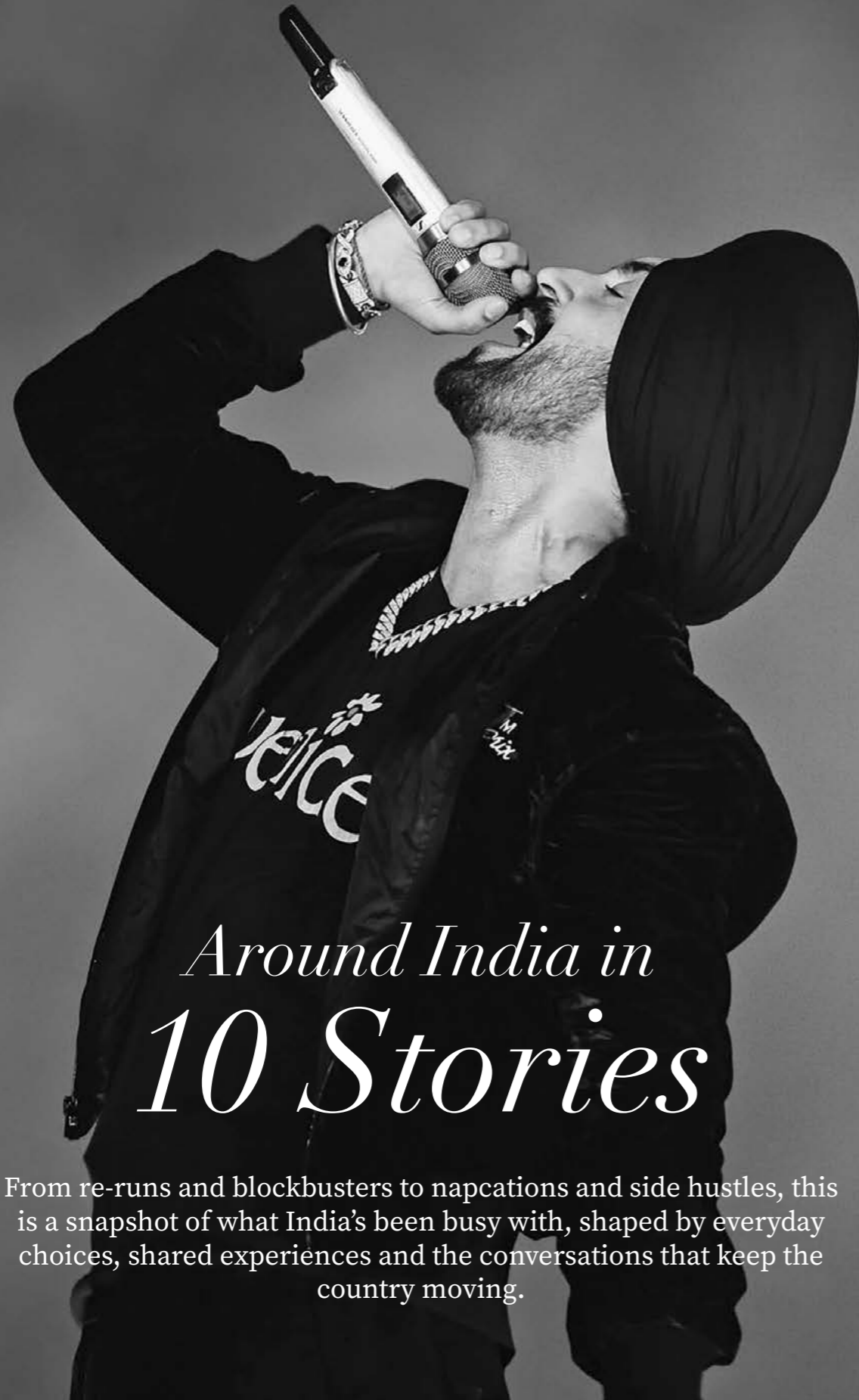


Rahul Garg

Founder & CEO, Moglix

Mr. Garg recounts how
discomfort, resilience and
long-term thinking and
vision shaped his journey
from working at Google
to building one of India's
most trusted industrial
platforms, proving that
enduring enterprises are
built patiently, not loudly.

✉ Rahul Garg



Around India in 10 Stories

From re-runs and blockbusters to napcations and side hustles, this is a snapshot of what India's been busy with, shaped by everyday choices, shared experiences and the conversations that keep the country moving.

1 Re-runs & Blockbusters

From global OTT favourites to big-screen spectacles, content continues to unite audiences.

One of the defining trends is the sustained popularity of film re-runs. Over the past year, more than 58 lakh viewers turned up for re-released films, with Hyderabad emerging as a key hub of this revival. At the same time, OTT platforms continue to command massive viewership with major titles such as *Aspirants Season 3* and *Bridgerton*.



Image: IMDb

2 Dancing With Devotion

Bhajans, once reserved for neighbourhood temples, where devotees, mostly the elderly, gathered to sing praises of the divine, have found a new stage. They are now popular with youngsters in clubs and concerts. From small gatherings in Haridwar to auditorium events in Delhi, bhajan clubbing is making the youth groove across India. Pieces like *Shiv Tandav Stotram* and *Aigiri Nandini* are being reinterpreted with a contemporary twist.



3

"Napcations" Becoming Real Vacations

Burnt out from deadlines, commutes and notifications? A growing number of Indians are choosing "sleep-focussed getaways." Resorts across Rishikesh, Coorg and Wayanad are now offering rest retreats like sound-bath sessions, digital-detox zones, forest naps and circadian-friendly sleep setups. Instead of sightseeing, travellers are buying silence, calm and deep rest. It's wellness travel, redefined.



4 World of Entertainment

International exchanges are the next big thing in entertainment. Global stars such as Ed Sheeran, Coldplay, Linkin Park, Ye and John Mayer are filling stadiums in India, meanwhile Indian artists are lighting up stages abroad. Diljit Dosanjh returned to Coachella, Arijit Singh sang to packed venues in London and Dubai, standup comedian Zakir Khan performed at Madison Square Garden, NYC and DIVINE took Indian hip-hop across Europe. Different cities, but the same cross-cultural thrill.





5 When Weekends Become Side Hustles
 If weekdays are for work, weekends are for passion projects. Engineers in Bengaluru run pottery workshops. Homemakers in Kochi deliver homemade pickle subscriptions. Office-goers in Gurugram sell desk plants grown in balcony nurseries. A recent MSME report noted a rise in home-based ventures by nearly 40%. Side hustles have become silent revolutions and are quietly reshaping what life after work looks like in India.



8 Hyper-Local Food Festivals
 Across India, hyper-local food festivals are stealing the spotlight. Karnataka's Jackfruit Festival celebrates *kathal* (jackfruit) with everything from kebabs to chips, while Pachmarhi's Mango Festival turns summer into a showcase of rare local mango varieties and recipes you won't find in any restaurant. These events draw people who are curious about local recipes and traditional flavours, creating simple spaces where regional food is shared and appreciated.

6

Millets are Cool Again
 Millets have quietly marched back into India's kitchens, and this time they're arriving with menus and fairs. In the last few years, states from Karnataka to Chhattisgarh hosted "millet melas" featuring everything from ragi brownies to *bajra* pizza. Many of these fairs showcased village recipes and farmer-led workshops, echoing the government's continued push after the International Year of Millets in 2023. What was once an everyday staple now feels modern, nutritious and proudly homegrown.



Image: IMDb

9

Local Stories, Global Stage
 From the flickering shadows of local lore to the glittering heights of the global stage, Indian storytelling has found its universal voice. Regional cinema is leading this charge with the Marathi film *Sabar Bonda* clinching the Grand Jury Prize at Sundance 2025 and Rima Das' Assamese feature *Not a Hero* earning a Crystal Bear Special mention at Berlin International Film Festival, this year. With Malayalam film *Moham* winning in Moscow and Manipuri film *Boong* securing a BAFTA, India's diverse narratives are proving that the most local stories are often the most resonant.



7

Campus Spotlight
 If nostalgia had a flavour, it would taste exactly like campus food. Social media has rediscovered that the world's best comfort food often comes from a college canteen. Videos celebrating DU's famous Tom Uncle's Maggi, IIT Kanpur's cheese paratha and BHU's chai-bun-maskra drew thousands of comments. Alumni everywhere were instantly transported back to the taste of late-night panic, inside jokes and friendships forged over shared plates. Campus food may not be fine dining, but it can take you back to a simpler and sweeter time.

10

Lost and Found, India Style
 India's metros collect an astonishing range of forgotten belongings. In Delhi Metro, commuters misplaced over ₹40 lakh in cash, 89 laptops and 193 phones in the latest reported cycle. Similarly, Nagpur Metro returned more than 450 items to passengers. Phones, wallets, bags and even sports gear made their way back through steady work by metro staff and CISF teams. In a country always on the move, it is comforting to know that many lost things still find their way home.



INDIA

A Civilisation in Motion

India is not merely a nation shaped by history; it is a civilisation shaped by consciousness. Padma Vibhushan guru **Dr. Sonal Mansingh** urges the youth to inherit its values, wisdom and purpose, and carry its living legacy forward.



C

ivilisation is a complex word. When translated into Hindi or Sanskrit, it becomes *Sabhyata*, but the meaning subtly shifts. In India, children are taught to be *sabhya* or well-behaved, which includes respecting elders, observing social norms and carrying oneself with dignity. Many of these lessons are absorbed unconsciously through everyday social ambience. When someone behaves rudely, they are called *asabhya*, roughly translating to ill-mannered. Seen this way, *Sabhyata*, as civilisation, encompasses both tangible and intangible aspects, including values, ideals, identity, and the codes, rules and laws that shape collective life.

This understanding of civilisation is not merely philosophical; it is also borne out by history. The discovery of ancient sites such as Mohenjo-Daro, Harappa, Lothal, Dholavira and Rakhigarhi, offers insight into how people once lived and how well our civilisation

provided for a good life thousands of years ago. From these findings also emerges an understanding of how they traded with the world. Civilisation was self-contained yet not inward-looking, marked by centrifugal and centripetal movement, reaching outward and bringing back values. Exchange was not limited to goods such as spices or silk, but also included ideas and cultural understanding.

What makes this continuity exceptional is that the Indian civilisation has not remained confined to the past. It remains one of the few living, vibrant, continuing civilisations in the world. While we often take this for granted, what brings this awareness back are celebrations tied to agricultural cycles, seasonal changes, planetary transitions, auspicious occasions and pilgrimages.

This continuity is visible not only in festivals but also in everyday practices. As Indians, we practise our civilisation



Did you know? The game of Snakes & Ladders was created by the 13th-century poet saint Gyandev. It was originally called 'Mokshapat'.



What Today's Youth Must Preserve

Matra Bhasha. While one can learn multiple languages, the mother tongue must be spoken, read and written. One's mother tongue connects deeply to their DNA, mindset and values.

Purpose. Determine your mission beyond earning. The larger question is, what meaningful contribution can you make to the world?

Humility. An essential trait in humans, humility in achievers, leaders and institutions breeds respect and balance.

almost daily, often without realising it. In South India, even today, women clean the courtyard and draw the ritualistic, geometric *kolams* with rice powder. There is no documented design pattern they follow. They draw from visual memory, and each day, a new design and mandala is created. Scientists such as Fritjof Capra and Carl Sagan spoke of mandalas as reflections of the cosmos, and here, it is executed with the ease of a daily ritual. Similar geometric designs like rangoli, which is drawn using coloured powder, and *alpana*, made with white paste of rice flour, reflect these connections to the universe.

Similarly, meaning is embedded within our rituals. Take marriage, for instance. Rishika Surya Savitri, a Vedic rishi, wrote the *Saptapadi*, the seven

promises husband and wife make to each other. Along this continuum of life, we have the 16 *samskaras* (rite of passage), from *Garbha Dhan* and *Anna Prashan*, to *Agni Samskara* after one's death. These *samskaras* are in our DNA.

This continuity also explains why sacred spaces feel alive. Our temples are vibrant because they contain the collective energy of millions of devotees. Ancient temples were built at points believed to attract cosmic forces.

At the heart of this civilisational consciousness lies light. It is central to awareness, and the Lord Shiva's cosmic dancer form, Nataraja, holds fire. Diwali and other festivals of light remind us why a diya is lit. When the flame appears, darkness disappears. The deeper message is to remove ignorance and

"As Indians, we practise our civilisation almost daily, often without realising it."

jadya, which translates to spiritual, emotional, mental and physical lethargy. The line in *Saraswati Vandana*, "ya kundendu tushara hara", asks not for success, but "nishesh *jadya apaha*", the removal of all *jadya*.

Yet, in today's chaos, we often lose sight of this balance. Youngsters must understand that every human birth carries a mission. Otherwise, it could lead to frustration. The pursuit of this mission can take one from ordinary to extraordinary. Unfortunately, modern distractions shrink attention spans. The result is distress and the disintegration of one's personality. It is precisely to counter this imbalance that civilisational values continue to matter.

At its core, this thought process is integrated with faith in a force beyond our control. This spirit of enquiry forms civilisation. Ultimately, saints articulated it as *Param Satya* (ultimate truth), *Param Shiva* (supreme consciousness). This realisation brings inner peace, and gently breaks the ego.

To preserve the Indian civilisation, then, is not merely to remember the past, but to live its values consciously, so that what we inherit continues, evolves and finds meaning in the hands of the next generation.



Padma Vibhushan Dr. Sonal Mansingh, renowned Odissi exponent, choreographer and scholar, has been honoured with Padma Bhushan and Sangeet Natak Akademi Award.

@mansingh.sonal

Learning the *AI Way*

What if your college professor
was not just a human, but an
algorithm as well?

By Ibtisam Fatima

open next to her laptop. She processes crude drawings into generative Artificial Intelligence software and soon, her screen is filled with prototypes she used to work on for days. “It doesn’t do the designing for me,” she says, adding, “It just speeds up sorting the jumbled parts so that I can concentrate on the important ideas.”

In Delhi, MBA graduate Mohammed Arif doesn’t memorise financial models in preparation for interviews but rather runs AI simulations that replicate market decisions. When recruiters ask him about strategy, he doesn’t just speak, he demonstrates.

Three stories, three cities, three disciplines. But all bonded by an invisible thread: AI is no longer the future of education in India, it is the present.

From Chalkboards to Chatbots

Enter a college classroom today and you may discover a quiet revolution in progress. With textbook learning and lectures come experiments with self-written code, chatbots that can solve doubts at midnight and algorithms that can predict career paths with an unfathomable ability. From the high-technology halls of IITs to smaller private schools in tier-2 cities, AI isn’t just a problem of a specialised computer science department, it’s beginning to find its way into medicine, law, business and even humanities. Students aren’t merely learning about AI but interacting with AI. It’s rewriting the definition of classroom

In a mango orchard on the outskirts of Patna, teenage Aditya Singh scans the branches of a tree in his father’s farm. In a few seconds, a message pops up on the screen saying that an early-stage fungal infection has been detected in the tree. This is not a scene out of a futuristic drama, but a college project

built with Artificial Intelligence (AI). A small victory, but an important one. For Aditya, the project is more than an experiment; it’s a bridge between his rural life and tech future.

Hundreds of kilometres away, in Bengaluru, design student Sneha Rao sits in a bustling café, her sketchbook

According to KPMG India, AI literacy is becoming what computer literacy once was. Soon, lacking it may feel much like not knowing how to use email did years ago.

A CENTA survey shows that over

70%

of Indian teachers now use AI tools in class, although many still feel under-prepared.



AIIMS Delhi now offers “Never Alone,” an AI-powered, 24x7 student wellness buddy.

engagement, employability and the future of knowledge itself.

The Student Experience

Artificial Intelligence is no longer a riddle or a challenge for most students. Rather, it is becoming a trusted partner.

Within medicine: Teachers at institutions like AIIMS Bhopal are running AI pilots for diagnostic imaging. Meanwhile, surveys of medical students reveal that the vast majority believe AI is helping them learn faster and more accurately.

In law: Symbiosis Law School, Pune has facilitated workshops in AI in legal education and throughout India, law students have begun to use online tools like ChatGPT to conduct case research for their moot court preparation. A feature from *Bar & Bench*, an online law and legal news platform, explained that nearly every law student interviewed had run around with AI to summarise judgements or test counterarguments.

In business schools: At the IIMs, AI and analytics have made their way

TOP 5 MUST-HAVE AI SKILLS FOR GRADUATES

- **Prompt Engineering**
To generate meaningful outputs from AI systems by framing the precise inputs.
- **Data Literacy**
Navigating datasets, cleaning data, and interpreting algorithmic outputs.
- **AI Ethics & Responsible Use**
Navigating bias, privacy and the morality of automation.
- **Predictive Analytics**
Utilising AI to detect trends, project results and steer decisions.
- **Human-AI Cooperation**
The question of when to rely on machines and when to depend on human judgement.

These skills span over disciplines, so they matter whether you're in engineering, agriculture, fashion or finance.

Doubt at midnight? There's a chatbot.
Confused by data? There's an AI visualiser.

Struggling with research? There's a summariser.
This isn't futuristic. This is everyday college life.

According to the World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report 2025, AI and big data lead the list of fastest-growing skills.

into executive and MBA courses. The IIM Ahmedabad and IIM Bangalore courses specifically train students to deploy AI-assisted data visualisation for strategic case solutions, so boardroom simulations here become shockingly realistic. AI is rapidly spreading into the world of campus life. As one Economics student in Hyderabad said, "AI is not replacing our professors; it's like having a second mentor who's always available."

The Challenge on Campus

But there are concerns about AI in education as well. Faculty are typically in a race to catch up with the technology students are already at speed with. Questions of academic integrity also loom large: when an AI can produce an essay in minutes, what is true of originality and critical thinking?

A few colleges are looking at solutions. For example, IIT Bombay has launched AI ethics workshops and private universities are adding modules on responsible AI use for

their students. Several colleges have also formed student-led AI clubs in which students learn from one another, lessening reliance on faculty members.

Re-envisioning Future

The bigger story isn't technology. It's young Indians reshaping their ambitions. For Aditya in Lucknow, AI modernises farming. For Sneha in Bengaluru, it boosts creativity. For Mohammed in Delhi, it offers an edge in interviews. Their journeys show that in Indian education, AI is no longer just about efficiency. It is about empowerment.

Education in India has always evolved: chalkboards became projectors, libraries became search bars. Now, AI isn't just another tool. It is a learning partner, a second voice in the classroom, sometimes even the first spark of a student's dream. The question isn't whether colleges should adopt AI. As this generation steps into an AI-shaped world, the real question is, how far will it take them?

The most popular AI tools

For Work

- Notion** - writing, summaries (Paid add-on)
- Google Workspace AI** (Gemini for Google Workspace) - drafting, meeting notes (Paid)
- ChatGPT** - ideas, content, explanations (Free + Paid Pro)
- Gemini** - research, writing (Free + Paid Advanced)
- Canva AI** - designs, presentations (Free + Paid Pro)
- Klap / OpusClip** - auto video-to-reels (Paid, limited free trials)
- Claude** - It summarises, writes and analyses content quickly. Also helps handle complex tasks and streamline workflows efficiently. (Paid)
- Perplexity AI** - Very effective for research with reliable sources and quick insights. (Free + Paid Pro)

For Education

- Photomath / Math Solver** - equations solved step-by-step (Free, some paid features)
- QuillBot** - rewriting, paraphrasing (Free + Paid Premium)
- Grammarly** - grammar, tone, clarity (Free + Paid Premium)
- Google Lens** - instant explanations and translations (Free)
- YouTube AI Courses / Learn with AI** - structured learning (Mostly Free with ads)

For Home & Daily Life

- JioVani / Google Assistant** - voice tasks in Indian languages (Free)
- AI grocery app features** (Blinkit Smart Lists, Zepto suggestions) - meal ideas, auto-lists (Free)
- Health apps with AI** (Samsung Health, Fitbit app) - sleep/step insights (Free + Paid Premium)
- Truecaller AI spam detection** - scam alerts (Free + Paid)

Researchers observed a **20%** drop in key inflammation markers among people who regularly ate fermented foods, indicating fewer signs of internal stress.



A fermented food-rich diet was shown to increase microbiome diversity and lower inflammatory markers in adults.



Stanford researchers discover following a diet high in fermented foods for **10 weeks** boosts microbiome diversity and improves immune responses.



Where to Buy: Check out Goosebumps Store and FarmDidi for preservative-free, healthy pickles with authentic regional flavours.

acts like the body's metabolic command centre: it regulates energy use, manages blood sugar and keeps inflammation in check. "Your metabolism doesn't live in your gym, it lives in your gut," Shilpi observes. Clients who incorporate a tablespoon of homemade *kanji* into meals often report steadier appetites, fewer sugar cravings and better digestion. Dr. Shah agrees, "Once your gut is happy, your mind and metabolism follow."

India's regional diversity shines in its water-based pickles. North Indian winters are brightened by *gajar kanji* and *gobhi gajar shalgam achar*. Western India offers lemon or beetroot *pani achar*, South India delights in *elumichai mor achar* and *uppinakayi*, while the east and Northeast have *oou khatta* and fermented bamboo shoots, respectively. "Nearly every region of India has a water pickle tradition," Shilpi notes, "we just forgot them when packaged oil pickles took over." The use of local vegetables and spices ensures each pickle is tailored to the climate and dietary needs of its region, highlighting centuries of culinary ingenuity.

Why Water-Based Pickles Deserve a Spot on Your Plate

- **Probiotic Power:** Naturally fermented vegetables like carrots, beetroots and green chillies are rich in beneficial bacteria that support gut health.
- **Better Digestion & Metabolism:** A balanced gut aids nutrient absorption, regulates blood sugar and helps with weight management.
- **Fresh & Light:** Unlike oily, mass-produced pickles, water-based versions are tangy, slightly fizzy and easy to digest.
- **Mindful Wellness:** Making these pickles connects you to slow-food traditions, turning simple meals into not just sensory experiences but also preventive care rituals.
- **Simple to Incorporate:** Just a spoonful of these items with lunch or a splash over salads can enrich your daily meals, effortlessly.

Modern Revival and Everyday Wellness

For city dwellers, these traditions may seem intimidating, but experts emphasise simplicity. A jar of grated carrot, mustard seeds and salt at room temperature, or a spoonful of *gajar kanji* with lunch, can bring remarkable benefits. "It's almost effortless, yet the results are huge," says Shilpi. Freshly fermented pickles are lighter on digestion than oily ones, and consistency matters more than perfection. Few spoonfuls a day can do more for your gut than any supplement.

There's also an emotional side to these foods. "It's the taste that reminds us of our loved ones," says Dr. Shah. Preparing pickles at home, listening to the brine bubble and waiting for that tangy fizz, is a slow-food ritual that reconnects us with nature and heritage. In a world of instant gratification, such mindful practices nourish both body and soul.

Young Indians are taking notice. Those who once reached for kombucha are now turning to *kanji*, curd rice and beetroot water pickles, finding real relief from digestive issues and even dull skin. "They're amazed that something so familiar works so well," says Shilpi. This revival is not a fad but a rediscovery of an accessible Indian path to wellness.

Beyond health, water-based pickles also reflect sustainability. Dr. Shah's Alibaug farm grows and harvests with awareness, turning seasonal produce into nourishing meals. Fermenting in tune with nature supports both gut health and the planet, offering food that is alive, rooted in culture and deeply satisfying.

Incorporating traditional pickles reminds us to slow down. These ferments show that health grows through simple habits, in what we eat, how we rest and the pace we live. Nurturing a jar of vegetables is preventive care made enjoyable, a flavourful way to support digestion and honour generations of wisdom. Water-based pickles are living traditions that prove simplicity brings lasting rewards.

From Grandma's Jars to Modern Wellness India's Gut Health Comeback

Be it *kanji* or *gajar ka achar*, India's age-old fermented foods are finding their way back into modern kitchens, proving that wellness can be flavourful, cultural and deeply personal.

By Anoushka Madan

For many urban Indians, a glass jar on the kitchen counter evokes nostalgia. Yet those jars of *kanji*, *bhindi ka pani achar* or spicy green chilli ferment are more than memories; they are probiotic-rich foods reshaping how we view gut health and sustainable weight management. Dr. Prarthana Shah, founder of Buova Care, a wellness service providing brand, says, "Our ancestors intuitively understood health. They may not have said 'microbiome,' but they honoured nature's rhythms. Fermentation wasn't just food preservation, it was life preservation."

The process is simple. Vegetables submerged in saltwater become a haven for good bacteria. *Lactobacillus* feeds on natural sugars, creating lactic acid that gives the pickle its tang and fizz. "No lab, no culture. Just time, temperature and nature's own microbes. They strengthen the gut, aid digestion and build resilience from within," says nutritionist Madhavi Shilpi.

The Science and Culture of Fermentation

Fermented foods play a surprisingly powerful role in weight and metabolism. A healthy gut

MIXED VEGETABLE WATER PICKLE

Ingredients

- Julienned carrots & cauliflower florets 1 cup each
- Shallots 1/2 cup
- Green peppercorns 3-4 (optional)
- Green garlic 4 tbsp or split mustard seeds 2 tbsp
- Turmeric 1/2 tsp
- Red chilli powder 2 tbsp
- Black peppercorns 8-10
- Kalonji 3 tsp
- Hing 1 tsp
- Crushed fenugreek seeds 2 tsp
- Salt 1 tbsp
- Boiled & cooled water 1 cup

Method

Combine all vegetables, spices & water. Transfer to a clean glass jar. Leave to ferment for 1-2 days. Refrigerate and enjoy as flavours develop.

The above recipe can be followed to make similar pickles with several other vegetables as well.

The average person reads about 12 books a year, but one powerful book can change everything.

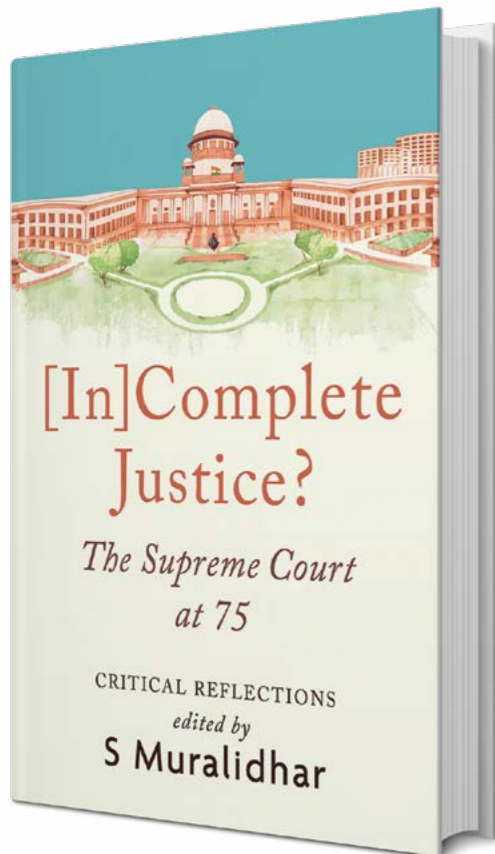
Books with deep moral themes shape identity most when read young.

India ranks among the top countries for time spent reading: about 10 hours a week.

Five Books That Changed the *Way I See Myself*

There are books you read and forget. And then there are books that rearrange something inside you, books that refuse to let you go even after you've closed them. These five: *[In]Complete Justice?* by S Muralidhar, *Chhaunk* by Abhijit Banerjee, *Scripts of Power* by Prachi Deshpande, *Meet the Savarnas* by Ravikant Kisana and *Scum of the Earth* by Rakshit Sonawane, did exactly that for me. They changed the way I understand the world, and in turn, the way I understand myself.

Dr. Sanjay Ranade



[In]Complete Justice?

When I first read Muralidhar's *[In]Complete Justice*, I realised how naïvely I had thought of justice as something delivered neatly by laws and courts. Muralidhar taught me that justice is rarely complete, that it's an imperfect, living thing, shaped as much by compassion and conscience as by statutes and verdicts. His writing made me see that justice is not something that happens out there in courtrooms; it's something we practise, or fail to practise, in our daily choices. Every time I pass judgement, stay silent or look away, I participate in that incompleteness.



Scum of the Earth

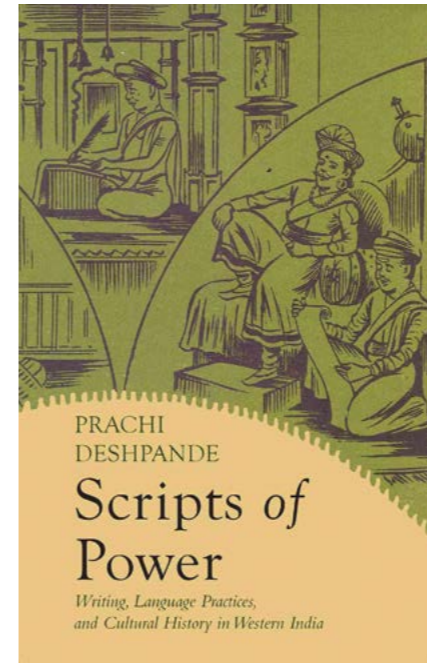
And then Sonawane's *Scum of the Earth* broke me open. Through the story of Avinash, a Dalit boy growing up in the slums of Mumbai, Sonawane revealed the dignity that survives even in the harshest circumstances. His honesty stripped away my illusions about merit, progress and fairness. It reminded me that resilience is not just endurance; it is rebellion.



Scripts of Power

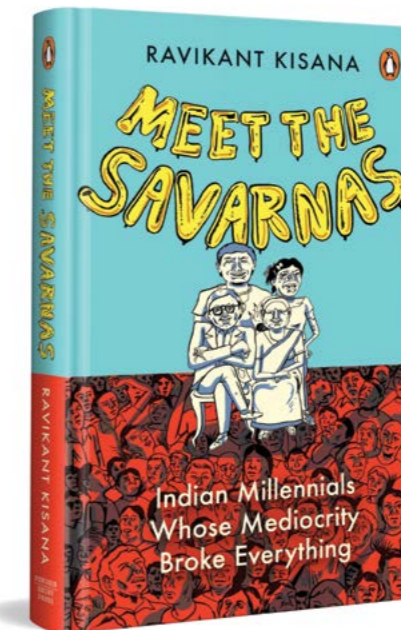
Then came Deshpande's *Scripts of Power*, which completely unsettled how I think about history and language. Deshpande reveals how power hides in the way things are written, in bureaucratic records, scripts and even in the idea of what counts as "authentic." After reading her book, I began to notice how language itself includes and excludes, how archives speak as much through silence as through what they preserve. It made me more critical of my own words, of how I use language and who it leaves out.

Together, these five books have become my moral compass. They taught me that justice is human, history is political, privilege is real and courage is quiet. Most of all, they made me see that change doesn't begin in institutions or revolutions; it begins inside, in the way we choose to see, to speak and to stand beside others. These books didn't just change how I read the world. They changed how I live in it.



Meet the Savarnas

Kisana's *Meet the Savarnas* hit closer to home. It forced me to look at privilege not as an accusation but as a fact, something quiet, structural, inherited. His book held up a mirror to my own life, to the comfort I've taken for granted, to the ways I've benefited from invisible systems that others have to fight against daily. It was uncomfortable, yes, but also necessary. Kisana made me realise that awareness is not enough; it must translate into unlearning, into humility.

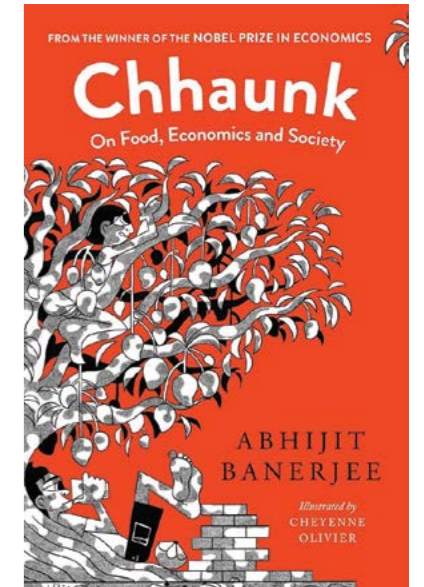


Chhaunk

Banerjee's *Chhaunk* pulled me in with its sensory richness: the smell of spices, the rhythm of small-town life, the awkward pauses between generations. It reminded me how deeply the everyday holds our moral truths. Banerjee's stories are about ordinary people in extraordinary moments of hesitation, courage or compromise. Reading *Chhaunk* made me aware of the quiet revolutions in my own life, in conversations at the dinner table, in the ways I adapt, resist or learn. It made me listen more carefully to the small sounds that change everything.



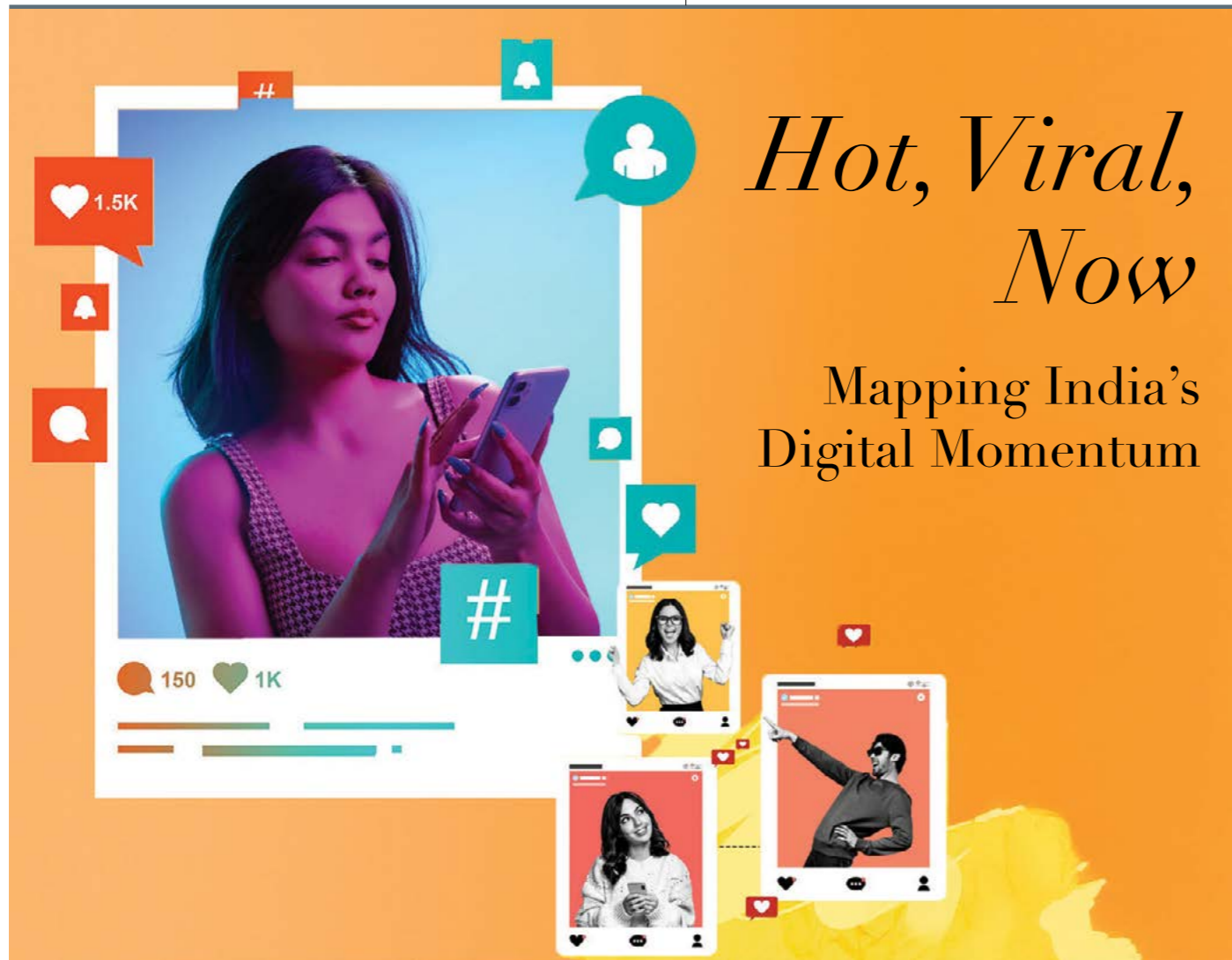
Dr. Sanjay Ranade is a media scholar with extensive experience in journalism, research and teaching. He is the author of *Songs of the Broken Road* and *Abating Season*, known for their emotional depth and reflective storytelling.



Quick Takeaway

India has more than **900** million smartphone users

58% of e-commerce purchases result from something seen on social media.



Hot, Viral, Now

Mapping India's Digital Momentum

Lifestyle: Thrift Is In

Fast fashion is on its way out. Thrifting is the new cool. Gen Z is swapping mall hauls for second-hand finds, vintage treasures and upcycled fashion. It's not just sustainable, it's a bold style statement.

Food: Only Insta-Worthy Survives

Food is not about taste alone, it's about the look and scroll. From neon-coloured mocktails to dosa-tacos and sushi-pani puri, only dishes that look striking, surprising or fusion-driven are making it big online.

Creators: The Real Celebs

Whether it's beauty tips, career hacks or daily vlogs, online content creators have become the new icons. Micro-influencers with 20,000 followers often drive more impact than movie stars, simply because they feel authentic and relatable.

Content: Relatable = Viral

The biggest digital hits are not polished. They are real. Sibling banter, workplace roasts, awkward daily moments and regional jokes are ruling the feed. When something feels like



Instagram's auto-scroll feature allows Reels and posts to play continuously, increasing content visibility and engagement.

Look out for this section every edition as we bring you the trending conversations in India.

your own life, it spreads instantly. The more honest it is, the more viral it gets.

Retro Revival: Old is New Again

Nostalgia is trending. The youth is digging into their parents' playlists, raiding old trunks for denim and sarees and romanticising eras they never lived in. Retro film filters, '90s Bollywood samples, polaroid frames and classic silhouettes are back in the spotlight. For Gen Z and Gen Alpha, vintage is not outdated; it is aesthetic, comforting and effortlessly cool.

Meme Marketing: Ads That Feel Like Jokes

Brands now understand that the internet prefers jokes over jingles. Instead of traditional ads, they drop witty memes, clever event reactions and pop culture riffs. Zomato, Swiggy and Netflix India are leading



Do You Know?

- India creates the highest number of Reels globally.
- 97% of people in India watch short-form videos at least once a day.
- "Get Ready With Me" has become a massively popular trend, with GRWM hashtags crossing 150 billion views globally.
- Nearly 80% of Indian shoppers discover new products via social media.
- 71% of images shared on social media are now AI-generated.
- Short-form videos under 30 seconds often achieve higher completion rates.
- 80% of Gen Z trust influencers who share real, authentic experiences.
- Reels using trending audio receive up to 42% more engagement and reach.

the wave by posting content that feels fun, familiar and wildly shareable. If it makes you smile, tag or take a screenshot, it works.

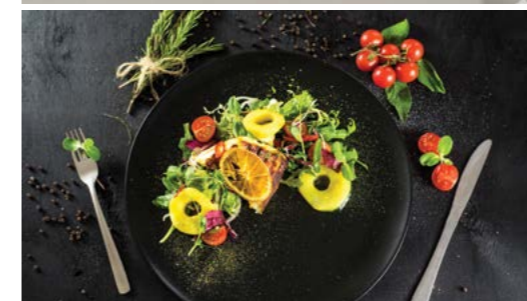
Micro Episodes: Scroll-Sized Stories

The binge is getting shorter. Audiences are hooked on 30-60 second "micro episodes", small dramas, comedy arcs or serialised stories told Reel by Reel. Think Netflix binge but designed for your scroll. It keeps you curious and clicking for "what happens next."

AI Dreams: The New Aesthetic Frontier

From dreamy retro filters to surreal AI-generated worlds, digital aesthetics have entered a new era. It is no longer just about lo-fi edits. It is about reshaping reality itself. With a single prompt, people can create hyper-realistic images of long-gone loved ones, favourite celebrities or alternate versions of themselves. It feels emotional, uncanny and deeply personal, where imagination meets memory and the impossible looks real.

Disclaimer: AI-generated visuals are synthetic creations and should be viewed as imaginative representations, not real photographs or factual recreations.



रोचक तथ्य

आने वाले वर्षों में भारत में पालतू पशु देखभाल उद्योग के

16 से 20%

से अधिक की महत्वपूर्ण चक्रवृद्धि वार्षिक वृद्धि दर (सीएजीआर) से बढ़ने का अनुमान है।

निरंतर वृद्धि

पेट्स को संभालने वाले उत्पादों (शैम्पू-ब्रश आदि) का बाजार

1,635

करोड़ रुपए तक पहुंच गया है।

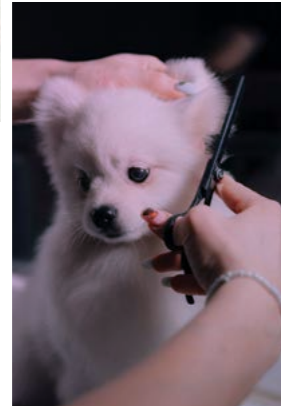


बढ़ रहा है राजस्व

राजस्व के मामले में यह बाजार

9.7

प्रतिशत की सीएजीआर से बढ़ रहा है।



डॉगी भी चाहते हैं लवज़री!

आलेख: तुषार वर्षा

कुछ वर्ष पहले तक पालतू डाग की देखभाल का मतलब सुबह-शाम की सैर और समय पर खाना देना हुआ करता था। वर्तमान में तस्वीर बिलकुल बदल चुकी है। अब डॉगी डे-केयर, प्रोफेशनल ग्रूमिंग, स्पेशल फूड, बर्थडे पार्टीज़ और यहां तक कि मेंटल एनरिचमेंट एक्टिविटीज़ बढ़ रही हैं।

भारत में पालतू जानवरों के साथ रिश्ते की परिभाषा बदल रही है। वफादार डॉगी शहरी जीवन-शैली में परिवार की भावना को प्रभावी ढंग से सजीव कर रहे हैं। ग्रूमिंग, डे-केयर और एनरिचमेंट जैसी सेवाएं डॉगी लवज़री नहीं, अब आवश्यकता बन गई हैं। यह प्रचलन संभवतः शहरी और उच्च वर्ग से आरंभ हुआ हो, किंतु अब हर वर्ग के लोगों ने इस चलन को अपना लिया है तथा विशेष रुचि भी ले रहे हैं। आने वाले समय में यह चलन न केवल पेट इंडस्ट्री को सुदृढ़ करेगा अपितु मनुष्य एवं पालतू जानवरों के रिश्ते को और भी खूबसूरत बनाएगा।

शहरी परिवारों में बढ़ता जुड़ाव

मुंबई की आईटी प्रोफेशनल रिया जौहरी अपने लैब्राडोर 'शैडो' को प्रत्येक सप्ताह 'पेट ग्रूमिंग सैलून' ले जाती हैं। वह बताती हैं, "पहले मैं सोचती थी कि ग्रूमिंग एक लवज़री है, लेकिन अब समझ आया कि यह मेरे डॉगी की सेहत एवं सफाई के लिए आवश्यक है। अब वह पहले से अधिक खुश और एक्टिव रहता है।" शैडो जैसे हजारों डॉगी आज भारत में एक नया ट्रेंड बना रहे हैं, जहां उन्हें केवल पालतू नहीं, बल्कि परिवार का हिस्सा माना जा रहा है।

डॉगी डे-केयर : अब अकेलापन नहीं

महानगरों में कामकाजी दम्पती तथा एकल पेट ओनर्स के लिए डॉगी डे-केयर एक वरदान बनकर उभरा है। बंगलुरु, दिल्ली, पुणे जैसे शहरों में कई प्रोफेशनल सेंटर खुल चुके हैं, जहां पालतू डॉगी को दिनभर खेलने तथा दूसरे डॉग्स के साथ इंटरैक्ट करने का अवसर मिलता है। डे-केयर सेंटर को संचालन करने वाले आदित्य मलिक बताते हैं, "डॉगी को लंबे समय तक अकेला छोड़ने से उनमें डिप्रेशन और एंग्जायटी जैसे लक्षण दिखने को मिलते हैं। हमारे यहां हर डॉगी के लिए पर्सनलाइज्ड एक्टिविटी प्लान होता है। इससे उनका मूड और व्यवहार संतुलित रहता है।"

पेट इंडस्ट्री का बढ़ता बाज़ार

रिपोर्ट्स के मुताबिक, 2025 तक भारत में पालतू जानवरों का बाज़ार 10 हजार करोड़ रुपए से अधिक हो गया है। इसमें सबसे अधिक हिस्सा डॉग फूड, ग्रूमिंग प्रोडक्ट्स, हेल्थ केयर एवं ट्रेनिंग सर्विसेस का है। ऑनलाइन प्लेटफॉर्म जैसे 'हेड्स अप फॉर टेल्स', 'विगल्स' और 'सुपरटेल्स' भी इस सेक्टर को तीव्रगति से डिजिटल बना रहे हैं।

सामाजिक सोच में बदलाव

पहले जहां डॉगी को छत अथवा बालकनी में बांधकर रखा जाता था, आज वे घर में सोते हैं। उनके लिए अलग बेड होते हैं। विशेष स्नैक्स, बर्थडे केक तथा फेस्टिव ड्रेस तक उपलब्ध हैं। अब लोग उन्हें 'पेट' नहीं बल्कि 'फर बेबी' कहकर बुलाते हैं। यह बदलाव केवल भावनात्मक नहीं अपितु सामाजिक दृष्टि से भी अहम है। जानवरों के प्रति संवेदनशीलता बढ़ रही है।

ग्रूमिंग: स्टाइल नहीं, आवश्यकता

डॉग की ग्रूमिंग पहले केवल डॉग्स-शो तक सीमित थी। अब यह एक आम प्रैक्टिस बन गई है। देशभर में हजारों ग्रूमिंग सैलून खुल चुके हैं जो डॉगी को हेयरकट, बाथ, नेल ट्रिमिंग और यहां तक कि डॉग-स्पा जैसी सेवाएं दे रहे हैं। गुरुग्राम के एक सैलून मालिक रवि खुराना के अनुसार, "लोग अब अपने पेट्स को सुंदर दिखाने से अधिक उनकी सेहत एवं साफ-सफाई को लेकर सजग हैं। हर ब्रीड की आवश्यकता भिन्न होती है, इसलिए हम उन्हें कस्टमाइज्ड केयर देते हैं।"

मानसिक व शारीरिक विकास के लिए एनरिचमेंट

अब केवल खेलकूद ही नहीं, डॉगी के मानसिक विकास हेतु भी अब विशेष एक्टिविटीज़ करवाई जाती हैं। स्मेल ट्रेल गोम्स, पज़ल टॉयज़, डॉग ट्रेकिंग तथा योगा क्लास तक चल रही हैं। इसका उद्देश्य डॉगी को स्ट्रेस-फ्री, एक्टिव और खुश रखना है। चेन्नई की डॉग ट्रेनर नंदिनी राव कहती हैं, "कई डॉगी शहरी जीवन-शैली के कारण शीघ्र ही उदासीन हो जाते हैं। हम उन्हें नई चीज़ें सिखाते हैं और व्यस्त रखते हैं।"

निरंतर वृद्धि

वित्त वर्ष 2024 में 12.19 मिलियन हेक्टेयर क्षेत्रफल पर श्री अन्न जिसे पौष्टिक अनाज भी कहते हैं, उनकी खेती की गई थी।



बढ़ रहा है उत्पादन

वित्त वर्ष 2024 में श्री अन्न का **15.38** मिलियन मीट्रिक टन उत्पादन किया गया।

रोचक तथ्य

बाजरे की खेती के लिए राजस्थान सबसे बड़ा क्षेत्रफल उपयोग में लाता है। इसके पश्चात कर्नाटक, महाराष्ट्र, उत्तर प्रदेश, हरियाणा, गुजरात, मध्य प्रदेश, तमिलनाडु, आंध्र प्रदेश तथा उत्तराखंड का स्थान है।

'श्री अन्न' के पौष्टिक लाभ (प्रति 100 ग्राम प्रत्येक श्री अन्न)

	प्रोटीन (ग्राम)	रेशे (ग्राम)	खनिज (ग्राम)	आयरन (ग्राम)	कैल्शियम (ग्राम)
ज्वार	10	4	1.6	2.6	54
बाजरा	10.6	1.3	2.3	16.9	38
रागी	7.3	3.6	2.7	3.9	244
कंगनी	12.3	8	3.3	2.8	31
चेना	12.5	2.2	1.9	0.8	14
कोदो	8.3	9	2.6	0.5	27
कुटकी	7.7	7.6	1.5	9.3	17
सावां	11.2	10.1	4.4	15.2	11
टेपफ	13	8	0.85	7.6	180
फोनियो	11	11.3	5.31	84.8	18
ब्राउन टॉप कदन्न	11.5	12.5	4.2	0.65	0.01

प्राथमिकता दें क्योंकि ये रसायन मुक्त और स्वास्थ्यवर्धक होते हैं।

बाजरा में है सेहत

बाजरा देश के सबसे पुराने और प्रमुख अनाजों में से एक है। इसमें फाइबर की मात्रा अधिक होती है, जो पाचन क्रिया ठीक रखती है। यह आयरन और मैग्नीशियम का भी अच्छा स्रोत है। इससे हड्डियां मजबूत बनती हैं और ऊर्जा देता है। मधुमेह रोगियों के लिए बाजरा बहुत लाभकारी माना जाता है क्योंकि यह ब्लड शुगर को नियंत्रित करता है। राजस्थान, गुजरात, हरियाणा और मध्य भारत के कई हिस्सों में बाजरे की रोटी और उसके व्यंजन खूब खाए जाते हैं।

ज्वार है ग्लूटन-फ्री

ज्वार भी ग्लूटन-फ्री अनाज है, जो स्वास्थ्य के लिए बहुत अच्छा माना जाता है। इसमें कैल्शियम, प्रोटीन, फाइबर और विटामिन पाया जाता है। ज्वार का सेवन हृदय रोग का खतरा कम करता है और रक्तचाप को नियंत्रित रखता है। इसके साथ ही यह वजन घटाने में सहायक है। महाराष्ट्र, कर्नाटक और आंध्र प्रदेश के ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में ज्वार की रोटियाँ और भाकरी खाने का चलन आज भी है।

डायबिटीज़ में कोदो है लाभकारी

कोदो डायबिटीज़ के मरीजों के लिए उपयुक्त होता है क्योंकि इसका ग्लाइसेमिक इंडेक्स कम होता है। कोदो में फाइबर, प्रोटीन और कई महत्वपूर्ण खनिज होते हैं, जो लिवर को स्वस्थ रखने में मदद करते हैं। यह ऊर्जा का स्थायी स्रोत है और वजन नियंत्रण में सहायक है। इसे चावल की तरह पकाकर या उपमा, इडली, डोसा के रूप में भी खाया जाता है।

'श्री अन्न' की विशेषता

ग्लूटन-फ्री: जो लोग गेहूँ या अन्य ग्लूटन युक्त अनाज नहीं खा सकते, उनके लिए ये उपयुक्त हैं।

उच्च फाइबर सामग्री: यह कब्ज, एसिडिटी एवं पाचन संबंधित समस्याएं दूर करता है।

ब्लड शुगर नियंत्रक: मधुमेह रोगियों के लिए ये सुरक्षित और फायदेमंद हैं।

वजन नियंत्रक: शरीर में फैट जमा नहीं होने देते, जिससे वजन संतुलित रहता है।

पर्यावरण के लिए हितकारी: ये कम पानी में उग जाते हैं और कम रसायनों की आवश्यकता होती है। इसलिए ये टिकाऊ खेती के लिए बेहतर विकल्प हैं।



गुणकारी है कुटकी

कुटकी बहुत ही छोटे आकार का अनाज है, लेकिन इसके पोषण मूल्य अत्यंत उच्च हैं। इसमें फाइबर, आयरन और अन्य मिनरल्स की मात्रा अच्छी होती है। यह खासकर महिलाओं और बच्चों के लिए लाभकारी माना जाता है क्योंकि यह आयरन की कमी को पूरा करता है। पाचन तंत्र दुरुस्त करता है। कुटकी के आटे से बने व्यंजन स्वादिष्ट और स्वास्थ्यवर्धक होते हैं।

जलवायु परिवर्तन में देसी अनाजों की भूमिका

आज दुनिया में जलवायु परिवर्तन की समस्या गंभीर हो रही है। खेती के लिए पानी की कमी हो रही है और पारंपरिक फसलों की पैदावार कम हो रही है। ऐसे में बाजरा, ज्वार, कोदो और कुटकी जैसे अनाज बहुत महत्वपूर्ण हैं, क्योंकि ये कम पानी में उग सकते हैं, और इनकी खेती पर्यावरण के लिए अनुकूल होती है।



'श्री अन्न'

स्फूर्त तन, प्रसन्न मन

पिछले कुछ सालों में किराने की दुकानों में एक नया शेक्शन बन गया है, वह है मिलेट्स यानि 'श्री अन्न' का। कोरोना के बाद श्री अन्न की मांग में बहुत तेज़ी आई है। सरकार ने भी इसके उपयोग को बढ़ावा देना आरंभ किया। ये अनाज न केवल खाने में स्वादिष्ट होते हैं अपितु पोषण की दृष्टि से भी लाभकारी हैं।

आलेख: डॉ. ज्योति कुमारी

आ

पकी थाली में गेहूँ की रोटी, चावल और सब्जी होती है। इसके सेवन से शरीर को असंख्य लाभ मिलते हैं। आज से ही थाली में 'श्री अन्न' सम्मिलित करें। कुछ दिनों के बाद आपका मानसिक एवं शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य बेहतर होगा। पोषण से भरपूर श्री अन्न कम जलवायु संसाधनों में भी आसानी से उगाए जा सकते हैं। ये भारत के ग्रामीण इलाकों में लंबे समय से खाए जाते हैं और अब स्वस्थ जीवन-शैली के लिए फिर से लोकप्रिय हो रहे हैं। आजकल श्री अन्न आपको लोकल मंडी, ऑर्गेनिक स्टोर और ऑनलाइन मार्केटप्लेस पर आसानी से मिल जाएंगे। इन्हें खरीदते समय ऑर्गेनिक या स्थानीय फसल को





निरंतर मिल रहे अवसर
सेवानिवृत्त लोगों के लिए एक माह में लगभग
26430 नौकरियों के आवेदन मांगे जाते हैं।



प्रभावशाली व सटीक सिद्धांत
सेवानिवृत्त लोग लक्ष्य प्राप्त करने का उचित प्रकार
जानते हैं एवं मार्ग-दर्शन में दक्ष होते हैं।

सेवानिवृत्ति: अंत नहीं आरंभ!



यद्यपि सेवानिवृत्ति को लेकर लोगों की धारणा है कि अब तो 'बोनस लाइफ' व्यतीत करनी है, अब भला हमें क्या काम। हमारी क्या उपयोगिता। सेवानिवृत्ति को लेकर प्रायः लोगों के मन में वृद्धावस्था, निष्क्रियता एवं निर्भरता की छवि बन जाती है। परंतु सच्चाई यह है कि इस पड़ाव पर व्यक्ति के पास अनुभव रूपी महत्वपूर्ण पूँजी होती है। यह दौर आपके जीवन का अंतिम पड़ाव नहीं अपितु नवीन आरंभ है। आज के जीवन में नौकरी अथवा व्यापार करना आसान नहीं है क्योंकि आपको तनाव, भागमभाग और थकान झेलनी पड़ती है। किंतु सेवानिवृत्ति के पश्चात आपको मिलता है सुकून, शांति तथा आराम से अपनी पसंद के काम करने का समय। ऐसे असंख्य उदाहरण हैं

अपनी पसंद को पंख देने का समय है, सेवानिवृत्ति। आप चाहें तो इसे अपने कैरियर की दूसरी अहम पारी भी कह सकते हैं। इस अवधि में आप अपनी रुचि के कार्य कर सकते हैं। कुछ नया भी सीख सकते हैं।

आलेख: पुरु प्रखर



जब वर्षों तक नौकरी या अन्य काम करने के पश्चात लोग अपनी रुचि को अपना कैरियर बनाते हैं। तत्पश्चात अधिक सफल, संतुष्ट एवं प्रसन्न होते हैं। कई नामी और सफल व्यक्तियों ने अपने मुख्य कार्यक्षेत्र से सेवानिवृत्त होने के बाद भी समाज में सक्रिय भूमिका निभाई और नए कैरियर या क्षेत्र अपनाए और मिसाल कायम की। सही कहा गया है कि "ऐज इज जस्ट ए नंबर।" यदि मन में ऊर्जा और संकल्प हो, तो कोई भी काम जीवन के किसी भी पड़ाव पर आरंभ किया जा सकता है। सेवानिवृत्ति केवल एक पद या नौकरी से विराम है, जीवन से नहीं। यह वह अवसर है जब व्यक्ति अपने लंबे अनुभव, कौशल और ज्ञान का उपयोग नई दिशा में कर सकता है। यह समय स्वयं के लिए जीने, समाज के लिए कुछ नया करने अथवा अपनी रुचि को पंख देने का होता है।

एन. एस. कौल ने रिटायरमेंट के पैसे से जम्मू में अपनी खेती की ज़मीन पर घर बनवाया और वहां अपने फार्म में स्ट्रॉबेरी लगाई। आज वह अपनी स्ट्रॉबेरी की वजह से पूरे देश में पहचाने जाते हैं।

उत्कृष्ट उदाहरण

हमारे सामने सबसे उपयुक्त उदाहरण डॉ. ए. पी. जे. अब्दुल कलाम का है। उन्होंने राष्ट्रपति जैसे सर्वोच्च पद से निवृत्त होने के बाद भी शिक्षण, लेखन एवं युवाओं को प्रेरित करने का कार्य निरंतर किया। उनका पूरा जीवन इस बात का सटीक उदाहरण है कि अनुभव कभी वृद्ध नहीं होता। देश-भर में प्रशासनिक सेवा से संबंधित ऐसे अनेक

उदाहरण हैं, जो हमें सिखाते एवं बताते हैं कि सेवानिवृत्ति के बाद भी सक्रिय और आत्मसंतुष्ट रह सकते हैं। देश की पहली आई.पी.एस. अधिकारी किरण बेदी पुलिस सेवा से सेवानिवृत्त होने के बाद समाज सेवा और राजनीति में सक्रिय हुईं। वहीं मध्यप्रदेश की पहली आई.पी.एस. अधिकारी आशा गोपाल ने समय पूर्व सेवानिवृत्ति लेकर एनजीओ के माध्यम से समाज सेवा को चुना। अरुणा राय वह नाम है, जिन्होंने भारतीय प्रशासनिक सेवा छोड़ने के बाद 'सूचना का अधिकार' आंदोलन खड़ा किया। इसने भारतीय लोकतंत्र को नया आयाम दिया। उनके योगदान के लिए उन्हें मैगससे पुरस्कार एवं मेवाड़ सेवाश्री आदि पुरस्कारों से सम्मानित किया जा चुका है। वह राजस्थान के निर्धन लोगों के जीवन को बेहतर बनाने हेतु किए गए सफल प्रयासों के लिए विशेष रूप से जानी जाती हैं। अन्ना हजारे के नाम से सभी परिचित हैं। अन्ना हजारे सेना से रिटायर होकर गाँव रालेगण सिद्धि को आदर्श ग्राम बनाने में सफल रहे और भ्रष्टाचार विरोधी आंदोलन की आवाज़ बने।

जहां चाह, वहां राह

देश-भर में ऐसे अनगिनत उदाहरण हैं, जब उच्च-पदों पर रहने वाले लोग सेवानिवृत्ति के पश्चात किसी राजनैतिक दल की सदस्यता ग्रहण कर मंत्री तक बन जाते हैं। सेवानिवृत्ति के बाद जनरल वी. के. सिंह (भारत के पूर्व थलसेना प्रमुख) भाजपा से जुड़े और केंद्रीय मंत्री बने। जनरल जे.जे. सिंह

वरिष्ठ नागरिकों के लिए जॉब पोर्टल

'विज़डम सर्कल' और 'नाइटिंगेल्स जॉब्स 60+' जैसे जॉब पोर्टल का उद्देश्य योग्य एवं अनुभवी सेवानिवृत्त पेशेवरों को आईटी, विनिर्माण एवं सामाजिक सेवाओं के क्षेत्रों में नौकरी दिलाना है। विशेषता तथा विशेषज्ञता के आधार पर नौकरी आसानी से मिल जाती है।



सोच बदलेगी, जीवन बदलेगा

सेवानिवृत्ति के बाद का कैरियर तनावमुक्त, रुचि-आधारित और संतोष देने वाला होता है। मानसिक संतोष और आर्थिक लाभ मिलता है। व्यक्ति अपनी रुचि एवं योग्यता के अनुसार नया जीवन गढ़ सकता है। समाज के लिए उपयोगी बन सकता है। इसलिए सेवानिवृत्ति को ठहराव नहीं, नवीनीकरण का आरंभ समझें और जीवन का निस्संदेह भरपूर आनंद उठाएं।

(पूर्व थलसेना प्रमुख) सेवानिवृत्ति के बाद पंजाब की राजनीति में सक्रिय हुए। भारतीय वायुसेना प्रमुख रह चुके एयर मार्शल एन. सी. सूरी भी राजनीति से जुड़े। अश्विनी वैष्णव (पूर्व भा.प्र.से. अधिकारी) राजनीति में आए और वर्तमान में केंद्रीय मंत्री हैं। मध्यप्रदेश में मंत्री बने रुस्तम सिंह भी आई.पी.एस. अधिकारी थे। कुछ सेवानिवृत्त लोग अपने अनुभव का लाभ दूसरों तक पहुंचाने के लिए परामर्शदाता भी बन जाते हैं अथवा किसी के साथ जुड़ जाते हैं। ऐसे भी ढेरों उदाहरण हैं, जब लोगों ने सेवानिवृत्ति की प्रतीक्षा किए बिना ही समय पूर्व सेवानिवृत्ति लेकर अपना पसंदीदा कैरियर चुना। किसी को बहुराष्ट्रीय कंपनियों ने आकर्षित किया तो किसी ने छोटा-सा स्कूल खोलकर बच्चों का भविष्य संवारने का बीड़ा उठाया। कुछ अधिकारी ऐसे

भी देखे गए, जिन्हें ज्योतिष में रुचि थी अतः वह पारंगत ज्योतिषी बन गए। जैसे उत्तर प्रदेश के पूर्व भा.प्र.से. अधिकारी डॉ. अनिल कुमार मिश्र, जो सेवानिवृत्ति के पश्चात वैदिक ज्योतिष और आध्यात्मिक विषयों पर लेखन करने एवं परामर्श देने लगे। मध्यप्रदेश के पूर्व प्रशासनिक अधिकारी डॉ. सुरेशचन्द्र मिश्र, छत्तीसगढ़ के अधिकारी आर. के. चौबे सहित अनेकों अधिकारी हैं, जो सेवानिवृत्ति के बाद ज्योतिषी बन ग्रहों की गणना कर रहे हैं।

शिक्षण मार्गदर्शन करने के लिए बड़ी संख्या में सेवानिवृत्त लोग कोचिंग सेंटर चला रहे हैं। कुछ लोग अपना स्टार्टअप आरंभ कर, संतुष्टि पा रहे हैं। कुछ योग, ध्यान प्रक्रिया और अध्यात्म को कैरियर के रूप में अपना रहे हैं। सेवानिवृत्ति के पश्चात साहित्य, लेखन से जुड़ने वाले लोगों की संख्या भी बढ़ रही है। कुछ लोग नई-नई भाषाएं और आधुनिक तकनीक सीखने में भी रुचि दिखाते हैं। सही भी है क्योंकि कहा जाता है कि "सीखने की कोई उम्र नहीं होती है।"

Gold crossed **\$4,000** per ounce in 2025 and recorded one of its strongest yearly performances, rising by over

60% year-on-year.

When the Old Hero



Became the New Star

Gold has delivered strong returns and seen a healthy correction. Regardless of price moves, it remains a reliable asset. Physical gold isn't easy to own, but Gold ETFs make it simple. Invest digitally, skip lockers, and let your gold grow with the market.

By Ajay Kedia

Between 2010 and 2020, gold prices in India rose from around

₹18,500 to nearly ₹48,651 per 10 g, increasing by more than two and a half times over the decade.

India has always shared a special bond with gold. From temple deities to heirloom jewellery, gold has been more than a metal; it is a cultural anchor, a symbol of security and a timeless marker of wealth. But today, this age-old treasure has found a new identity. Beyond vaults and wedding trousseaus, gold now shines in boardrooms and investment portfolios through gold Exchange-Traded Funds (ETFs), redefining how Indians preserve and grow their wealth. For centuries, gold narrated India's story of power and prosperity. It was minted by kings, traded by merchants and cherished by families. Now, it stands at the crossroads of tradition and technology. Gold ETFs perfectly blend heritage with modernity, offering investors transparency, convenience and growth.

In recent years, global uncertainty from pandemics to inflation and geopolitical tensions has only reinforced gold's importance. What was once a safety net has become a reliable performer, with prices in India doubled in last two years. Even when other assets faltered, gold has historically proven resilient, thriving in uncertainty and rewarding patience over time.

What makes this story remarkable is how gold has stayed culturally timeless while evolving financially. For generations, Indians trusted physical gold for security, but issues of purity, storage and liquidity often made it inconvenient. Gold ETFs transformed this relationship by offering transparency, safety and easy liquidity without physical possession. With a click, investors can now own fractions



The shine stays the same; only the way we hold it has changed.

Pro Tip If you prefer simplicity and don't have a Demat account, explore Gold Mutual Funds, they invest directly in Gold ETFs and are equally effective.

Reliable Gold ETF Options Nippon India Gold BeES (high liquidity, established track record), Axis Gold ETF (low tracking error, cost-efficient), and DSP Gold ETF (lower expense ratio, newer but promising).

Gold ETFs mirror India's larger story, the fusion of heritage and progress. Just as classical ragas blend with modern beats, gold's digital evolution strengthens tradition through technology. In turbulent times, it stands not only as a safe asset but as a resilient performer.

of gold, track real-time value and trade seamlessly. Centuries of trust have found their most practical expression.

More than just an investment, gold ETFs are a bridge between tradition and modern finance. They have become a starting point for young investors learning about markets while aligning with India's emotional connection to gold. They simplify finance, making money management more accessible while promoting financial literacy.

Even institutions now embrace them. PSUs, banks and ministries include gold ETFs in their reserves, recognising gold's enduring role as a stabilising asset. As India moves toward a US\$ 5 trillion economy, gold remains its quiet guardian, anchoring stability in uncertain times. For millennials and Gen Z, gold ETFs blend legacy with innovation. They buy gold digitally, integrate it into SIPs and value it for liquidity and transparency. Older generations, too, find comfort knowing the essence of

gold, its security and universal value, remains intact.

Gold ETFs mirror India's larger story, the fusion of heritage and progress. Just as classical ragas blend with modern beats, gold's digital evolution strengthens tradition through technology. In turbulent times, it stands not only as a safe asset but as a resilient performer, with recent years proving its strength through significant gains.

Gold's story is no longer just history; it is the future. Investing in gold ETFs is about more than returns. It is about preserving legacy in a modern language. Gold has not faded with time; it has reinvented itself, shining brighter in the portfolios of a new India.



Ajay Kedia is a commodity market expert. With over two decades of experience in commodities, equities and currency markets, he is widely respected for his insights on gold investment trends, risk management and market strategy.

[in](#) Ajay Kedia

How to Get Started with Gold ETFs

1. Open a Demat & Trading Account

To buy gold ETFs, you need a Demat account (for holding units) and a trading account (for transactions), just like investing in shares.

2. Choose a Trusted ETF

Look for SEBI-registered gold ETFs offered by reputed mutual fund houses such as SBI, Nippon India, HDFC or Axis.

Check factors like liquidity, expense ratio, and tracking error before you invest.

3. Start Small

You can begin with as little as ₹500-₹1,000. Many platforms allow you to buy even a fractional unit of a gold ETF.

4. Buy Through Your Broker or App

Use your online brokerage platform or mobile app to purchase gold ETFs on NSE or BSE, just like shares.

You'll own gold in digital form, fully backed by physical gold held by the fund.

5. Stay Consistent with SIPs

Consider setting up a Systematic Investment Plan (SIP) in gold ETFs to build your holdings gradually and benefit from cost averaging.

6. Relax, No Need for Constant Monitoring

Unlike equities, gold ETFs don't need daily tracking. Their prices move in line with real gold rates, making them a stable, low-maintenance investment for long-term wealth preservation.

7. Redeem When Needed

You can sell gold ETFs anytime during market hours. The amount is credited to your bank account in 1 to 2 working days.

नियमित रूप से दें पानी

हर्ब्स को कम पानी की आवश्यकता होती है। प्रतिदिन पौधों पर हल्का छिड़काव करें। अधिक पानी देने से जड़ें सड़ जाती हैं।



बढ़ रहा है उत्पादन

आशा है कि आयुर्वेद उत्पाद का बाजार वर्ष 2028 तक

1800 बिलियन रूपए तक पहुंचेगा।

बालकनी में करें हर्ब गार्डनिंग



आपके खाने में सेहत एवं खुशबू हो तो खाना सभी को पसंद आएगा। इसके लिए बजट की नहीं अपितु बालकनी की आवश्यकता है। एक बार इसे अपने घर में जगह दें, फिर देखें कैसे आपकी रसोई खुशबू से महकती और घर पर उगाये मसाले एवं सब्जियां घर-परिवार को सेहतमंद बनाती हैं।

आलेख: दीप्ति अंगरीश

स्वयं उगाएं, उपयोग में लाएं

ताजे हर्ब का स्वाद एवं सुगंध पैक किए हुए उत्पादों से कई गुना बेहतर होता है। आप उनका उपयोग चाय, सब्जियों, सलाद, सूप या काढ़ा बनाने में सहज रूप से कर सकते हैं।



कीटों से बचाव

यदि पौधों में कीड़े लग रहे हैं, तब नीम का तेल, लहसुन का स्रे या हल्दी का छिड़काव करें। ये प्राकृतिक उपाय हैं और हर्ब को नुकसान नहीं पहुंचाते।



आपकी बागवानी में रुचि तो बहुत है, किंतु घर में जगह की कमी है। चिंता छोड़ें, हमारा कहा मानें तो आप अपनी बालकनी में बेझिझक हर्ब गार्डनिंग कर सकते हैं। सच मानिए, कम जगह में बागवानी का कारगर तरीका है, हर्ब गार्डनिंग। इससे आपकी सेहत भी सुधरेगी और आत्मनिर्भरता भी आएगी। जीवन-शैली में बदलाव की दिशा में भी यह एक छोटा-सा, किंतु प्रभावशाली कदम है। थोड़े से प्रयास से, आप चाहें तो अपनी बालकनी को मिनी हर्ब फार्म में बदल सकते हैं।

ऐसे करें हर्ब का चयन: आप चाहें तो तुलसी, पुदीना, धनिया, करी पत्ता, अजवायन, लेमन ग्रास और हरी इलायची जैसे मसाले आसानी से उगा सकते हैं। औषधीय गुणों से भी भरपूर इन हर्बल का आप दैनिक सेवन कर सकते हैं और इनका इस्तेमाल भोजन में भी किया जा सकता है।

इस तरह उगाएं: आपकी बालकनी में अधिक जगह नहीं है तो चिंता न करें! आप पुरानी बोतलों, डिब्बों, मग, प्लास्टिक कंटेनर अथवा टिन के डिब्बे को रीसाइकिल करके उनका उपयोग गमले के रूप में करें। हां! एक खास बात ध्यान रहे, इनमें छेद करना न भूलें ताकि पानी की निकासी आसानी से हो सके।

धूप व हवा है महत्वपूर्ण: अधिकतर हर्ब को दिन में 4 से 6 घंटे धूप की आवश्यकता होती है। बालकनी के उसी कोने में गमले रखें, जहां धूप सीधी आती हो। अगर धूप कम है, तो पौधों के लिए एलईडी ग्रो लाइट्स का विकल्प भी उपयोगी हो सकता है।



इस प्रकार की बागवानी उत्तम पारिवारिक गतिविधि हो सकती है। बच्चों को बीज बोना, पानी देना एवं पौधों की देखभाल करना सिखाएं। पर्यावरण संरक्षण में रुचि जगोगी

बीज या कटिंग से करें बागवानी: धनिया, मेथी या पुदीना जैसे पौधों को आप सीधे बीज अथवा किसी पुराने पौधे की कटिंग से भी उगा सकते हैं। कटिंग को पानी में तब तक रखें, जब तक उसमें जड़ें न आ जाएं।

मिट्टी ऐसे तैयार करें: आप तो जानते ही हैं कि अच्छी मिट्टी होगी तब खेती भी अच्छी होगी। हर्ब के लिए भुरभुरी, हल्की और अच्छी ड्रेनेज वाली मिट्टी उपयुक्त रहेगी। मिट्टी में कोकोपीट, वर्मी कम्पोस्ट तथा थोड़ी-सी रेत मिलाकर क्यों न बढ़िया मिक्स तैयार किया जाए।

वर्टिकल गार्डन का उपयोग करें: जगह की कमी हो तब आप दीवार पर भी वर्टिकल गार्डन बना सकते हैं। पुराने जूते रखने वाले ऑर्गनाइजर, रैक अथवा हैंगिंग पॉट्स आपके बहुत काम आ सकते हैं। कम जगह में अधिक पौधे, है न मजेदार बात।

समय-समय पर कटिंग: ध्यान रहे, हर्ब का विकास बाधित न हो, इसलिए समय-समय पर उनकी कटाई करते रहें। इससे पौधा घना होगा और नई कोपलें निकलेंगी। काटे गए पत्तों को सुखाकर भी उनसे खाद बनाकर उनका उचित प्रकार से उपयोग किया जा सकता है।





Regional flavours are the fastest-growing sub-trend in India's packaged FMCG market.

The traditional food packaging market is shifting to eco-friendly and biodegradable materials like banana leaves and terracotta.



Thanks to social media, even small, informal food producers from across the country are able to reach semi-urban and urban markets.

Regional Flavours *Mean Business*

A new segment of India's food economy is emerging from home kitchens, where personal recipes and regional traditions are driving scalable ventures and redefining how small entrepreneurs enter the culinary market.

By Anushree Chatterjee

In a small apartment in central Mumbai, home chef Reshma Mane showed us an object she rarely speaks about publicly: her grandmother's old spice box. The metal sheet is dull and dented, but the aroma that rises when she lifts the lid is unmistakable. The spice box, says Mane, inspired her to begin cooking professionally 15 years ago, long before home-chef culture became mainstream. The first dish she ever served to paying guests was her grandmother's Kolhapuri *missal*, prepared exactly as she remembered it. "The moment they tasted it, I saw the same expression I once had at my grandmother's table," she recalls. "That is when I knew I wanted to turn this into something bigger."



“I have served diverse communities and nationalities (over 500 foreign guests), all of whom have deeply enjoyed the unique flavours and spices of Kolhapuri cuisine.”

- Reshma Mane

Her story illustrates what many may not realise about India’s home-based food entrepreneurs. While social media often portrays them as hobbyists who stumbled into business, several of them began with deeply personal motivations rooted in memory, emotion and culture. Their journeys reveal lesser-known stories of resilience and reinvention that underpin India’s growing home-grown food economy.

Regional Food as Cultural Anchors

One of the most significant yet lesser-known aspects of the home-grown food movement is the revival

of ingredients and recipes that nearly vanished from everyday cooking.

In Hyderabad, Suparna Bajaj works with Swacch, a supermarket platform that sources handmade and heritage products. She explains a surprising insight. “When we collaborated with women from small towns to source products for Swacch, we found that many were still using forgotten regional techniques that do not appear in mainstream recipe videos or cookbooks,” she says. “These techniques are centuries old, yet many urban consumers have never encountered them.”



Women from a self-help group working with Aazol (top), Aazol’s farm-sourced products (top right) and Jamir, founder of Naga Chukka (right).



For upcoming pop-ups, follow: @everyaroma, @nagachukka
To shop authentic flavours of CountrySpices, visit their official website: www.countryspices.com
Or explore home-grown food from Maharashtra at: aazol.in



Naga Cuisine Finds Urban Home

Chuba Jamir runs Naga Chukka, a cloud kitchen that serves Naga food in Mumbai. Marketed mostly through social media, the brand has become popular not just among people from the state residing away from home but also among aficionados, who want a taste of Nagaland’s cuisine. Founded during the pandemic, Naga Chukka has come a long way, be it through freshly served food or packaged fare. “From bamboo shoot to king chilli, all my produce arrives from the Mokokchung district to my kitchen in Mumbai. The recipes are treasures from my home and my community, which I am happy to offer to clients of Naga Chukka,” says Jamir. He has loyal patrons. Though not directly exporting, his range of products is carried overseas via local clients when they visit their foodie fraternity.

Swacch’s founder Shiv, who introduced Sindhi foods into the brand’s offerings, shares an example: “There is a traditional Sindhi chaap recipe that uses a specific method of marinating with crushed spices and water. It is rarely documented and nearly lost. I wanted to preserve these flavours before they disappeared.” A reason why the brand now includes rare Sindhi dishes made using original recipes in its home-delivery offerings. The dishes are promoted on social media platforms and a WhatsApp number is used to book orders. “We can’t mass manufacture these dishes. Small batches are made every day, and they are sold almost immediately,” adds Bajaj.

In Maharashtra, Apurva Purohit from Aazol recalls discovering rural ingredients that were unknown in cities. “I tasted a Mahua laddoo made in a small village and realised no urban market had access to such flavours,” she says. “It became clear that our role was not only to sell products but also to safeguard culinary heritage.”

Entrepreneurship

Mahua Magic

The flowers of the Mahua tree, used in sweets and drinks in central India, are considered "liquid gold" by tribal communities.



Thepla Travels

Gujrati *theplas* were among the first Indian snacks to travel globally. They were often packed on family trips abroad, long before packaged foods became popular.

Recipe:

King Chilli Garlic Oil Noodles

1 packet instant noodles; 1 carrot; 1 chicken breast; 1 egg; Spring onion or coriander.



Boil the noodles and keep them aside.

In a pan, heat oil, sauté a carrot, add chicken and cook on a low flame. Add 1 tbsp King Chilli Garlic Oil, break an egg and mix. Add noodles, toss well and garnish with spring onion or coriander. You can also use other veggies like pok choy, bell pepper, cabbage or broccoli instead of carrot.



Agrees the founder of Dahibara Express, Sourabh Khandelwal, who launched the fast-growing food chain in 2023 with the goal of making regional Indian street food more accessible and popular. "When I moved cities for work, I used to miss the popular street food from my village in Odisha, a speciality, *dahibara*," he says. This craving led this hotel management graduate to research and, with the help of a chef and friend, launch this affordable fast-food chain that focusses on *dahibaras*. "Many regional dishes are still unknown," he says. Today, the brand serves 35 traditional items, from *dahibara* and *kanji vada* to *dal pakwan*, along with filter coffee and kahwa tea, all priced between ₹39 and ₹200. "We wanted it to be affordable for everyone," he adds. The venture is projected to close the month at ₹1.8 crore in revenue.

In the Northeast, Artilin Row Thangkhiew from CountrySpices speaks about the challenges and rewards of sourcing indigenous produce. "We work with cultivators who hand-process perilla seeds and wild honey," she says. "Many of these ingredients are harvested in areas that have no paved roads. Yet they carry a depth of flavour that industrial foods cannot replicate."

Home Dining Experiences

Home food entrepreneurs are taking on restaurants as well. In Indian cities, intimate home-dining experiences have become a new culinary space. These gatherings offer more than food. They offer a personal connection between guests, a comfortable ambience and a culinary cultural connection.

In Jaipur, Seema Sethi, who runs Food Experiences with Seema, has created a dining format centred on storytelling. Today, her tables of 10 or more guests get filled up within hours of social media announcements and is often

India's packaged food market (organised and unorganised) hit \$121 bn in 2024 and is projected to reach \$224 bn by 2033.

Home food businesses are significantly more cost-effective than restaurants because they avoid major expenses like commercial rent, staff salaries, décor, dine-in utilities and large inventories, allowing them to operate with minimal investment, very low waste, minimal marketing spend and profit margins that can reach **40–60%**.



Not So Tough to Start

The accessibility of this business model comes from low overheads, cultural familiarity and community trust. Mane explains, “You do not need a commercial kitchen. Your first equipment is what you already have at home.”

Sethi adds, “Your personal story becomes your brand. When people understand the emotion behind your food, they support you.”

Khandelwal agrees. “Regional food already has a loyal audience. You start small and grow organically.”

Industry experts say that India’s expanding cloud kitchen and delivery ecosystem further reduces barriers. Entrepreneurs can launch menus, test dishes and gather customer feedback without investing a fortune.

Beyond statistics and trends, what stands out is the emotional and cultural depth behind India’s home-grown food ventures. Whether it is a grandmother’s spice box, a forgotten Sindhi recipe, a rural ladder of cultivators or a regional dish that travelled across state lines, each story carries memory and meaning.

These entrepreneurs are not only building businesses. They are shaping a new culinary identity that is deeply personal, proudly regional and quietly revolutionary.



“People don’t come to my table for just a meal. They come to feel seen, to share stories, and to remember flavours they thought were lost forever.”

- Seema Sethi
(Food Experiences with Seema, Jaipur)

recommended as a “must-try experience” in many tourist brochures. But the start was bumpy.

“The first supper I hosted was for two guests who never turned up,” she says. “I had prepared a complete seven-course meal and set the table beautifully. I cried that evening, but the next morning, I tried again.” That second attempt led to a series of small gatherings, growing slowly through word-of-mouth. Sethi recalls, “I never advertised. People arrived because they heard there was a dining table where strangers met and discovered forgotten recipes.”

Her supper clubs now feature slow-cooked regional dishes, open-air cinema nights and creative sessions.

The Economic Times reports that successful home chefs can earn “upwards of ₹2 lakh per month” purely through home-based cooking.



How They Began

While many entrepreneurs start with emotion-led motivation, their next steps require practical decision-making on sales, packaging and food laws. Mane says, “I began by selling directly to neighbours and friends,” she said. “I packed the food in stainless steel dabbas because it felt homely and sustainable.” As demand grew, she shifted to leakproof containers, ensuring they retained heat and preserved aroma.

Khandelwal experimented extensively with packaging. “One of our biggest early challenges was packing *Dahibara* Aloo Dum, a dish traditionally served fresh or in simple polythene,” he said. “We spent months testing different materials to retain their taste, texture and hygiene. Many attempts failed due to leakage or cost, but we kept improving. Eventually, we found packaging that was functional, affordable and true to its

authenticity, allowing us to scale *Dahibara Express* responsibly.”

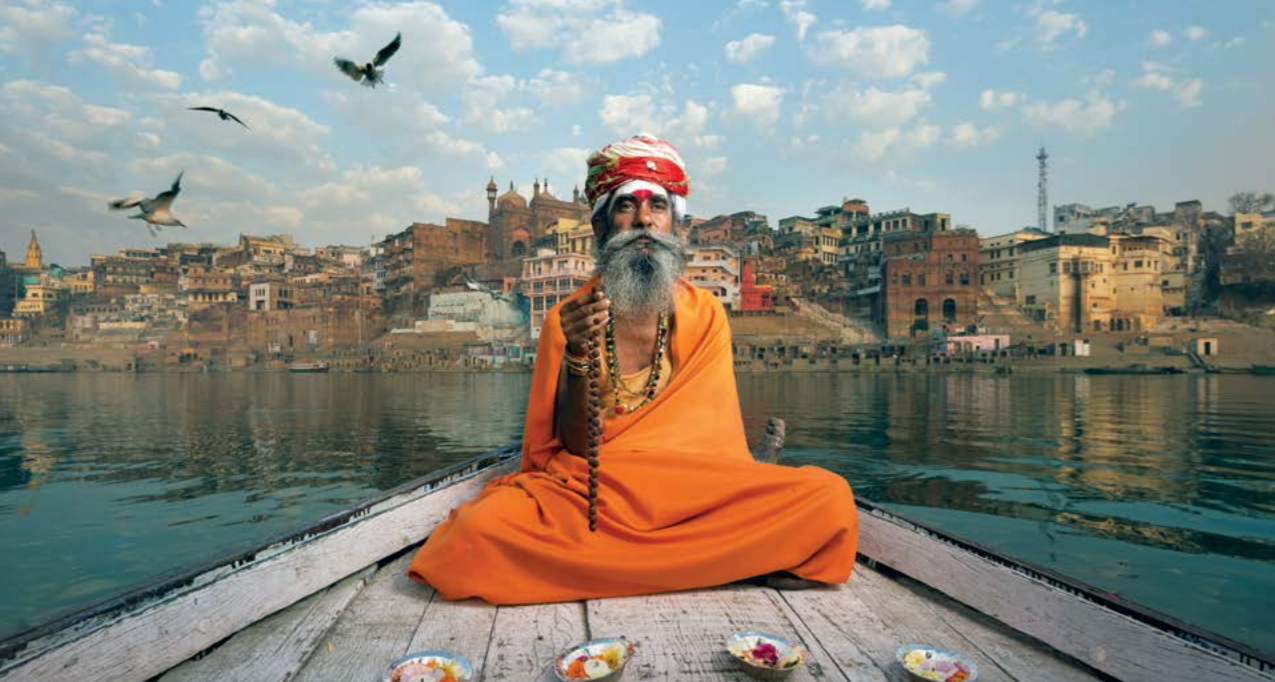
Entrepreneurs selling packaged goods must comply with the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) regulations. These include basic hygiene standards, mandatory licensing or registration, labelling norms and permitted ingredient usage. Suparna Bajaj notes, “Every product we sell has to comply with FSSAI rules. Many home entrepreneurs do not initially realise that even small-batch products require proper labelling and registration.” Apurva Purohit emphasises traceability. “We had to create structured documentation for sourcing, processing and packaging because consumers increasingly demand proof of authenticity and safety,” she said. Compliance, while initially daunting, becomes manageable with clear guidance from local authorities and online registration tools.

Corridors of *the Divine*

Across Kashi, Ujjain and Puri, ancient divine corridors now breathe anew, turning hurried *darshan* into lingering embrace, where stone, light and devotion converge to awaken the heart of every pilgrim, says Namratha Mohan, popularly known on social media as ‘Temple Girl’.

T

here's a moment in every devotee's life when the divine touches you so deeply that tears blur your vision. For me, it happened last winter at 4 am, standing in the newly opened Kashi Vishwanath corridor, watching the first *aarti* as mist rose from the Ganges. The bells rang, the chants echoed, and I could finally see. Really see. Baba Vishwanath's temple in all its glory, no longer hidden behind cramped lanes and crumbling walls.



Opening page: A panoramic view of the ghats in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

Clockwise from top left: A lone sadhu meditating by the Ganges on a calm Varanasi morning; Lord Shiva's presence towers over the divine Mahakal Corridor in Ujjain; Standing tall at 77 metres, the Shri Kashi Vishwanath Temple is situated inside the Banaras Hindu University campus in Varanasi

That's when I understood what these new temple corridors really mean. They're not just infrastructure projects or tourist attractions. They're love letters written in stone and light, India's way of saying to her gods: "We remember you. We honour you. And we're making space for you in our modern lives."

Let me take you through these transformed sacred spaces, not as a guide, but as a fellow seeker who has walked these paths with dusty feet and an open heart.

Kashi: Where I Learnt to Breathe Again

I grew up hearing my grandmother whisper, "*Kashi mein marna mangal hai*" (to die in Kashi is auspicious). But when I first visited Varanasi 10 years ago, I nearly suffocated. The ancient lanes were so narrow, the crowds so dense, that reaching Vishwanath temple felt like a battle, not a blessing. The smaller temples that were hidden for decades have been restored. For example, Sheetla Mata's shrine, where mothers bring their children for blessings, or the ancient Gangeshwar Mahadev temple, where I saw a young couple touch the *lingam* together, their wedding garlands still fresh.

However, the magic happens at sunset. When the corridor lights reflect off the Ganges, when these restored temples glow golden, and when you can walk straight after *darshan* to the ghats



for *aarti*, that is when you understand this is not renovation. It is resurrection.

My favourite spot is the colonnade near Dashashwamedh Ghat, where you can sit and watch the river while still feeling connected to the temple. During my previous visit, I met an 80-year-old woman from Bihar who was in tears. She said, "I have come here 20 times in my life. This is the first time I could bring my husband in his wheelchair for *darshan*."

Ujjain: Where Shiva Dances in Reflections

If Kashi touched my heart, Mahakal Lok in Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh, set my soul on fire. Picture this: you enter through gates named after *Nandi* and *Pinaki* (Lord Shiva's bow), and suddenly, you are not in the present anymore. You are in the cosmos, walking

alongside 108 pillars decorated with *trishuls*, each one humming with energy. The 200 statues are not merely sculptures. They are storytellers, frozen mid-narrative, whispering tales from the *Shiv Purana*.

I woke up at 4 am for the *Bhasma Aarti*, where Mahadev is adorned with sacred ash. The 900-metre walk through the corridor in darkness before dawn, with lights twinkling in Rudrasagar Lake like fallen stars, made me understand why Kalidasa wrote his *Meghadootam* here. This city, this corridor, makes poets of us all.

The lake itself has been reborn. What was once a neglected water body is now a mirror for the divine. I sat by its edge one evening, watching children feed fish while their grandparents told them stories of Lord Shiva defeating demons here. The murals

Accessibility & Connectivity

Kashi Vishwanath, Varanasi:

Well-connected by air, rail and road from Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata. Just 26 km from Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport.

Best Time to Visit: October–March; attend the serene Mangla Aarti (3–4 am).

Mahakal Lok, Ujjain:

56 km from Indore Airport, with regular trains from Bhopal, Delhi and Mumbai. The corridor features ramps, wide paths and modern amenities.

Best Time to Visit: October–February; witness the Bhasma Aarti at dawn. Corridor open till 10 pm.

Jagannath Temple, Puri:

60 km from Bhubaneswar Airport, easily accessible by rail and road, with shaded walkways and facilities for elderly and differently-abled visitors.

Best Time to Visit: November–February; the Rath Yatra (June–July) is a major attraction.

Over **25.28** crore

devotees have visited the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor since its inauguration in December 2021.

Around **80%** of domestic and international tourists visiting Odisha usually include Puri in their itinerary.

₹413 crore was approved by the Jagannath Temple administration as annual budget (2024-25 FY), a 34% increase from the previous year.

The Kashi Corridor has helped generate around **₹1.25** lakh crore in economic activity, including lodging, food and local spending.

More than **8.5** million devotees have visited Mahakal Lok during the Shravan month (July-August) of 2025.

The Mahakaleshwar Temple generated **₹27** crore in revenue during the month.

Ujjain Municipal Corporation's revenue increased from **₹220.91** crore in 2021-22 to **₹370.28** crore in 2023-24, driven by higher property taxes, hotel registrations, and commercial licensing fees.

Budget & Stay Options

- **Budget Travellers:** Guesthouses, state tourism lodges and dharamshalas near temple zones start from ₹800-₹1500 per night.
- **Mid-range to Premium Options:** Comfortable hotels and heritage stays range between ₹3,000-₹10,000 per night.
- **Travel Budget Estimate:** A 3-day spiritual circuit across any of these cities can be planned within ₹10,000-₹15,000 (excluding travel from your home city).

Travel Tips & Insider Notes

- Book early *darshan* slots online. Both Kashi Vishwanath and Mahakal Lok allow advance booking for special *aartis* through official portals.
- Carry light and modest attire, as security checks are strict. Avoid peak festivals unless you specifically want to experience the crowds. Plan mid-week for quieter visits.

Accessibility first: All three corridors now feature ramps for differently-abled visitors and senior citizens, shaded rest zones, toilets and drinking water for all.



Clockwise from top left: Glimpses of the new corridors at Puri, Varanasi and Ujjain



stopped me cold. There is one depicting Lord Shiva's *Tandava* that is so alive, I almost heard his ankle bells. An artist was touching up details when I visited. "We are not merely painting. We are praying with our brushes," he said. The corridor is four times bigger than Kashi's, but it does not feel overwhelming.

Puri: Where the Universe Arrives

Lord Jagannath has always been different. Those large, loving eyes that see everyone equally. The new heritage corridor in Puri, Odisha, which opened in January 2025, captures that inclusive spirit perfectly.

The first time I saw the transformed temple complex, I actually gasped. The 75-metre-wide Parikrama path is not merely wide; it is generous, like Lord Jagannath himself. This is not about making religion convenient; it is about making the divine accessible. The elderly can rest in shaded areas. Parents can explain the temple's history to children through interactive displays. The Green Buffer Zone is not merely landscaping. It is breathing space for souls overwhelmed by the Lord's infinite compassion.

Watching the sunset from the corridor is divine. The Nila Chakra flag atop the temple fluttered against an orange sky, and the Bay of Bengal hummed its eternal song. A young boy next to me, said, "Mummy, God's house is so big!" His mother smiled. "No, God's heart is big. That is why He needs such a big house."

These corridors have transformed *darshan* from a hurried glimpse into a lingering embrace.



Namratha Mohan works at the intersection of storytelling, heritage and modern media. She is the face behind Temple Girl, a popular social media handle. [@thetemplegirl](#)

A single Theyyam headgear can weigh over **30** kg, making it one of India's heaviest ritual masks.



Chhau artists in Purulia take 7–10 days to craft one papier-mâché mask using ancient methods.

Sacred Masks of *India*

India's masked theatres turn dancers into gods, demons and spirits. From Theyyam to Chhau and Cham dances, masks blend art, faith and storytelling, reflecting centuries of cultural heritage.

By Dr. Aarti K Singh

In India, performance traditions are more than simply entertainment. They are a medium of cultural expression, often originating from spiritual practices. Folk and regional dance and theatre in India often rely on various tools to narrate stories from epics, mythology and spirituality. Therefore, in these traditional performances, masks are more than props; they are portals to gods, demons, ancestors and myth. From the fiery rituals of Kerala's Koodiyattam to the rousing martial grace of eastern India's Chhau, an exploration of India's masked theatres reveals how folklore, faith and artistry are woven together to create a rich tapestry.

When the Mask Becomes the Divine

In a village courtyard in Kerala, the rhythmic thunder of drums announces the arrival of Theyyam, a ritual where the performer, draped in vivid red and crowned with an ornate headdress, transforms into a deity. Combining intricate face painting and masks, Theyyam blurs the line between art and divinity. Each mask corresponds to a specific god or goddess. For instance, *Gulikan*, a local form of Shiva, features a trident and towering headgear, while *Edalapuratha Chamundi* is depicted with a wooden mask showing a protruding tongue. "The masks are carved



Theyyam headgear types like *Valiyamudi* can tower up to

15-20 feet in full regalia

Kummattikali dancers wear wooden masks and grass-and-leaf costumes, with the grass considered medicinal.



Painting living myths with Kathakali in Kerala

from areca palm wood, decorated with palm leaves, and painted in bold shades of orange, white, yellow and red, with black used to accentuate the eyes,” explains Haribabu K.P., a master craftsman whose family has been making Theyyam masks for nearly a century. In Theyyam, masks are sacred and believed to embody divine power that transforms ordinary men into living gods. Many performers come from marginalised communities, making the ritual both spiritual and socially subversive. In

Thalassery, traditional craftsman G.M. Santosan (Santosettan) and his family continue the legacy of creating the elaborate *mudi* (headgear) and ornaments using bamboo and areca nut palm. “We are more than artisans; Theyyam is our prayer,” says Santosan. “For devotees, the mask is not theatre; it is the divine itself.”

The Stylised Power of Chhau

India’s eastern states present a different vision of masked theatre through Chhau, a muscular, martial and mythic dance form from Jharkhand, Odisha and West Bengal. Dancers leap and spin to depict tales from the Mahabharata and Ramayana, their masked faces fixed in stylised expressions.

Among the three main styles, Seraikella Chhau relies most on masks, using finely crafted papier-mâché creations that limit facial movement and make the dancer’s body the main instrument of expression. In Mayurbhanj Chhau, the mask disappears, allowing emotions to be conveyed through facial expression. Yet what unites all forms is their spiritual depth.

Koodiyattam: The Classical Precision of Emotion

While less reliant on masks than Theyyam or Chhau, Koodiyattam uses select masks for supernatural characters: *rakshasas*



Traditional twirls in vibrant Bhutanese hues



Bhaona: Drama Born of Devotion

In the prayer halls of Assam, the centuries-old form of Bhaona carries the devotional spirit of the Bhakti movement. Conceived by the 15th-century saint Srimanta Sankardeva, Bhaona uses music, dance and drama to retell stories from scriptures. Here, masks are used to portray demons, animals or celestial beings, adding to the magical lure of the stories and enhancing the way they are told.

Crafted from bamboo, clay and fabric, Bhaona masks are lightweight but impactful, used sparingly to signal transformation. The performers, often trained within monastic communities, bring a meditative energy to their roles. These are not actors in the modern sense; they are spiritual messengers.

Back in Kerala, within the sanctum of ancient temples, another masked tradition unfolds, Koodiyattam, India’s only surviving form of Sanskrit theatre.

(demons), divine beings or animals. But its essence lies in the mask-like facial control of the actor.

Years of rigorous training enable performers to isolate facial muscles and convey complex emotions (*rasas*) through minute gestures. One blink, and you might even miss them! The result is a performance where the face itself becomes a living, expressive mask, more powerful in stillness than even the most elaborate costume. This restraint takes years to perfect, and as Santosan sums up, “It is not about ‘learning’, but more about unlearning and coming into your own self; there is god within us, and the demon too. Grounding

Travelling to Kerala? See Theyyam performances & artisans crafting masks

You can witness Theyyam in North Malabar, mainly in the districts of Kannur and Kasaragod, from October to May, with the peak season in November and December during the Kaliyattam festivals.

Performances take place at local temples and shrines, especially in Bekal, Karivellur and Nileswaram. One can also witness performances in parts of Wayanad and northern Kozhikode.

For schedules and temple events, visit the **Kerala Tourism Theyyam Calendar** (www.keralatourism.org/theyyamcalendar) or the **DTPC Kannur Theyyam Calendar** (www.dtpckannur.com/theyyam-calendar).

Traditionally male dominated, Chhau dance now embraces gender inclusivity.

Koodiyattam, India's oldest Sanskrit theatre, is a UNESCO-recognised cultural masterpiece.



Clockwise from Top-Left: Fiery Theyyam performer, painted red, radiating divine energy
Theyyam, a traditional art form from Kerala
A performer at the Hemis Festival of Ladakh



The Craft Behind the Transformation

Behind every masked performance lies another sacred art: mask-making. In places like Seraikella and Kannur, master artisans pass down techniques honed over centuries, where creating a mask is itself a ritual involving prayers, fasting and devotion. Each colour and form holds meaning. Red symbolises divine power, green virtue or fertility, and black chaos or evil. Features, too, speak a visual language, a flared nose shows arrogance, bulging eyes suggest alertness or rage.



oneself and meditating is most crucial to not just performing this divine art, but also performing in life.”

Masks of Ladakh's Monasteries

In the high-altitude monasteries of Ladakh, Himachal, Spiti and Sikkim, masks are central to the vibrant Cham dances performed during monastic festivals. Crafted from papier-mâché and painted in bright colours, these masks represent deities, guardians and mythical beings. When monks wear them, they embody cosmic forces believed to drive away evil and bless the community. With bulging eyes, fanged mouths and radiant crowns, the masks transform monastery courtyards into sacred theatres where Buddhist philosophy meets performance. Rooted in Vajrayana Buddhism, Cham dances often depict scenes from the life of Padmasambhava.



Learn to Make Your Own Masks Here:

- Sri Sri Samaguri Satra, Majuli, Assam: This satra (monastic centre) is world-renowned for its traditional mask-making practices, which have been passed down for over five centuries. They use the masks in traditional Assamese drama (Bhaona).
- Department of Handicrafts & Handloom (DHH), Sikkim: The DHH in Sikkim offers a two-year course in traditional wooden mask-making, teaching skills such as wood preparation, carving and painting of masks like the Mahakala mask.
- Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh: The Craft Centre in Tawang is a place where visitors can observe the traditional mask-making process, and local workshops are occasionally organised for the community and potentially visitors.
- Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts (TIPA), Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh: TIPA offers training programmes related to traditional Tibetan opera, dance and drama, which involve mask-making.



Chhau masks, donned by the performers of the Chhau dance, have become an iconic symbol of West Bengal's cultural heritage

Today, this heritage faces challenges such as fading apprenticeships, commercialisation and mass production. While tourism and festivals have revived interest, they also risk diluting the ritual and cultural depth that give these masks their soul.

Masks in a Changing World

As traditions evolve, the mask remains a powerful symbol across India. From temple courtyards in Kerala to monastery courtyards in the Himalayas, masked performers continue to bridge the sacred and the human. Today, ancient forms meet the modern as urban theatre artists collaborate with Chhau dancers, digital creators reinterpret Theyyam and even Bollywood embraces masked aesthetics.

Though some fear a loss of authenticity, others see resilience. The mask has always adapted to history and change. In India's masked theatres, masks do not conceal; they reveal, turning performance into a dialogue between art and belief, story and ritual, life and death. In a world ruled by screens, these traditions remind us of something timeless; a face that does not just perform but becomes the spirit it embodies.

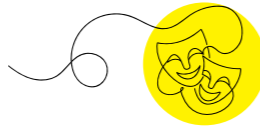


Dr. Aarti Kapur Singh is a veteran journalist and cinephile with over three decades of experience, writing on films, food, culture, history and heritage for prominent media houses including National Geographic, CNN IBN and NDTV.

[@aartiisingh/](#)

घूमने में है रुचि

सांविका इस समय देशभर में घूमकर पर्यटन से संबंधित शो भी कर रही हैं।



रंगमंच का अनुभव

सांविका ने शौकिया तौर पर रंगमंच में भी हाथ आजमाया। रंगकर्मी के तौर पर उन्हें वहां अभिनय की बारीकियां समझने को मिलीं।

आलेख : दीपक दुआ

“अरे! रिंकी”



दर्शकों के लिए वह रिंकी हैं, वेब-सीरीज़ 'पंचायत' के गांव फुलेरा के प्रधान जी की बिटिया। मध्यप्रदेश के जबलपुर की रहने वाली पूजा कैसे सांविका बन गई, कैसा रहा उनका सफ़र, कैसी रही इस सफ़र की यादें, आइए जानते हैं

पूजा से सांविका बनने का सफ़र कैसा रहा?

बड़ा ही हसीन सफ़र रहा है। इस सफ़र के दौरान मुझे बहुत कुछ सिखाने को मिला। मैंने तो कभी सोचा भी नहीं था कि मैं अभिनय करूंगी। जब अभिनय करने लगी और 'पंचायत' मिला तो पाया कि पूजा सिंह नाम से एक अभिनेत्री पहले से ही थीं। लेख मेरे बारे में छप रहे थे किंतु फोटो किसी और की। फिर मुझे सलाह मिली कि क्यों न मैं अपना प्रोफेशनल नाम बदल लूं। वैसे भी पूजा बहुत ही कॉमन नाम है। तब मैंने कुछ नाम सोचे और आखिर सांविका फाइनल हुआ।

अपने माता-पिता के दिए नाम, अपनी उम्र भर की पहचान से अलग होकर एक नए नाम को अपनाना कितना कठिन या इमोशनल था, आपके लिए?

नहीं, न तो कठिन था और न ही इसे लेकर मैं कभी इमोशनल हुई। देखिए, हम कलाकार तो हर किरदार में एक नया नाम, एक नई पहचान ओढ़ लेते हैं। हमारे लिए यह इतना मुश्किल नहीं होता। और आप देखिए कि मुझे तो लोग पूजा या सांविका से ज्यादा रिंकी के नाम से जानते हैं। तो मेरे लिए यह कोई ऐसा इमोशनल निर्णय नहीं था। मेरे माता-पिता को भी सांविका नाम बहुत पसंद है।

शौकिया अभिनय करना और अभिनय को प्रोफेशन बना लेना, ये दोनों तो अलग-अलग बातें हैं न?

हां बिल्कुल। मैंने भी तब नहीं सोचा था कि अभिनय कभी मेरा प्रोफेशन होगा। लेकिन इंजीनियरिंग पूरी होते-होते मुझे यह लगने लगा था कि तय घंटों वाली ऑफिस की नौकरी तो मुझसे होने से रही। मेरा मन था कि कुछ ऐसा काम करूं, जिसमें रचनात्मकता हो और मुझे घूमने का मौका मिले। तब मेरे दोस्तों ने समझाया कि फिल्म इंडस्ट्री में अभिनय के अलावा भी बहुत सारे काम होते हैं। तब मैं बेंगलुरु में थी और उनकी सलाह पर मैं मुंबई आ गई। यहां मैंने एक-दो प्रोडक्शन में सहायक निर्देशक के तौर पर काम किया। कॉस्ट्यूम डिपार्टमेंट में काम किया। साथ ही साथ मैं अभिनय के लिए ऑडिशन भी देती रही। ऐसे कुछ-कुछ काम मिलता रहा और मैं काम में रुचि



लेने लगी। तब मेरे लिए अभिनय के क्षेत्र में आना एक यात्रा थी न कि मैंने पहले से तय कर रखा था कि मैं यही करूंगी।

इंजीनियरिंग की पढ़ाई और एक्टिंग का रास्ता, ये दोनों किस चौराहे पर टकराए थे?

सच तो यह है कि मुझे अभिनय में रुचि नहीं थी। पर जब मैं कॉलेज में थी, तब मेरे कुछ दोस्त रंगमंच किया करते थे। उनके बुलावे पर मैं रिहर्सल देखने जाती थी। वहां वरिष्ठ कहते थे कि खाली कोई नहीं बैठेगा। सभी को कुछ न कुछ करना होगा। मैंने भी अभिनय किया तब आनंद आने लगा, फिर सोचा कि चलो करके देखते हैं। और बस, ऐसे ही धीरे-धीरे ये दोनों रास्ते कब एक हो गए, पता ही नहीं चला।

मुंबई आने के आपके निर्णय पर माता-पिता की क्या प्रतिक्रिया रही?

सच तो यह है कि उन्हें मेरे मुंबई आने के बारे में पता ही नहीं था। मैं तो पहले बेंगलुरु गई थी, फिर मुंबई आई। बाद में जब मैंने उन्हें बताया तो उन्हें लगा कि मैं अब भी शौकिया अभिनय कर रही हूँ, इसलिए उन्होंने विरोध नहीं किया। उनका मानना था कि अभिनय में कुछ कर लिया तो ठीक वरना इंजीनियरिंग का रास्ता तो है ही। लेकिन मैं यहां आकर गंभीर हो चुकी हूँ, अब तो इसी इंडस्ट्री में रह कर ही कुछ करना है।

आप जब आगे बढ़ने लगीं तब अभिनय सीखने और उसे मांझने के प्रयास भी किए या सब अपने-आप होता चला गया?

जबलपुर में मैं थिएटर कर चुकी थी, आधारभूत अभिनय मेरे भीतर था। मुझे अहसास हुआ कि अगर वास्तव में टिककर कुछ करना है तब स्वयं को और निखारना होगा। तब मैंने कुछ कार्यशालाएं कीं। बहुत कुछ वरिष्ठों से सीखा। इन सबसे मुझे लाभ मिला क्योंकि इस तरह की कार्यशालाएं आपको खुलना सिखाती हैं। आत्मविश्वास बढ़ता है।

'पंचायत' से जुड़ने का अनुभव कैसा रहा?

'पंचायत' में जब काम करने को मिला तभी आभास हो गया था कि यह कुछ बड़ा ही होगा। इसके साथ जो लोग जुड़े हुए थे, जो कलाकार इसमें काम कर रहे थे, वे सभी दिग्गज हैं। लेकिन मेरे किरदार को इतना प्यार मिल जाएगा, यह मैंने नहीं सोचा था। इस शो के बाद जो नाम मिला, जो पहचान मिली, मैं कह सकती हूँ कि यह शो मेरे जीवन का सुखद मोड़ सिद्ध हुआ है।

रघुबीर यादव और नीना गुप्ता जैसे वरिष्ठ कलाकारों की बेटा का किरदार आसान तो नहीं ही रहा होगा?

आसान तो सचमुच नहीं था क्योंकि इस किरदार का ग्राफ इस शो के अन्य किरदारों से अलग था। लेकिन मुझे अपने-आप से बहुत अधिक अपेक्षाएं थीं। रघुबीर जी या नीना जी ही नहीं अपितु इस शो से जुड़े हुए शेष अभिनेता भी वरिष्ठ एवं सधे हुए लोग हैं। मेरे मन में यह भाव था कि मुझे डटकर काम करना है। मैं सोचती थी कि अगर मैं किसी फ्रेम में हूँ तो मेरी वजह से कोई काम खराब नहीं होना चाहिए। आरंभ में मैं थोड़ी अधीर थी लेकिन साथी कलाकारों ने मुझे सहयोग दिया। इससे मैं अपने किरदार को और बेहतर ढंग से कर पाई।



दीपक दुआ सर्वश्रेष्ठ फिल्म समीक्षक एवं राष्ट्रीय पुरस्कार से सम्मानित फिल्म पत्रकार हैं। 1993 से फिल्म पत्रकारिता में सक्रिय, भारत के बुनियादी फिल्म समीक्षकों की संस्था 'फिल्म क्रिटिक्स गिल्ड' के सदस्य भी हैं।

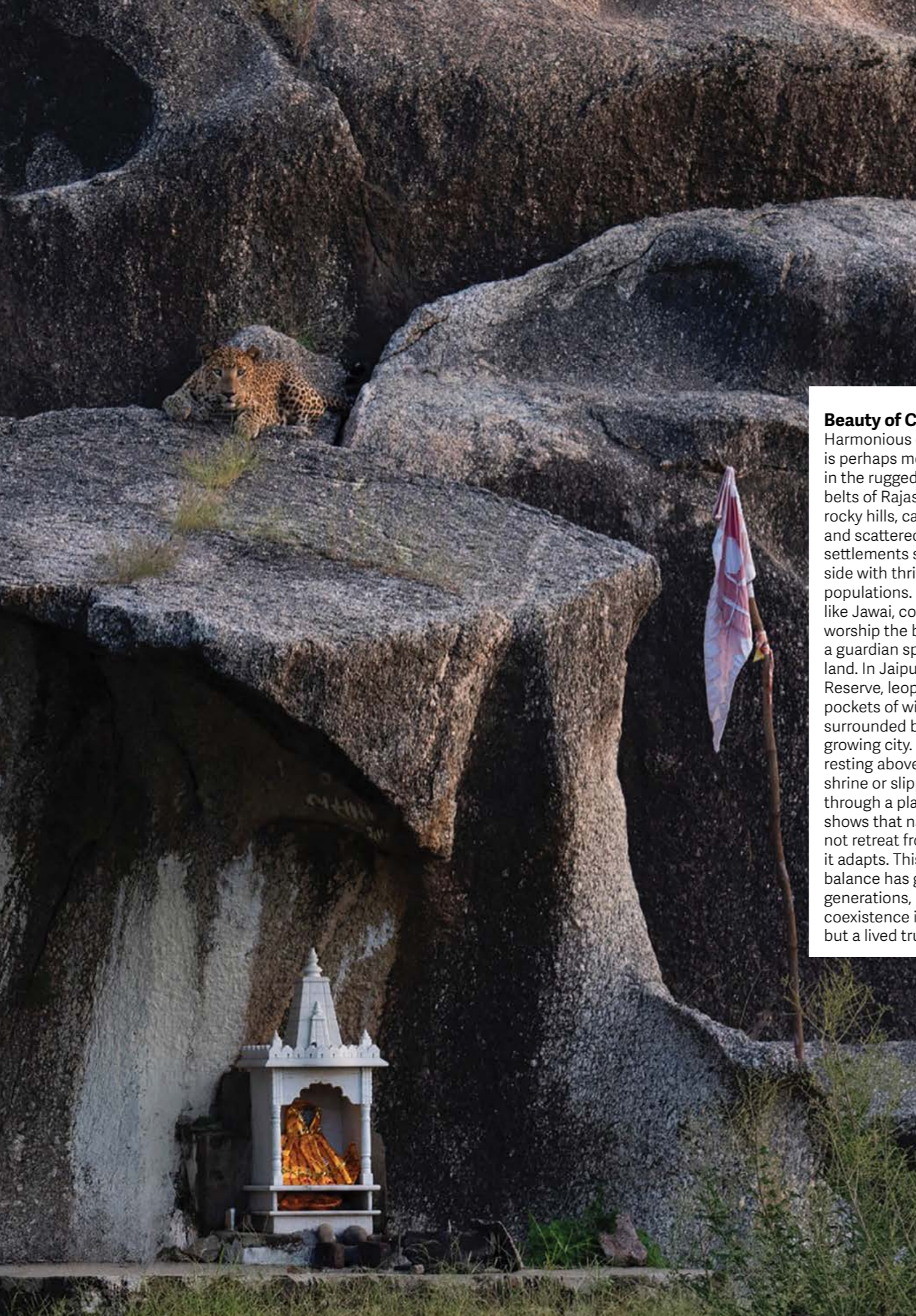


The Leopard *Next Door*

From the misty tea slopes of the Western Ghats to the granite outcrops and ancient hill temples of Rajasthan, leopards live astonishingly close to people. They move through forest edges, slip past farmlands and sometimes appear near small villages or the green pockets of busy cities. This is not just a story of survival. It is a story of coexistence. India's leopards have learned to live with us. The question is, can we live with them, too?

Born to Blend in

Few animals showcase adaptability as well as the Indian leopard. From tea plantations to temple towns, it thrives in landscapes shaped by people. Research by the Nature Conservation Foundation (NCF) in the Western Ghats shows that leopards rely mainly on wild prey like chevrotain and porcupine, rarely targeting livestock. This flexibility helps them survive beyond protected forests, moving quietly along fields, plantations and village edges.



Beauty of Coexistence

Harmonious cohabitation is perhaps most visible in the rugged leopard belts of Rajasthan, where rocky hills, cave temples and scattered herder settlements sit side by side with thriving leopard populations. In places like Jawai, communities worship the big cat as a guardian spirit of the land. In Jaipur's Jhalana Reserve, leopards live in pockets of wilderness surrounded by the growing city. A leopard resting above a temple shrine or slipping silently through a plantation shows that nature does not retreat from people; it adapts. This quiet balance has grown over generations, proving that coexistence is not an idea but a lived truth.

Image: Shivang Mehta



Winter: The Season of Sightings

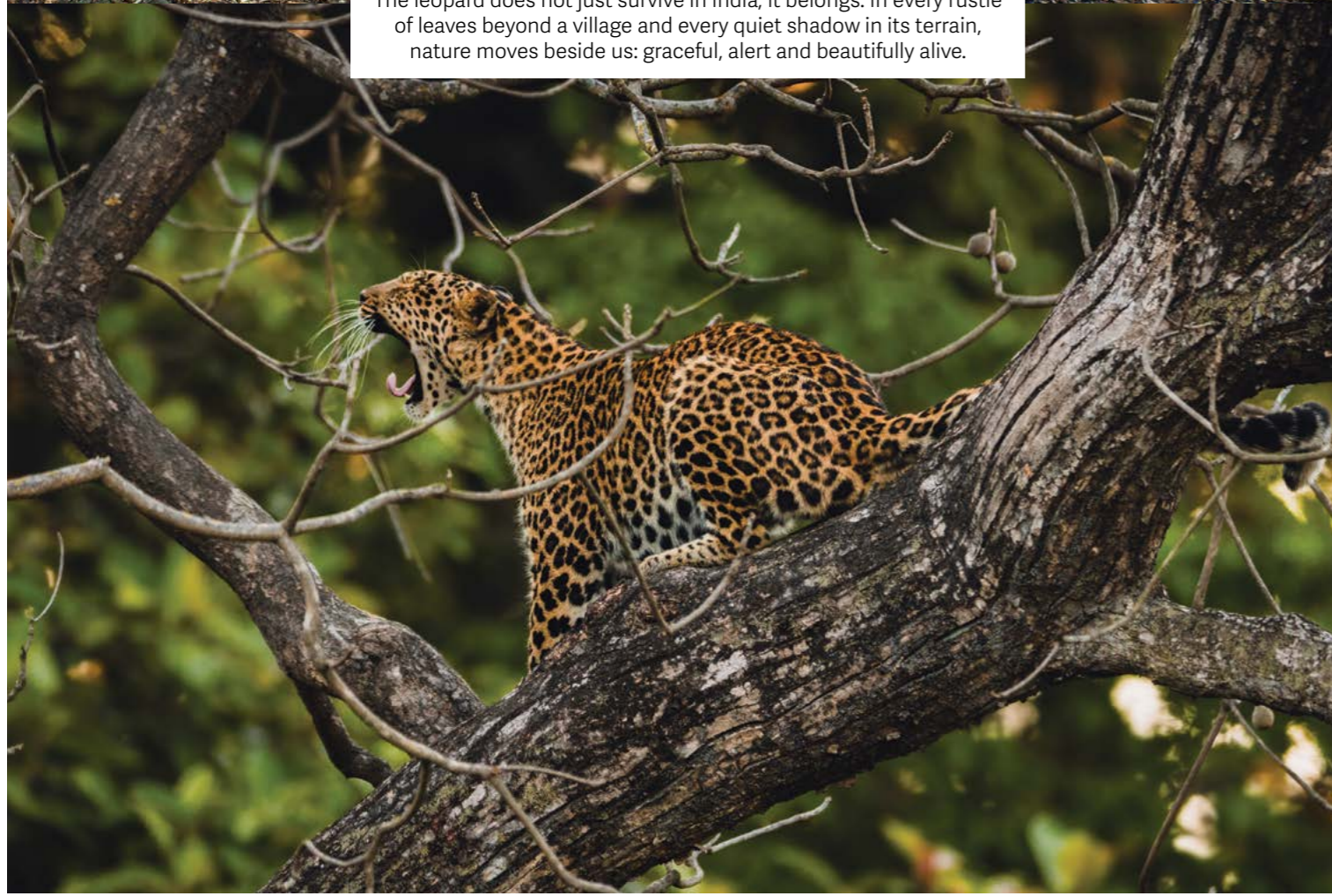
Winter turns the Indian countryside golden, and this is when leopards step into the open. Cool air clears the haze, vegetation thins, and big cats move through sunlit spaces with a calm confidence, making even the most elusive individuals easier to spot. For the best chances of sightings, visit Jawai Bandh in Rajasthan; Panna National Park, Pench National Park and Satpura National Park in Madhya Pradesh; or Sanjay Gandhi National Park in Mumbai.





A Majestic Presence

The leopard does not just survive in India; it belongs. In every rustle of leaves beyond a village and every quiet shadow in its terrain, nature moves beside us: graceful, alert and beautifully alive.



Plan Your Escape Into Leopard Realms

Imagine waking up, stepping out for your morning tea, and your host points out a fresh pug mark just outside your cottage.

How thrilling would that be?

Across several of India's wild and culturally rich regions, some of the most beautiful boutique and luxury stays sit right on the edge of leopard territory. These places offer more than a room. They offer a front-row seat to coexistence.

Jawai Bandh, Rajasthan

- Suján Jawai
- Aaramgah Jawai
- Jawai Leopard Safari Lodge

Jhalana Leopard Reserve, Rajasthan

- The Oberoi Rajvillas
- The Tree House Resort
- The Leela Palace Jaipur

Pench National Park, Madhya Pradesh

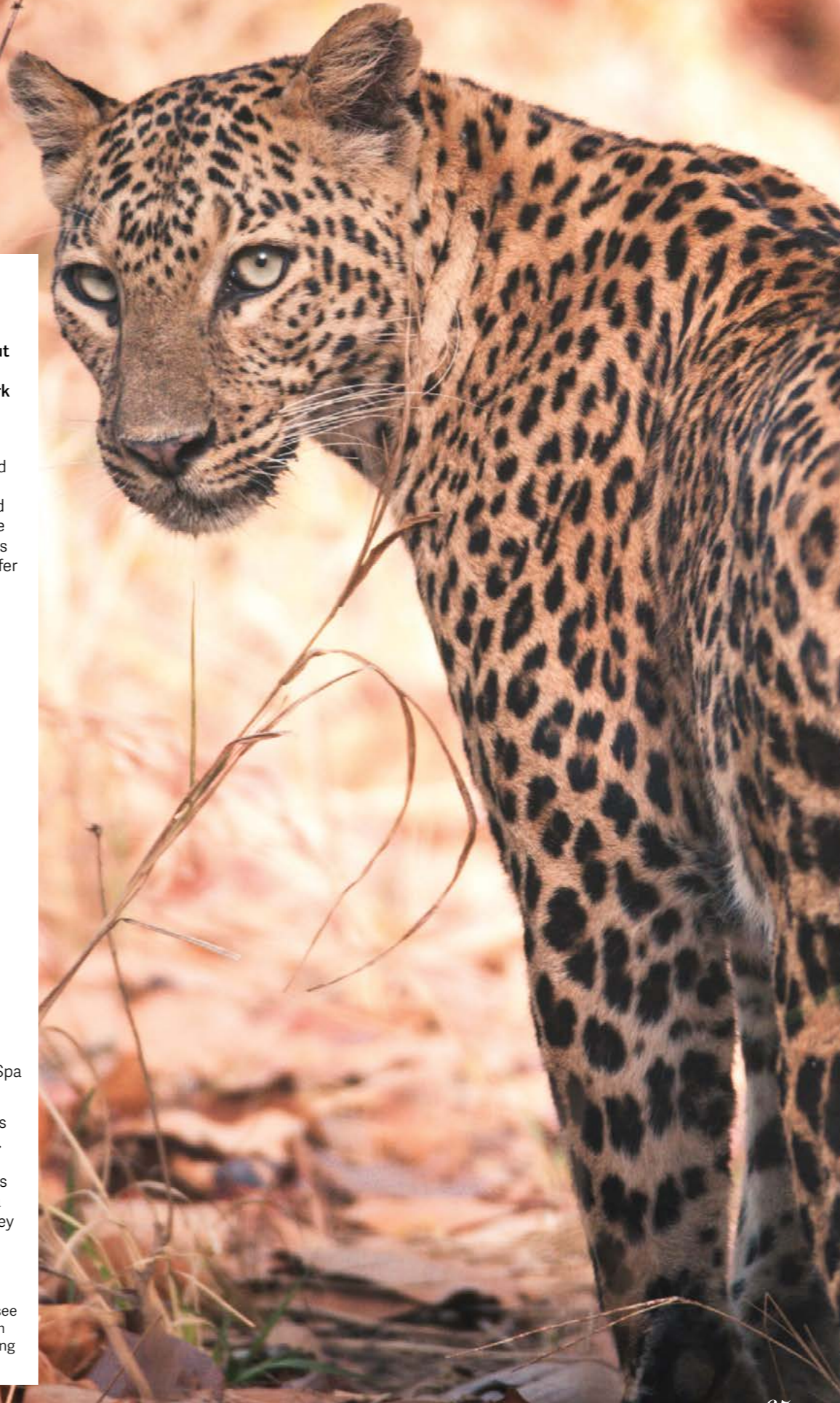
- Pench Tree Lodge
- Jamtara Wilderness Camp
- Baghvan (Taj Safaris)

Panna National Park, Madhya Pradesh

- Pashan Garh (Taj Safaris)
- Ken River Lodge
- Tendu Leaf Jungle Resort & Spa

These stays place you close to natural corridors where leopards move silently at dawn and dusk. You may not always see the cat, but you might wake to footprints on a dusty trail, claw marks on a tree or the soft alarm calls of prey in the distance.

*Sightings are always a matter of patience and luck. But one thing remains certain: even if you do not see a leopard, a leopard might have seen you. That is the true allure of travelling through leopard realms.



Breaking Barriers, Building Nations *The Women of Vedanta*

From underground mines to moving locomotives, these are places few imagine women working. At Vedanta, they are not only present but are also leading with skill, resilience and quiet confidence.



Yojitha Kattokola was sitting beside her father when she watched a documentary on the copper mines of Zambia. “The mix of geology, engineering and the sheer scale of moving earth felt like a giant puzzle,” she recalls. “I started reading about the industry, and the more I learned, the more I wanted to be part of it.”

Years later, that curiosity led Kattokola hundreds of metres underground as a mining engineer, into one of the most demanding roles in Indian industry. Today, she is part of Hindustan Zinc’s all-women underground mine rescue team, the first of its kind in India and one that has earned international recognition. In spaces where light disappears, air grows thin and seconds matter, the team trains to respond with precision, presence of mind and calm authority.

Speaking about her first descent into a mine, Kattokola says, “The cage dropped 300

metres. The air turned cool. The darkness was complete except for our headlamps. What stayed with me was the sound: the hum of ventilation, steel echoing. You realise you are part of a living system, and lives depend on you.”

Like many women entering spaces long dominated by men, Kattokola encountered assumptions early in her career. “Some assumed I was there to fill a diversity quota,” she says. “It felt like my knowledge was questioned before I even spoke.” Underground, however, doubt rarely survives long. During a sudden rock fall, when her capability was questioned, she asked for the data, laid out a clear plan and led the crew through a safe clearance. “Afterwards, the same senior thanked me,” she says. “That was the moment I understood that competence, shown calmly and consistently, changes perceptions.”

Preparing for the First-Class Manager’s



“Closing the gender gap in industry is not just about equality, it is about unlocking India’s full potential. A 10% rise in women’s workforce participation could add \$770 billion to our GDP. At Vedanta, we believe roles should be defined by capability, not gender. When women are trusted with real responsibility, they don’t just participate in industry, they help shape its future.”

- Priya Agarwal Hebbar
Chairperson, Hindustan Zinc Limited
Non-Executive Director, Vedanta Limited

Certificate, one of mining’s toughest milestones, reshaped her outlook even further. “It is not just an exam,” she says. “It is about accepting responsibility for lives underground. That awareness stays with you.”

Women on the Aluminium Potline

If the mine tests courage, the aluminium potline tests consistency. Sindhu Pandre’s journey began not underground but on the shop floor. In 2007, she joined Vedanta as a Graduate Engineer Trainee, an uncommon choice for a woman in her family, where most pursued government jobs. She also made another bold decision; leaving home to work in the remote industrial town of Jharsuguda in Odisha.

“I never wanted a desk job,” she says. “I wanted to work close to the process, where decisions have immediate impact.”



Women of steel, shaping change and redefining India’s toughest industries with courage, skill and determination.



India’s Firsts, Led by Women

- India’s first all-women underground mine rescue team, which secured second place in the Women’s Task Force category at the XIII International Mines Rescue Competition in Colombia
- Agnivahini, an all-women fire response team at Vedanta Aluminium
- All-women locomotive engine operations
- Durga Vahini, an all-women security team at Cairn Oil & Gas sites
- Hindustan Zinc’s oldest smelter operating 24x7 with women on rotational shifts

When Pandre joined, the plant was still under construction. She watched machinery being installed, systems taking shape and operations slowly coming to life. Being part of that early phase strengthened her technical understanding and built quiet confidence. The environment was demanding, marked by high temperatures, round-the-clock production and rapid decision-making. Pandre focused on performance, and within two years, her first promotion followed, reshaping perceptions around her.

Today, she leads an all-women aluminium potline team. “This industry never stops,” she says. “It teaches discipline, presence of mind and balance. When women are trusted with responsibility, they deliver.”

On the Tracks: Driving Change at Jharsuguda

At Vedanta Aluminium’s Jharsuguda plant, locomotives

move raw materials day and night, forming the backbone of daily operations. Kaushalya Behera still remembers the first time she climbed into a locomotive cabin. “It felt like entering a new world,” she says. “New people, new technology and responsibilities I had only imagined.”

Armed with a B.Tech in Mechanical Engineering and experience in potline quality operations, Behera chose a path few women take by becoming a loco operator. Growing up, she mostly saw women around her as homemakers, or in professions such as teaching and nursing. “I wanted something different,” she says. “Something that broke stereotypes.”

Working in a male-dominated space felt awkward at first, but the feeling passed quickly. Training, supportive colleagues and strong



systems helped her settle into the role. “That moment stayed with me because it was not just about driving a loco,” she says. “It was about breaking a barrier.”

While her family was proud at first, concern followed once they understood the night shifts and associated risks. Over time, reassurance came through visible safety measures such as CCTV monitoring, proper lighting, secure transport and constant coordination. “Now I work without fear,” Behera says. “Their worry never became mine. It made me more determined.”

The experience transformed her personally. Once timid and hesitant to step out at night, she now works with confidence shaped by responsibility and resilience.

Support That Shows Up

For women like Yojitha, Sindhu and Kaushalya, support is not an HR slogan. It is something they experience in everyday working life. It comes

through guidance from seniors, opportunities to learn on the job, clear channels to raise concerns and a workplace culture that values safety and dignity. Long and demanding shifts are managed with care, allowing them to perform consistently in environments that never pause.

“When I started my work as a loco operator, I was surprised by the support I received from my colleagues,” says Behera. “They were welcoming, but what mattered just as much was that the systems were supportive and the training was thorough. I never felt the work was too challenging. This support system is an integral part of the company.”

Kattekola echoes this sentiment from deep underground, where trust and preparation are non-negotiable. For her, support became real when systems were designed for real working conditions rather than expecting individuals to adjust alone. Proper safety gear, regular drills, guidance from experienced mentors



Shaping Tomorrow, One Shift at a Time

Across underground tunnels, glowing potlines and moving tracks, the women of Vedanta are not trying to make history. They are simply doing their jobs, showing up, learning fast and carrying responsibility with confidence. For some, it is the first time a woman in their family has worn a helmet and safety boots. For others, it is years of consistently proving that results matter more than assumptions.

Together, their journeys carry a simple truth. When women are trusted with real responsibility, they do not just meet expectations. They raise them. And with every shift worked, they are reshaping what India's industrial future looks like.



and leadership that responds quickly during emergencies made a clear difference to her work.

“In mining, support means knowing that when something goes wrong, you are not standing alone,” she says. “It means safety systems you can rely on, and leaders who step in when it matters.”

Safety remains central across all operations. CCTV surveillance, proper lighting, secure transport, emergency response systems and dedicated facilities for women create an environment where focus remains

firmly on the work, not on personal security. Underground or on the shop floor, these measures allow women to operate with confidence and clarity.

At Hindustan Zinc, this commitment is reflected in initiatives such as IGNITE, a senior leadership development programme designed to advance women into leadership roles. The programme identifies and nurtures potential, addresses career obstacles and unlocks aspirations, while engaging senior leaders as sponsors to ensure growth is shared, not shouldered alone.

नया ट्रेंड! गज़ब



क्या आपने कभी किसी को देखा है जिसकी ड्रेस तो एकदम सिंपल है, किंतु जूते कुछ हटकर हैं? फिर भी उसका लुक सबसे अलग और स्टाइलिश लगता है? हो सकता है, वह नए फैशन ट्रेंड को फॉलो कर रहे हों, जिसे कहते हैं गलत जूते का सिद्धांत...

आलेख: सुष्मि झा

गलत जूते के सिद्धांत के अंतर्गत आप किसी भी ड्रेस के साथ वे जूते पहनें, जो आमतौर पर लोग उसके साथ नहीं पहनते हैं। इस चलन (ट्रेंड) के अनुसार जब आप किसी आउटफिट के साथ जान-बूझकर ऐसे जूते पहनते हैं जो उससे मेल नहीं खाते, तब आपका स्टाइल और भी आकर्षक बन जाता है। जैसे - फ्रॉक के साथ स्पोर्ट्स शूज़, सलवार-सूट के साथ बूट्स, जीन्स के साथ पारंपरिक जूतियां, लहंगे के साथ सफेद स्नीकर्स। वास्तव में छोटे-छोटे 'मिसमैच' ही आपके लुक को अलग तथा यादगार बनाते हैं।



क्यों प्रचलित है यह चलन

इस चलन के तहत कुछ नया दिखता है। यानी जो प्रचलन सामान्य नहीं होता, वह अधिक लोगों को आकर्षित करता है। अब फैशन में नियम नहीं, अपितु प्रयोग (एक्सपेरिमेंट) अधिक चलते हैं। आज का फैशन परफेक्ट दिखने से अधिक, कुछ अलग दिखने पर फोकस करता है। आपका अनोखा अंदाज़ झलकता है। आप जब कुछ हटकर पहनते हैं, तब लोग आपकी सोच एवं आपके आत्मविश्वास को नोटिस करते हैं। लुक में बैलेंस आता है। अगर कपड़े बहुत भारी या फैंसी हैं, तब कैजुअल जूते पहनने से सब कुछ संतुलित लगने लगता है।

कैसे अपनाएं यह ट्रेंड

आप आरंभ स्नीकर्स से करें। भले ही ये गलत जूते लगें किंतु प्रत्येक ड्रेस के साथ अच्छे लगते हैं।

अपने पुराने जूते निकालें

वे जूते जो कभी आपके आउटफिट से मेल नहीं खाते थे, अब वही आपको सबसे स्टाइलिश लग सकते हैं।

प्रयोग करने से न डरें

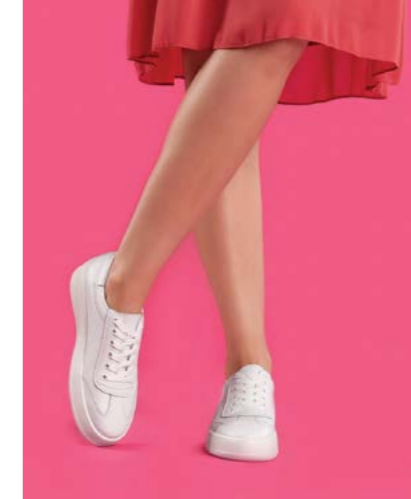
आपको अगर लगता है कि परिधानों के साथ आपके जूतों का मेल 'थोड़ा अजीब' है, तब हो सकता है कि वही जूते आपके लिए सबसे स्टाइलिश बन जाएं।

हमेशा याद रखें

- फैशन का असली आनंद तभी आता है, जब आप स्वयं को उचित प्रकार से अभिव्यक्त करें।
- दूसरों की नकल न करें।
- गलत जूते पहनने का अर्थ है कि आप नियमों को तोड़ते नहीं अपितु उन्हें नया स्वरूप देते हैं।
- आप जब किसी गलत चीज़ को आत्मविश्वास के साथ पहनते हैं, तब वही आपके लुक को विशेष बना देती है।

कुछ रोचक जानकारियां

- यह चलन केवल स्टाइल ही नहीं बल्कि पुरानी चीज़ों के उपयोग की भावना भी बढ़ाता है। अब लोग बार-बार नए कपड़े या मैचिंग जूते खरीदने के बजाय, अपने पुराने जूते नई तरह से पहनने लगे हैं। गलत जूते पहनकर लोग प्रतिदिन नए कॉम्बिनेशन बनाते हैं। इससे वेस्ट कम होता है और सस्टेनेबल फैशन को सपोर्ट मिलता है।
- यह ट्रेंड इंटरनेशनल बन चुका है। बेला हदीद, जेंडाया, मैरी कोलमैन और रिहाना जैसी हॉलीवुड सेलेब्रिटीज़ भी आउटफिट के साथ जान-बूझकर 'रॉन्ग शूज़' पहन रही हैं। भारत में भी कई फैशन इन्फ्लुएंसर जैसे कोमल पांडेय, कृतिका खुराना आदि इस ट्रेंड को फॉलो कर रही हैं।
- यह मनोविज्ञान से भी जुड़ा है। फैशन विशेषज्ञों के अनुसार, जब आप कुछ असामान्य पहनते हैं (जैसे गलत जूते), तब लोग आपको दीर्घावधि तक याद रखते हैं। इस चलन से एक प्रकार की संज्ञानात्मक असंगति उत्पन्न होती है। अर्थात् देखने वाले का ध्यान तुरंत उस 'गलती' पर जाता है, और फिर वही लुक यादगार बन जाती है।
- डिज़ाइनर्स अब 'मिसमैच स्टाइलिंग' पर अधिक ध्यान दे रहे हैं। कई नए फैशन कलेक्शन में जूते तथा कपड़े जान-बूझकर असंतुलित या अनमैचिंग रखे जा रहे हैं। कुछ ब्रांड्स तो अब 'मल्टी-स्टाइल शूज़' बना रहे हैं, जो एक ही साथ पारंपरिक एवं आधुनिक दोनों प्रकार के लुक देते हैं।
- आज की युवा पीढ़ी 'जेन जी' का पसंदीदा चलन बन चुका है। युवा वर्ग किसी भी 'परफेक्ट लुक' से अधिक 'ऑर्थेंटिक' एवं 'एफर्टलेस' स्टाइल को पसंद करता है। 'रॉन्ग शूज़ थियोरी' इसी सोच को दर्शाती है कि फैशन कोई नियम नहीं है।





राष्ट्रीय शिक्षक पुरस्कार

यह पुरस्कार शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में शिक्षकों द्वारा किए गए उल्लेखनीय कार्यों हेतु प्रदान किए जाते हैं।

राष्ट्रपति द्वारा सम्मानित

'राष्ट्रीय शिक्षक दिवस-2025' के अवसर पर स्कूली शिक्षा से 45 एवं उच्च शिक्षा से 21, कुल

66

शिक्षकों को सम्मानित किया गया।

बढ़लाव की बयार

मध्यप्रदेश के स्कूलों में पढ़ाई की प्रयोगशाला



आपको फिल्म 'श्री इंडियट' का वह सीन तो याद होगा, जब रेंचों के दोस्त उसे ढूंढते हुए लददाख पहुंचते हैं और वहां एक स्कूल में बच्चे नए-नए प्रयोग कर रहे होते हैं। अब ऐसे ही सीन 'देश के दिल' मध्यप्रदेश में अनगिनत स्कूलों में देखने को मिल रहे हैं।

आलेख : वीणा सबलोक पाठक

शिक्षा, शिक्षक और शिक्षण व्यवस्था किसी भी व्यक्ति का जीवन सजाती, संवारती है। मध्यप्रदेश में अध्यापक स्कूल की पढ़ाई में अलग-अलग प्रयोग कर रहे हैं और शिक्षा को बच्चों के लिए रुचिकर बना रहे हैं। वे समाज एवं राष्ट्र निर्माण में भी अपना अहम योगदान दे रहे हैं। इसका प्रभावशाली परिवर्तन देखने को मिल रहा है।



भेरूलाल ओसारा

मालवा जिले के खेरिया मिडिल स्कूल के अध्यापक भेरूलाल ओसारा ने पढ़ाई को इतना रोचक बना दिया है कि जो बच्चे पहले विद्यालय आने से कतराते थे, वे अब अवकाश के दिन भी विद्यालय जाना चाहते हैं। श्री ओसारा ने 'पिलड क्लासरूम' और 'एग्जिट टिकट्स' जैसी

गतिविधियों से अपनी कक्षाओं को प्रयोगशाला में परिवर्तित कर दिया है। इसके अतिरिक्त, उन्होंने अभिभावकों की भागीदारी और 'सेल्फ अटेंडेंस ट्रेकिंग' जैसे अभिनव उपायों से विद्यालय प्रबंधन को और अधिक प्रभावी बनाया है। अब इनके विद्यालय में भी निजी विद्यालयों की भांति अभिभावक-अध्यापक बैठक का आयोजन होने लगा है। उन्होंने विद्यार्थियों को पर्यावरण, साइबर सुरक्षा जैसे मुद्दों पर भी जागरूक किया है। उनके अथक प्रयासों का ही परिणाम है कि क्षेत्र में विद्यालय छोड़कर जाने वाले छात्रों की संख्या में कमी आ रही है। उनके समर्पण के लिए ओसारा जी को सराहना तो मिल ही रही है, उन्हें शैक्षणिक नवाचारों के लिए 'राष्ट्रीय पुरस्कार-2025' से सम्मानित भी किया गया है।



उषा दुबे

मध्यप्रदेश के सिंगरोली जिले की यह अध्यापिका अब अपने नाम से नहीं अपितु 'किताबों वाली दीदी' के नाम से पहचानी जाती हैं। यह नाम उन्हें किसी और ने नहीं बल्कि स्वयं हमारे यशस्वी प्रधानमंत्री श्री नरेंद्र मोदी जी ने अपने रेडियो कार्यक्रम 'मन

की बात' में दिया था। कोरोना काल में जब विद्यालय बंद और ज़िंदगी मानो थम सी गई थी, तब ऐसे विकट समय में उषा जी ने अपनी स्कूटी में एक लाइब्रेरी बनाकर गांव-गांव घूमकर बच्चों को पढ़ाई से जोड़े रखने का सफल प्रयास किया था। कोविड के बाद भी वह छुट्टी वाले दिनों में अपनी मोबाइल लाइब्रेरी लेकर उन बच्चों के पास जा पहुंचती हैं, जो किसी कारणवश पढ़ाई से वंचित रह गए हैं।



शीला पटेल

दमोह जिले के पथरिया के सरकारी प्राइमरी विद्यालय की इस अध्यापिका ने सीमित संसाधनों के उपरांत भी शिक्षा को रोचक, सजीव और प्रभावी बनाया है। अपने नवाचारी दृष्टिकोण एवं कक्षा में अभिनव तरीके अपनाकर उन्होंने बच्चों को पढ़ाई में रुचि लेने के लिए प्रेरित किया है। उनके अहम योगदान हेतु उन्हें भी 'राष्ट्रीय पुरस्कार-2025' से सम्मानित किया

गया है। आरंभिक दिनों में उनके विद्यालय में मात्र 6-8 बच्चे ही आया करते थे। बच्चों की उपस्थिति बढ़ाने के लिए उन्होंने व्यक्तिगत रूप से प्रयास किए। उन्होंने गांव में प्रचार का सहारा लिया। दीवारों पर स्लोगन लिखवाए तथा ग्राम सभा का आयोजन किया। घर-घर जाकर लोगों से संपर्क किया तथा अभिभावकों को इस बात के लिए सहमत किया कि वे बच्चों को स्कूल भेजें। व्यक्तिगत रुचि लेते हुए विद्यालय में ग्रीष्मकालीन एवं सर्दकालीन कैंप का भी आयोजन किया। पढ़ाई को आनंददायी बनाने की दिशा में उनके द्वारा किए गए प्रयासों के परिणामस्वरूप विद्यालय में विद्यार्थियों की संख्या निरंतर बढ़ती गई।



सुनीता शर्मा

सीहोर जिले की इस अध्यापिका ने पढ़ाई को रुचिकर बनाने के लिए कठपुतली का सहारा लिया है। वह स्वयं कठपुतली बनाती हैं। कठपुतली, कहानी तथा संगीत के माध्यम से वह जब कठिन से कठिन विषय और पाठ पर बोलती हैं और बच्चों को समझाती हैं तब बच्चे उससे सहजता से जुड़ जाते हैं। इसके अतिरिक्त वह कठपुतली के माध्यम से बच्चों को

नैतिक विज्ञान एवं सामान्य ज्ञान की शिक्षा भी सरलता से देती हैं। कोविड काल में उन्होंने वीडियो के माध्यम से इस नवाचार का आरंभ किया था। बच्चों ने इसे बेहद पसंद किया था। अब वे इसे निरंतर अपना रहे हैं। अंग्रेजी भाषा सीखने के लिए उन्होंने गुल्लक बनाने की अभिनव पहल की। इसके तहत बच्चे अंग्रेजी का जो शब्द सीखते हैं, उसे कागज पर लिखकर, उसे गुल्लक में डालते जाते हैं। उनके नवाचार को राज्य सरकार द्वारा भी सराहा गया है।

"लाइक्स नहीं, लाइफ के अनुभव ज़रूरी हैं"

बॉलीवुड के विख्यात अभिनेता **पंकज त्रिपाठी** ने युवाओं का आह्वान किया है कि वे अपने जीवन में वास्तविक अनुभवों का आनंद लेना सीखें। सोशल मीडिया के प्रभाव में पड़कर भ्रमित न हों। युवा स्वयं पर विश्वास रखें। धैर्य रखें और सच मानें कि भले ही वे छोटे शहरों से आते हों, एक दिन उनके भी सपने पूर्ण होंगे तथा वे भी अपने लक्ष्यों को प्राप्त करेंगे।

आज का युवा अक्सर मुझसे पूछता है, "सर, जल्दी सफल कैसे हुआ जाए?" मैं मुस्कुराकर कहता हूँ, जिंदगी कोई रील नहीं है, जिसे फास्ट-फॉरवर्ड कर दिया जाए। मैं मानता हूँ कि असली जीवन अनुभवों से बनता है, न कि सिर्फ लाइक्स और व्यूज़ से। सोशल मीडिया एक खूबसूरत माया है, लेकिन पूरी दुनिया नहीं। उसमें उलझकर अपने भीतर की आवाज़ मत खोइए। खुद पर भरोसा रखिए, धैर्य रखिए और याद रखिए कि अगर आप छोटे शहर या गांव से भी आते हैं, तब भी आपके सपने बड़े और साकार हो सकते हैं।

धैर्य का पाठ मैंने खेतों से सीखा

आज की पीढ़ी अक्सर रातोंरात सफलता का सपना देखती है। लेकिन मेरी जिंदगी ने मुझे यह सिखाया है कि धैर्य सबसे बड़ा गुण है। मैं किसान परिवार से हूँ। बीज बोने के बाद रोज़ खेत में जाकर देखना, कब पौधा निकलेगा, यह इंतज़ार आसान नहीं होता। प्रकृति हमें सिखाती है कि हर चीज़ अपने समय पर होती है। पेड़ पर फल भी मौसम देखकर आता है। कलाकार बनने में मुझे भी दस साल लगे। छोटे-छोटे रोल, लगातार अस्वीकृति, और फिर भी अपने काम पर भरोसा बनाए रखना, यही असली संघर्ष होता है। इसलिए मैं युवाओं से यही कहता हूँ, जल्दी मत करो। रास्ते में ठहरना, सीखना और खुद को समझना भी ज़रूरी है। जल्दबाज़ी आपको मंज़िल के करीब नहीं, बल्कि दूर ही ले जाती है।



धैर्य का असली मतलब

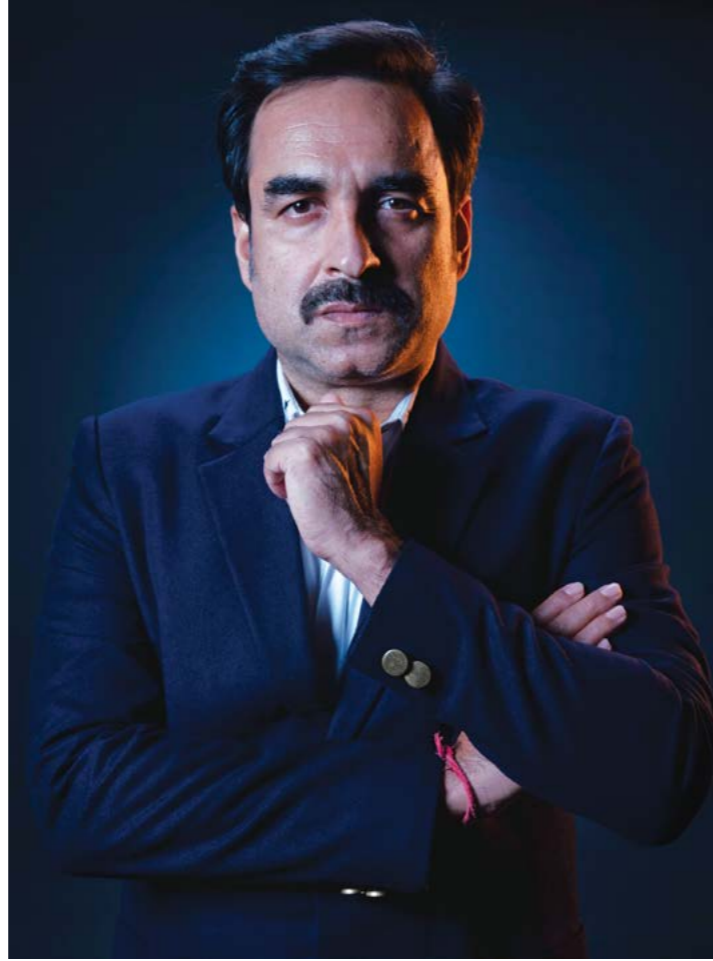
धैर्य का मतलब सिर्फ इंतजार करना नहीं है। धैर्य का मतलब है, लगातार तैयारी करना। एक ओलंपिक एथलीट दस साल तक रोज़ मैदान में दौड़ता है, तब जाकर एक दिन उसे मैडल हासिल होता है। जब मैं मुंबई आया, तब समझ में आया कि यहां एक्टर्स की कोई कमी नहीं है। सवाल यह था कि मैं अपने अभिनय में क्या अलग लाऊँ। मैंने तय किया कि मेरी एक्टिंग में किसी और की परछाई नहीं होनी चाहिए। बस ओरिजिनल रहना है। मैं अपनी बेटी को भी यही समझाता हूँ कि एक टीचर से नहीं, दस टीचरों से सीखो। हर इंसान से कुछ न कुछ मिलता है। मेरे भीतर धैर्य था, सीखने की जिज्ञासा थी, इसलिए मेरे पास एक नहीं, दस स्कूलों का अनुभव है।

एक्सेप्टेंस बाहर नहीं, अंदर से चाहिए

कई बार ऐसा होता है कि लोग आपकी ओरिजिनैलिटी स्वीकार नहीं करते। आज का युवा वहीं घबरा जाता है। मैं कहना चाहता हूँ, अपनी स्वीकृति खुद से होनी चाहिए, समाज से नहीं। अगर आप बाहरी तारीफ़ के पीछे भागेंगे, तो ज़िंदगी भर परेशान रहेंगे। कोई न कोई कमी निकाल ही देगा। मुझे भी कई बार कहा गया कि मेरी हिन्दी में बिहारी लहज़ा झलकता है। मैंने बिना हिचक कहा, बिल्कुल झलकता है क्योंकि मैं बिहार से हूँ। यही तो मेरी पहचान है। अगर मैं इसे छिपाने की कोशिश करता, तो शायद मैं खुद से ही दूर हो जाता। अपनी जड़ों को अपनाने में शर्म नहीं, ताकत होती है।

फेक रियलिटी से बचिए

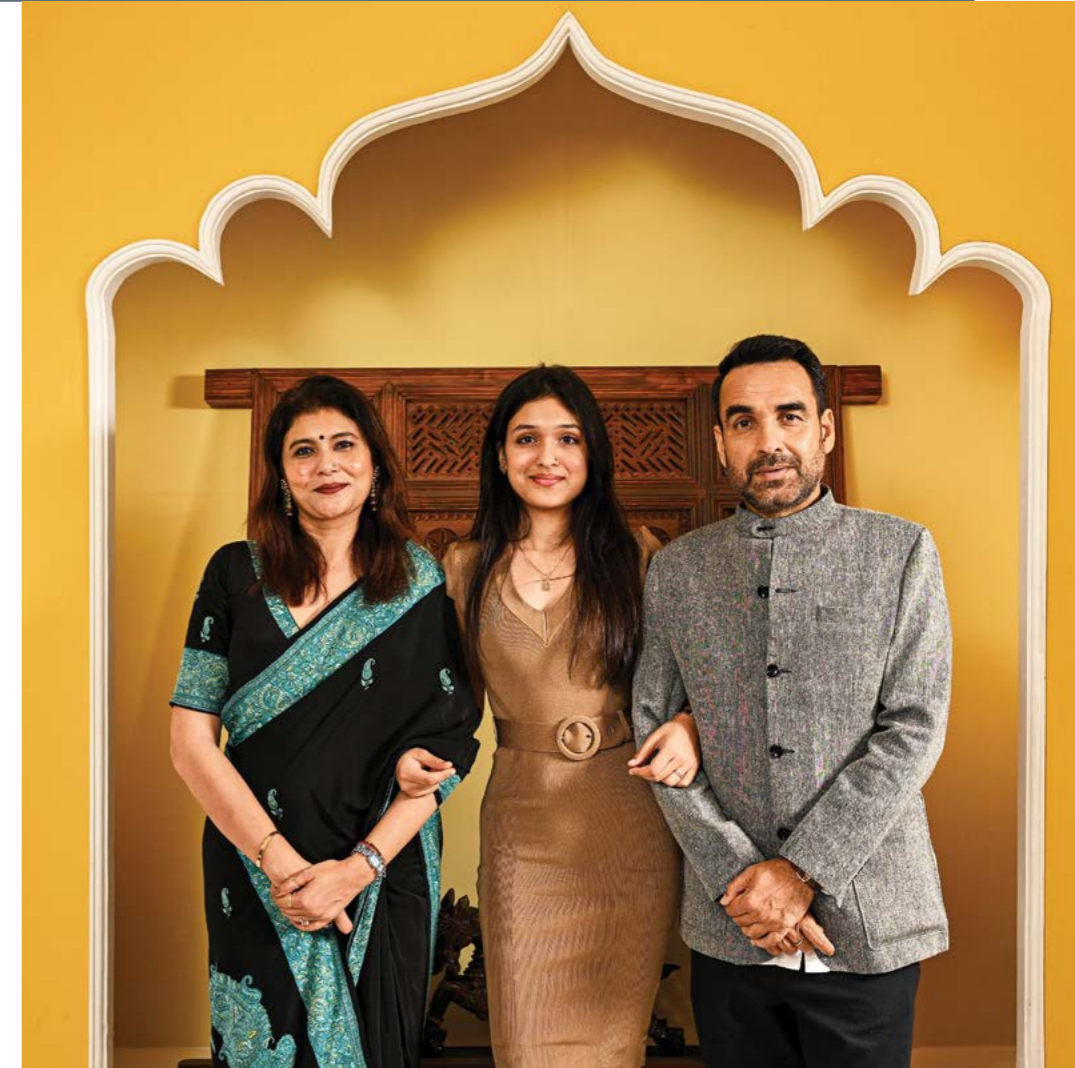
बॉलीवुड एक इमेज-ड्रिवन इंडस्ट्री है। यहाँ अक्सर चेहरे, पैकेजिंग और प्रचार अधिक मायने रखते हैं। लेकिन मैंने कभी जान-बूझकर अपनी इमेज बनाने की कोशिश नहीं की। मेरी कोशिश हमेशा यही रही कि स्क्रीन पर मेरा किरदार सच्चा लगे और दर्शक उसे याद रखें, न कि सिर्फ मेरे चेहरे को। मैं किसी पीआर गेम, दिखावे या गिमिक के पीछे नहीं भागा। मैंने सोचा कि अगर काम में ईमानदारी होगी, तो पहचान अपने आप बन जाएगी। मेरे पास न कोई फार्मूला था और न ही किसी तरह का शॉर्टकट। मेरे पास बस अपना हुनर था, मेहनत थी और अपने काम के प्रति सच्चाई थी। हर किरदार को मैंने पूरी शिद्दत से जिया, चाहे वह छोटा हो या बड़ा। शायद इसी वजह से लोग आज भी मेरे नाम से ज्यादा मेरे किरदारों को याद करते हैं। मेरी पहचान किसी रणनीति से नहीं बनी, वह काम करते-करते अपने आप बन गई।



दोस्त और दोस्ती का मतलब

सीखने की प्रक्रिया में अच्छे दोस्तों की बहुत अहमियत होती है। मैंने भी अपने दोस्तों से बहुत कुछ सीखा। दोस्त भी शिक्षक होते हैं। कुछ ऐसी अपनी उलझनें होती हैं जो आप अपने माता-पिता या पत्नी से शेयर नहीं कर सकते, लेकिन दोस्त से कर सकते हैं।

ज़िंदगी की सबसे बड़ी सीख किसी एक जगह से नहीं मिलती। क्लासरूम, दोस्त, कैरियर या कोई साधारण-सा अनुभव। सच तो यह है कि जिस दिन आप पैदा होते हैं, उसी दिन ज़िंदगी का पाठ्यक्रम शुरू हो जाता है।



युवाओं को संदेश

आज के दौर में सबसे ज़रूरी चीज़ है, सही तरह की अवेयरनेस। यह समझ होना कि जो मैं देख रहा हूँ, जो सुन रहा हूँ, क्या वह मेरी ज़िंदगी में सच में ज़रूरी है भी या नहीं। हर सूचना ज्ञान नहीं होती। हर चर्चा सच नहीं होती। आजकल पॉडकास्ट से लेकर वीडियो तक, कोई भी कुछ भी बोल रहा है, और अफसोस की बात यह है कि जितनी ज्यादा नकारात्मक बात होती है, उसकी पहुँच उतनी ही अधिक बढ़ती है। इस कलयुग में हर किसी की अपनी दुकान है। लेकिन आपको यह तय करना है कि आप ग्राहक बनेंगे या सोचने वाले इंसान। मोबाइल और इंटरनेट बहुत ताकतवर साधन हैं। गांव या कस्बे में बैठा बच्चा भी आज पूरी दुनिया से जुड़ सकता है। लेकिन सवाल यही है कि आप इसका इस्तेमाल कैसे कर रहे हैं। ज़रूरत के लिए या आदत के लिए।

मैं तो यह मानता हूँ कि दिन में एक घंटा कुछ न करना भी ज़रूरी है। मोबाइल दूर रखिए। कुछ मत कीजिए। खाली बैठिए। आज के समय में यह भी एक स्किल बन चुकी है। क्योंकि अब हालत यह है कि अगर आदमी जाग रहा है और सो नहीं रहा, तो कुछ न कुछ करेगा ही। ज्यादातर लोग फोन उठा लेंगे। हमें याद है, हम खेतों में काम करते थे। तीन घंटे बस हम होते थे और खेत होता था। पौधों को देखना, पानी देना, पत्तियाँ ठीक हैं या नहीं, वही ध्यान था। तब अलग से मेडिटेशन सीखने की ज़रूरत नहीं पड़ती थी। आप जिस भी पेशे में हैं, अपने काम को एकाग्रता से करना ही असली ध्यान है। इसलिए वर्चुअल दुनिया से बाहर निकलकर असली दुनिया को देखिए। प्रकृति के करीब रहिए। प्रकृति सब सिखाती है। समय के साथ सब कुछ मिलता है। ज़िंदगी खुद एक स्कूल है और इसमें सीखना कभी बंद नहीं होता।



पंकज त्रिपाठी, राष्ट्रीय पुरस्कार से सम्मानित अभिनेता हैं। वह न्यूटन, स्त्री, मिमी और बरेली की बर्फी जैसी फिल्मों एवं ओटीटी प्लेटफॉर्म पर अपने प्रभावशाली एवं विविध अभिनय के लिए जाने जाते हैं

@pankajtripathi

DHURANDHAR'S Trending Trio

Some songs do not just play in a film.
They announce a character.

By Tina Singh



FLIPPERACHI

W

hen Akshaye Khanna's Rehman Dakait walks into *Dhurandhar* with effortless swagger, it is not dialogue that seals the moment. It is the pulse of *Fa9la*. A beat unfamiliar, unapologetic and impossible to ignore.

Born thousands of kilometres away from India, *Fa9la* did not arrive as a Bollywood composition. It arrived as instinct. As an attitude. And in doing so, it became one of the most unexpected musical phenomena of the year, leaping from Gulf hip hop culture into the heart of Indian pop consciousness.

At the centre of this crossover is an unlikely but powerful trio: Bahraini rapper Flipperachi, producer DJ Outlaw, and Indian shehnai maestro Lokesh Anand. Together, they created not a fusion experiment, but a

conversation that feels ancient and modern at once.

A New Grammar of Collaboration

Fa9la works because no one softens their identity to fit the other. Each artist stands their ground.

"If people from another culture connect with your sound, that's the highest compliment," says Flipperachi. In *Fa9la*, that compliment flows both ways.

For Lokesh Anand, the impact has been deeply personal. "Young listeners are hearing the shehnai beyond weddings for the first time," he says. "That makes me incredibly happy." This isn't fusion as fashion. It's fusion as a form of respect.

Flipperachi: From Bahrain to Bollywood

At the centre of *Fa9la* (pronounced Faasla) is Flipperachi, born Hussam Aseem, a Bahraini rapper whose voice and presence have made him one of the Gulf's most compelling hip hop artists. Though unfamiliar to Indian audiences before *Dhurandhar*, he had already spent over two decades shaping his sound in the Khaleeji rap scene, having discovered music at 12.

Released independently on YouTube in 2024, *Fa9la* quickly clocked millions of views. Rooted in Khaleeji rhythms, the track carries the energy of Gulf hip hop, driven by percussive intensity and vernacular lyricism.

"When *Fa9la* was made, it wasn't meant for a film. It was just a moment, a vibe," Flipperachi says.

In Arabic slang, *Fa9la* loosely translates to a moment of joy, confidence and swagger, a

feeling meant to be felt rather than explained.

Composer Shashwat Sachdev sensed its raw swagger would mirror Akshaye Khanna's Rehman Dakait perfectly. Once *Dhurandhar* was released, the song erupted across Indian social media, becoming a viral soundscape on Reels and Shorts.

What followed went beyond virality. *Fa9la* topped multiple Billboard Arabia charts, earning Flipperachi an official entry into Guinness World Records and turning him into a familiar name in India alongside Akshaye Khanna's now-iconic entry scene.

"Guinness World Records, habibi. It feels amazing," Flipperachi said in a video reacting to the news. "The song took off in a language it wasn't sung in. Topping four charts at once was unreal."

Seeing his music paired with Akshaye Khanna's commanding screen presence was surreal. "The song suddenly felt bigger than me. It belonged to the scene and to the audience."

The response reached home too. "People in Bahrain suddenly said, 'We have this rapper!'" he laughs. "When your family hears about it from others, you realise how far it's travelled."

He also dreams of collaborations. "Working with Badshah (Indian rapper) would be a bucket list moment. I want to come to India, perform live and feel that love in front of me," shares the rapper.

For Flipperachi, *Fa9la* worked because it did not chase formulas. "People try to engineer hits. We had pure emotion." He laughs, and adds, "Maybe next time, I will redo my viral dance with Akshaye's moves."

Behind the Beat: DJ Outlaw

If Flipperachi brought *Fa9la* its lyrical swagger, DJ Outlaw provided the sonic architecture that allowed the track to slip seamlessly into cinema. Known as Mohammed AlMohri in Bahrain, Outlaw shaped the song's pulse with precision, building a groove that feels restrained yet commanding.

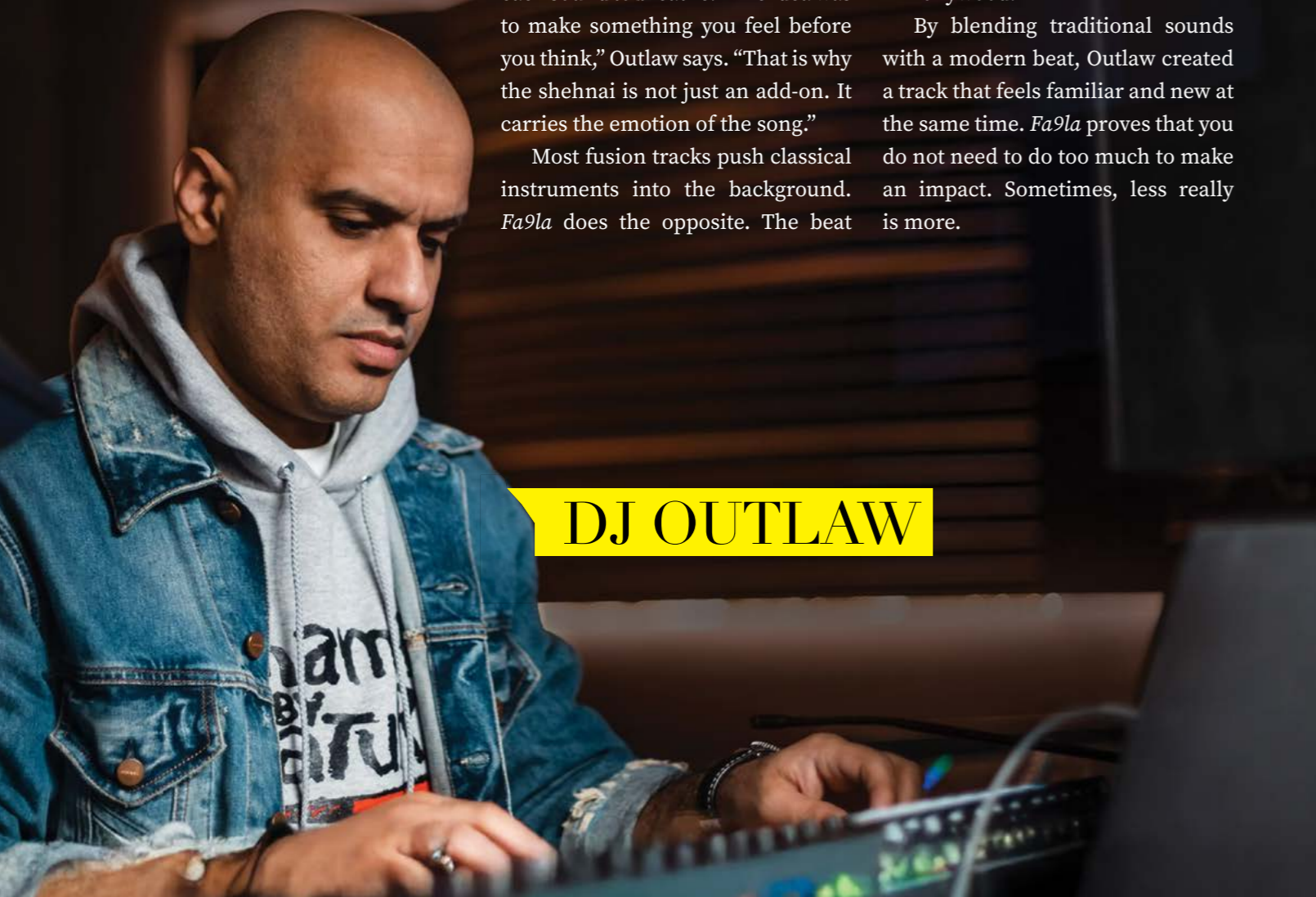
Much of *Fa9la*'s impact comes from its simplicity. The track is not crowded or overproduced. The beat moves slowly and confidently, with strong bass and enough space for each sound to breathe. "The idea was to make something you feel before you think," Outlaw says. "That is why the shehnai is not just an add-on. It carries the emotion of the song."

Most fusion tracks push classical instruments into the background. *Fa9la* does the opposite. The beat

takes a step back, and the shehnai takes the lead.

At its heart, the track is hip hop, shaped by Gulf rhythms and a steady, almost desert-like pulse. It fits naturally with Flipperachi's voice and Lokesh Anand's powerful shehnai lines. When *Dhurandhar*'s team chose the track for Rehman Dakait's entry scene, Outlaw admits he was not sure if Indian audiences would connect with the Arabic lyrics. "But it worked," he says. "I knew the song was strong. I just didn't expect it to become this big in Bollywood."

By blending traditional sounds with a modern beat, Outlaw created a track that feels familiar and new at the same time. *Fa9la* proves that you do not need to do too much to make an impact. Sometimes, less really is more.



DJ OUTLAW

Dhurandhar: The Revenge,

the sequel, has crossed **₹3,000** crore worldwide within a month of its release, becoming the first Indian franchise to hit this milestone, ahead of *Baahubali* and *Pushpa*.

The Shehnai Effect by Lokesh Anand

The first sound that cuts through *Fa9la* is not the beat. It is the shehnai.

An instrument often linked to weddings and rituals cuts through the bass with authority. In *Fa9la*, it is not celebratory but commanding, amplifying the power and presence of Akshaye Khanna's Rehman Dakait in *Dhurandhar*.

This is rare. The shehnai is seldom heard beyond traditional settings. Here, it becomes the instantly recognisable hook, shifting from meditative to ominous, with silence speaking as loudly as sound.

Behind this striking presence is Lokesh Anand, one of India's leading shehnai players, trained in the Mewati Gharana and a disciple of Pandit Jasraj. Beginning his classical journey at eight, Anand approached *Fa9la* without chasing novelty.

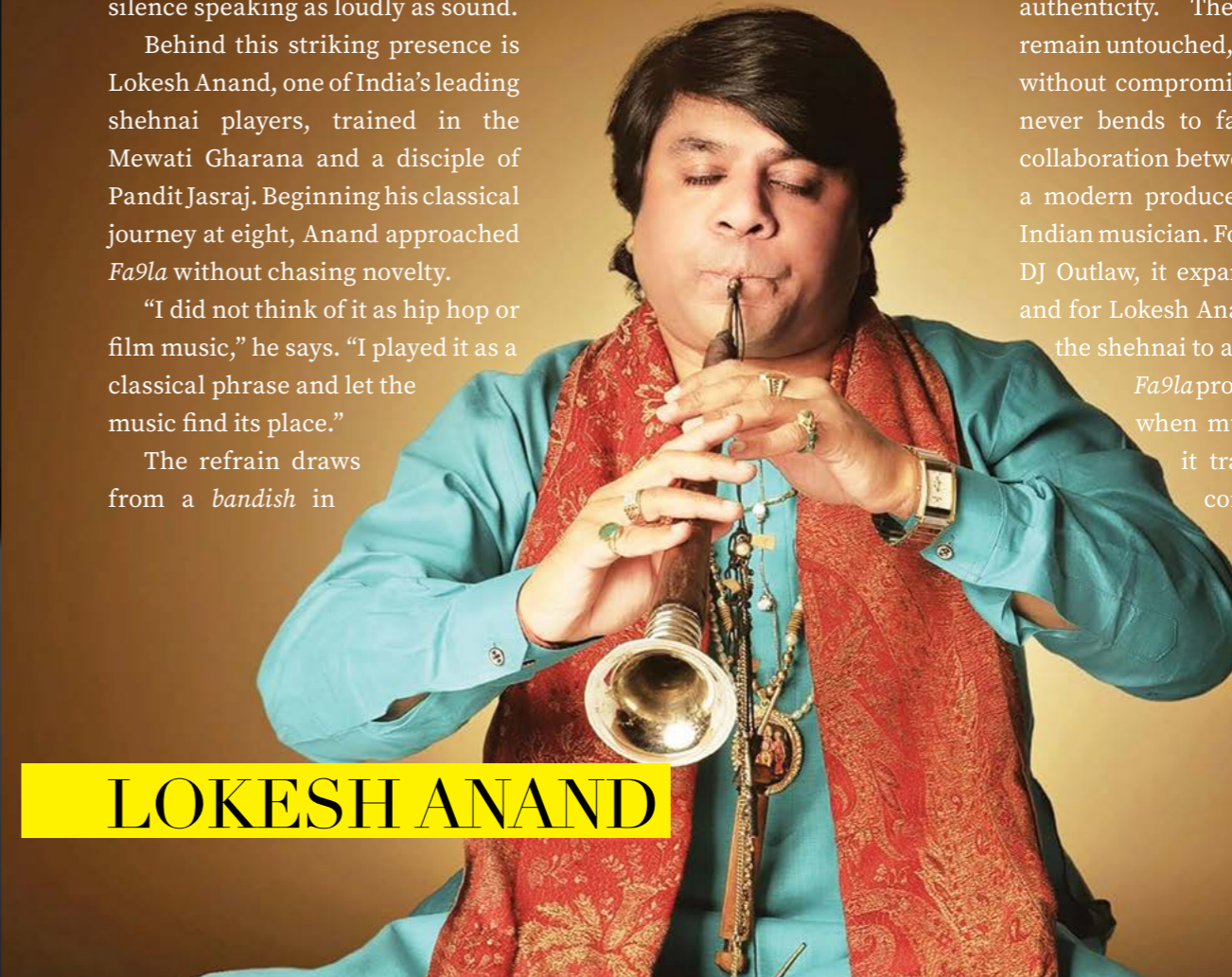
"I did not think of it as hip hop or film music," he says. "I played it as a classical phrase and let the music find its place."

The refrain draws from a *bandish* in

Raag Jaunpuri, giving the track depth beneath its swagger. What emerges is a cultural exchange, Indian classical sound woven seamlessly into Khaleeji hip hop.

For Anand, who has collaborated with composers like A.R. Rahman and Anirudh Ravichander, *Fa9la* reaffirms how borderless music has become. "That someone in the Middle East connected with an Indian raag is overwhelming," he reflects.

He smiles at the shehnai's renewed relevance. "Music schools are seeing fresh interest.



LOKESH ANAND

Playlists now place it alongside hip hop and cinematic beats."

His conclusion is simple: "The shehnai has always been powerful. It just needed a new room."

Cinema as Catalyst

Fa9la shows how freely music now moves across borders. A Bahraini rap track led by an Indian classical instrument becoming a Bollywood favourite reflects changing audience tastes. Beyond cinemas, it spread rapidly across social media, its hook echoing through reels.

What sets *Fa9la* apart is its authenticity. The Arabic lyrics remain untouched, the shehnai leads without compromise and the music never bends to familiarity. It is a collaboration between a Gulf rapper, a modern producer and a classical Indian musician. For Flipperachi and DJ Outlaw, it expanded their reach, and for Lokesh Anand, it introduced the shehnai to a new generation.

Fa9la proves a simple truth: when music stays rooted, it travels farther and connects deeper.

Today, Khelo India operates through

Over **1,040**

Khelo India Centres (KICs) across more than 750 districts, training close to 30,000 athletes

32

Khelo India State Centres of Excellence (KISCs) across States and Union Territories

More than **300** accredited academies

Over **2,700**

Khelo India Athletes supported under structured talent development pathways

These centres have also transformed how past champions are integrated into the ecosystem. More than 900 former champion athletes are now engaged as coaches and mentors, creating livelihoods while training the next generation, a virtuous cycle of giving back.



Sporting Young Dreams

Sporting excellence today is no longer a privilege; it is a policy-backed opportunity. Through government initiatives like Khelo India, youngsters now benefit from structured pathways, grassroots infrastructure, financial support and national exposure. Designed to identify and nurture talent early, these policies empower young athletes to dream bigger, train better and build sporting careers regardless of background or geography.

By Manu Bhaker

Sporting excellence is never accidental. It is the result of vision, persistence and belief, backed by opportunity and infrastructure at the grassroots. I was one of the earliest beneficiaries of Khelo India, when it was launched in 2018 by our Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi. I had won gold with a record score in the inaugural edition and have never looked back ever since. Khelo India's core mission, to create awareness, access and aspiration in sport, has steadily reshaped India's sporting ecosystem. More than six years on, Khelo India is no longer just a platform; it is a lifeline of Indian sport, touching athletes across age groups, genders, regions and abilities.

From an athlete's perspective, the most critical factor in success is early identification and development of talent. Khelo India has understood this from the outset. Its foundation rests on providing opportunities, creating infrastructure and nurturing belief: three pillars without which no sporting nation can grow. Persistence and perseverance are learned young, and Khelo India has ensured that young athletes experience structured competition and professional environments early in their careers.



Inclusive Sporting Vision

What makes Khelo India unique is its inclusive approach. Equal emphasis is placed not only on Olympic disciplines but also on traditional sports, indigenous martial art forms, winter sports and para sports. Launch of the Khelo India Beach Games in Diu and the Khelo India Water Sports Festival in Srinagar last year and the inaugural Tribal Games in Chhattisgarh only reflect a commitment to developing new sports hubs at various nooks and corners of the country.

Performance That Speaks for Itself

The competitive success of Khelo India Athletes (KIA) underlines the programme's effectiveness:

Asian Games 2022: 124 KIAs participated, winning 42 medals

Paris Olympics 2024: 28 KIAs were part of the 117-member contingent, contributing four medals, including historic achievements by Sarabjot Singh, Sanjay and Aman Sehrawat, the youngest Indian Olympic medallist.

Several KIAs finished fourth, narrowly missing medals, signalling strong future prospects.

KIAs have won 1,953 international medals, growing from 229 medals in 2021-22 to 774 in 2022-23

126 Khelo India athletes have progressed to the TOPS scheme, receiving elite-level support.

These numbers reflect not just medals, but a growing pipeline of competition-ready athletes.

The Road Ahead

Achieving sporting excellence is a process, one that must be supported regardless of hurdles. Khelo India continues to cross milestones, from hosting the Youth Games across multiple cities in Tamil Nadu to conducting the University Games in the North-East and, most recently, Rajasthan, generating unprecedented enthusiasm.

Khelo India today stands as an engine for mass participation and a catalyst for elite performance, balancing Sports for Development and Development of Sports.

As athletes, we are beneficiaries of systems that believed in us early. To me, Khelo India is the catalyst that can help fulfil our Prime Minister's vision of India finishing amongst the top-10 nations in the 2036 Olympics and top-5 countries by 2047, when we celebrate 100 years of our independence.



How to Enroll for Khelo India or ASMITA

Khelo India
Who can apply: School and college students, grassroots athletes (varies by discipline and age group).

- How to start:**
1. Register on the official Khelo India portal (kheloindia.gov.in).
 2. Select your sport, age category and state.
 3. Participate in district, state or national-level trials/competitions announced on the portal.

What you get: Access to competitions, scholarships, training support and exposure to national coaches.

ASMITA (Achieving Sports Milestone by Inspiring Women Through Action)
Who can apply: Girls and young women athletes across age groups.

- How to start:**
1. Enroll through announcements by the Sports Authority of India (SAI), state sports bodies or educational institutions. Or access mygov.in/campaigns/asmita-khelo-india-women-league/
 2. Register for ASMITA leagues and competitions conducted at district/state levels.

What you get: Competitive platforms, talent identification and pathways to higher-level training.

Laying emphasis on the Khelo India Winter Games, which were hosted in Leh, Union Territory of Ladakh, recently, only proves that challenging terrains are merely pathways for ice and snow sports athletes to shine on the international stage.

Equally inspiring is the impact of Khelo India on para athletes. Since the first Para Games were hosted in December 2023, Khelo India's sustained support has delivered remarkable results, firmly placing India on the global para sport map. At the Paris Paralympics, 24 Khelo India Athletes (KIAs) represented the country, contributing six medals, including podium finishes by Deepthi Jeevanji, Preethi Pal, Simran Sharma,

Hokato Hotozhe Sema and Mona Agarwal. Each of them represents not just personal excellence, but a system that believes in inclusion.

ASMITA: Empowering Girls
 As a woman athlete, the role of ASMITA (Achieving Sports Milestone by Inspiring Women Through Action) deserves special mention. Under the larger mission of Khelo India, ASMITA has created competitive platforms exclusively for women, encouraging participation at the grassroots, where social barriers often exist.

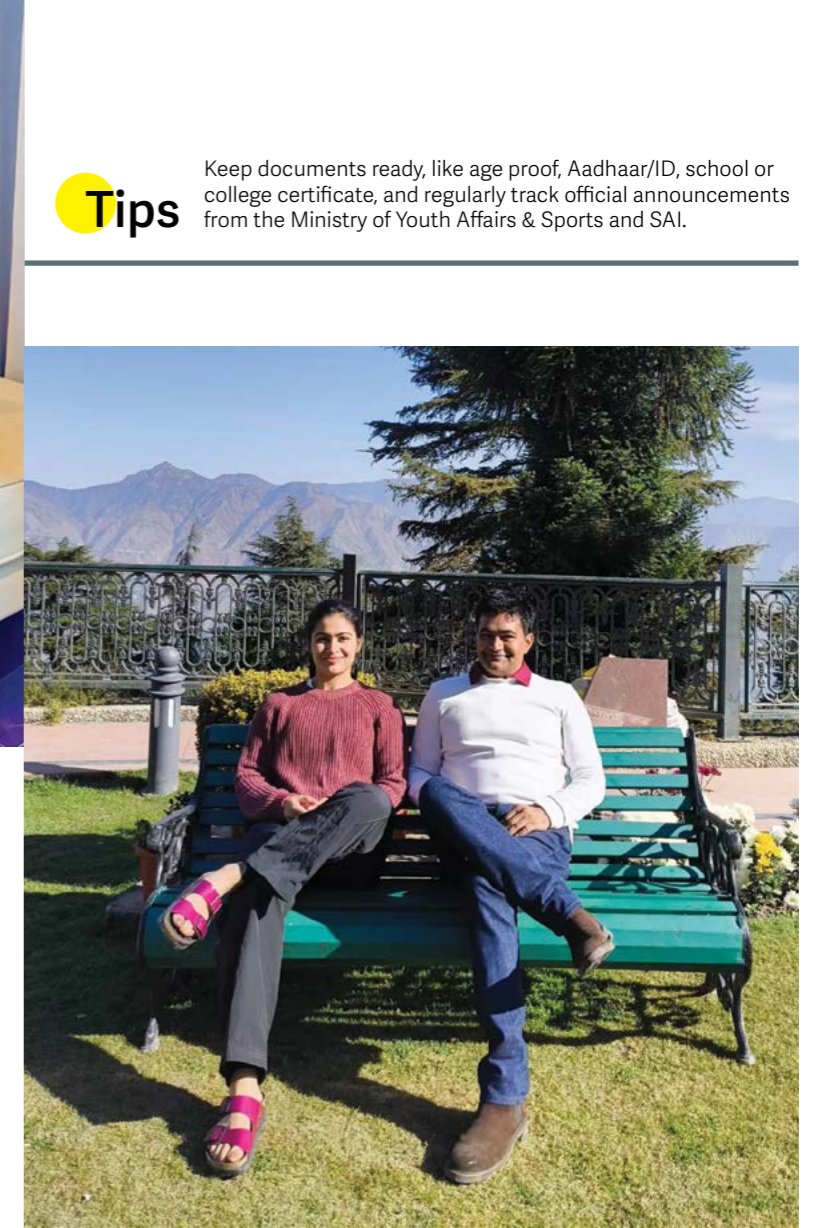
The impact is visible and measurable. Since its inception in 2021, almost 2,400 ASMITA leagues have been conducted in 34 sports



Khelo India is transforming India's sporting ecosystem by empowering thousands of athletes, establishing over 1,000 talent development centres and creating structured support systems that nurture potential from village to podium.

disciplines, with over 2,56,000 female athletes participating from all 36 States and Union Territories covering 550 cities/districts. These leagues have gone beyond traditional sports, uncovering talent in disciplines like rugby, which is now gaining remarkable popularity among village girls in several states. For many young girls, ASMITA is their first experience of organised sport, an experience that builds confidence, independence and ambition alongside athletic skill.

Sustained Impact
 Khelo India's expansion has been both wide and deep. With over 22 editions of Khelo India Games, the programme has exposed athletes



Tips Keep documents ready, like age proof, Aadhaar/ID, school or college certificate, and regularly track official announcements from the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports and SAI.

to international-standard competition at a young age, eliminating psychological barriers when they step onto global stages later in life. Till now, seven editions of Khelo India Youth Games, five editions of Khelo India University Games, six editions of Khelo India Winter Games, two editions each of Khelo India Para Games and Khelo India Beach Games, besides the inaugural edition of the Khelo India Water Sports Festival, have been conducted with the participation of 36 States/UTs.



Manu Bhaker, sport shooter, first Indian to win two medals at a single Olympics, securing double bronze at Paris 2024.

@bhakermanu



From Pain to Possibility

Built to bring world-class cancer care closer to home, BALCO Medical Centre is easing treatment journeys for patients across central and rural India.



When seven-year-old Riya (name changed) arrived at BALCO Medical Centre (BMC), her parents believed they were facing an impossible choice. Diagnosed with bone cancer in her leg, they had been told elsewhere that amputation was the only way to save her life. For a family from Mungeli, Chhattisgarh, the fear was not just about survival, but about what kind of life their child would live after.

At BMC, the conversation was different. Instead of default decisions, a multidisciplinary team paused to ask a

different question: What would give this child the best chance at life? After careful evaluation, the team chose a complex limb-salvage surgery using rotationplasty, a rare and demanding procedure that preserves function and dignity. Today, Riya walks comfortably with a prosthesis, has returned to school and is busy reclaiming the ordinary joys of childhood.

Stories like hers sit at the heart of BALCO Medical Centre's purpose. Established in March 2018 as a not-for-profit tertiary cancer centre under the Vedanta Medical Research Foundation, BMC was created to ensure that patients from smaller towns and rural India no longer have to compromise between access, quality and affordability of care. Here, world-class medicine is not a distant aspiration, but a lived reality for families who once had few options.

For many, BMC becomes a place where long-standing suffering finally finds resolution. A 16-year-old girl from Bastar had spent most of her childhood moving between hospitals, battling severe pain, anaemia and repeated admissions caused by sickle cell disease. In a region where the disorder is widespread, especially in tribal communities, curative treatment was long out of reach for most families. At BMC, she underwent a bone marrow transplant using stem cells donated by her father, a half-matched donor. The procedure marked a turning point. Today, she is symptom-free, effectively cured and living a life no longer defined by illness.

These individual transformations reflect the larger ecosystem of care BMC has built. The centre delivers comprehensive, end-to-end cancer services under one roof,





"Cancer care in India must be built for our people and our healthcare realities. World-class medicine is meaningful only when it reaches those who need it the most, at the right time, without forcing families into impossible choices.

At BALCO Medical Centre, we are committed to ensuring that no patient delays or abandons treatment because of cost, distance or lack of awareness. But treatment alone cannot transform outcomes. Lasting change requires equal focus on prevention, education, specialist training and research, so patients seek care early, professionals are equipped to deliver excellence and decisions are guided by evidence relevant to our population.

The future we are working towards is one where a patient's chances of survival and recovery depend only on the quality of care they receive, not on where they are born or what they can afford. This belief guides every decision we make."

- Dr. Bhawna Sirohi
Medical Director, Vedanta
Medical Research Foundation

from prevention and early detection to diagnosis, treatment, follow-up and rehabilitation. Decisions are guided by multidisciplinary tumour boards, evidence-based protocols and advanced technology, reducing fragmentation and easing the emotional, physical and financial burden on patients and caregivers.

As a pioneer in central India, BMC has introduced advanced therapies and precision diagnostics supported by strong nuclear medicine capabilities, modern radiation platforms and personalised medical oncology. Clinical excellence is matched by a strong research focus, with ongoing clinical and epidemiological studies examining cancer patterns, treatment outcomes and financial toxicity. This research ensures that care is not only cutting-edge but also relevant to India's realities.

Sometimes, the impact of this approach is felt at the most fragile intersections of life. A young woman diagnosed with breast cancer during a high-risk pregnancy was advised elsewhere to terminate the pregnancy so treatment could begin. At BMC, doctors across specialities came together to design a plan that protected both mother and child. She underwent chemotherapy

during pregnancy, followed by breast-conserving surgery and radiotherapy. She delivered a healthy baby, and today, both mother and child are well.

Affordability and access remain central to BMC's mission. Empanelment under Ayushman Bharat and multiple insurance schemes helps reduce out-of-pocket expenses, while the BMC Charitable Fund supports patients facing gaps in diagnosis or treatment. Non-medical challenges are addressed through subsidised accommodation, nutritious meals and transport assistance, recognising that healing depends on far more than medicine alone.

Beyond hospital walls, BMC is actively working to build a cancer-aware society. Mobile screening vans, community outreach programmes, support groups and awareness initiatives focus on early detection, prevention and education. By engaging communities, frontline health workers and young people, the centre is helping shift the narrative from late-stage intervention to timely, informed care.

At BALCO Medical Centre, care goes beyond curing disease. It restores dignity, builds resilience and quietly transforms moments of pain into possibilities for a healthier future.



Rahul Garg
Founder and CEO of Moglix

The Quiet Marathon of *Building Moglix*

How discomfort and long-term thinking shaped the journey from Google to building Moglix, one of India's most trusted industrial unicorn startups.

By Rahul Garg

I always knew I wanted to be an entrepreneur to solve a problem unlike any other. What I didn't know was how or when. Growing up in Faridabad, factories and industrial units were simply part of the landscape. They weren't glamorous, but they mattered. Education later opened doors, from IIT Kanpur to ISB Hyderabad, and eventually

Harvard Business School. Each step felt like progress, a logical continuation of the last.

That path led me to Google, working across Tokyo and Singapore. It was an environment where scale was intentional, systems were elegant, and learning was constant. From the outside, it looked like an arrival.



Yet every time I returned to India, I felt a quiet discomfort I couldn't immediately articulate.

Our factories, the backbone of economic activity, were still running on fragmented processes. Procurement depended on phone calls and spreadsheets. Credit was constrained. What I didn't realise then was that this discomfort was a signal.

Ambition doesn't always arrive as confidence. Sometimes it shows up as irritation, a persistent sense that something important isn't built yet. Many young people misread this feeling as restlessness or dissatisfaction, when in reality it is clarity trying to surface.

Learning to listen to it early can change the direction of an entire career.

I found myself returning to a simple question: why should India's factories operate like it's still the 1990s?

Leaving Google wasn't dramatic. It was uncomfortable. I walked away from structure and certainty into ambiguity. From a path that made sense to one that didn't yet exist.

The early days of building Moglix were not a sprint. They were a quiet, internal marathon. As a first-generation entrepreneur, every misstep felt amplified. Savings were burned.

Our factories, the backbone of economic activity, were still running on fragmented calls and spreadsheets.

India's online B2B market is set to reach **\$200** billion by 2030, signalling a major digital shift in India's industrial economy.

India has become a global unicorn hub, with over 118 startups valued above **\$1 billion.**



Regulatory complexity was real. Credibility had to be built from scratch, one conversation at a time.

From the outside, startups look fast. Inside, progress is iterative and often invisible. Moglix became a unicorn in 2021, but that milestone hides years of recalibration and persistence without applause. Most days didn't feel like momentum. They felt like staying with the problem even when walking away would have been easier.

Resilience, I have learned, isn't about intensity. It's about choosing which fall you are willing to stand up from again and again. To this day, I've yet to find a substitute for hard work.

In B2B, excitement fades quickly. Consistency doesn't. Trust compounds quietly, transaction by transaction, long before outcomes show up in headlines. Over time, Moglix evolved from a marketplace into an industrial operating system, but that evolution was visible

internally long before it became visible externally.

Leadership, too, changed meaning for me. Early on, I thought leadership was about having answers. Over time, I realised it's about creating clarity and letting people own outcomes.

Leadership doesn't begin with designation. It begins with ownership. Responsibility attracts authority, not the other way around.

As India moves toward becoming a \$20 trillion economy by 2047, we'll need more than companies that scale quickly. We'll need builders willing to work on foundational problems manufacturing, infrastructure and climate solutions systems that don't trend, but endure.

Looking Ahead

As India moves toward becoming a \$20 trillion economy by 2047, we'll need more than companies that scale quickly. We'll need builders willing to work on foundational problems manufacturing, infrastructure, climate solutions systems that don't trend, but endure.

To the people reading this article, especially those early in their careers here are a few reflections I wish I had internalised sooner:

- Don't optimise for titles. Optimise for high-velocity learning.
- Find your tribe; building is rarely a solo act.
- Start before you feel ready. Refinement comes through iteration.
- Dream of Bharat but build for the world.



Rahul Garg, Founder and CEO of Moglix, former Google executive driving digital transformation in India's manufacturing sector through innovative supply-chain solutions.

[in](#) Rahul Garg

A Constitution of Possibility

From a weaver's home in rural Rajasthan to the nation's highest legal office, Union Minister of Law and Justice Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal reflects on how India's Constitution quietly transforms ordinary beginnings into extraordinary public service.

I was born in the small town of Kismidesar in Bikaner, into a modest family where opportunities were limited but aspirations were boundless. My father, Lakhu Ram Meghwal, and my mother, Hira Devi, worked tirelessly at a traditional pit loom, weaving rugs and blankets to support our household. Their quiet dignity, discipline and resilience shaped my earliest understanding of hard work, fairness and determination.

In 1968, while studying in Class VIII at Bhinasar school, education already felt like a pathway to something larger, even if the destination was unclear. There was a popular saying in the village that no boy from the Meghwal community could pass Class X with good marks. I was determined to challenge that assumption. When I passed with strong marks, it became my first personal victory against inherited expectations.

I continued my education at Government Fort Higher Secondary School, but by 1973 the need for employment had become urgent. I applied for a telephone operator position at the local exchange and was selected after

a test. In early 1974, I moved to Adarsh Nagar, Jaipur, for formal training, marking my first step into government service. My initial posting was in Sangaria, District Sri Ganganagar, after which I continued my service in Bikaner.

Yet, my aspirations continued to evolve. In 1977, I completed my LL.B. and appeared for the Rajasthan Judicial Services and Rajasthan Administrative Services Examinations. These formative years strengthened reading habits and deepened engagement for public service. In 1982, I qualified for RAS and subsequently, promoted to IAS, I gained first-hand experience of grassroots policy implementation and governance.

From the administrative services, my journey gradually transitioned into public life. For me, politics was never an ambition for power, but an extension of service; a platform to amplify voices that often go unheard. In 2009, I was elected to the Lok Sabha from Bikaner, marking a new chapter of public responsibility. Being conferred the 'Sansad Maharatna' Award as a Member of

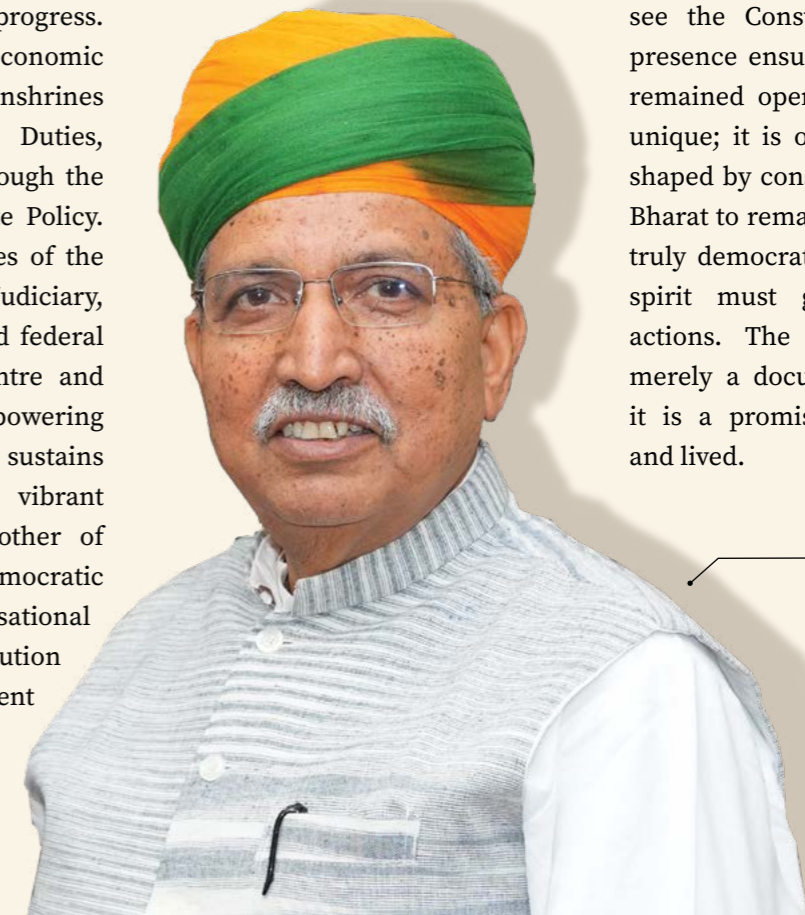
Parliament further strengthened my resolve to uphold the highest standards of parliamentary excellence. Subsequently, I had the privilege of holding ministerial responsibilities across key portfolios, including Finance, Corporate Affairs, Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises, Culture and Parliamentary Affairs. These assignments deepened my commitment to contributing meaningfully to India's transformative journey toward becoming a developed nation under the dynamic leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

My journey was not the result of individual brilliance alone; it was made possible because the Constitution of India levelled the playing field. The Constitution is the bedrock of our nation's unity, integrity, peace and progress. It guarantees social, economic and political justice, enshrines Fundamental Rights and Duties, and guides governance through the Directive Principles of State Policy. By clearly defining the roles of the Legislature, Executive and Judiciary, and by ensuring a balanced federal structure between the Centre and the States, along with empowering local self-governance, it sustains and strengthens India's vibrant democracy. India, the 'Mother of Democracy', draws its democratic values from a rich civilisational ethos, and the Constitution stands as a living embodiment of those timeless principles.

In a country full of diversity, the Constitution is rigid in preserving unity and integrity, while also being flexible enough to meet the hopes and aspirations of the people. I did not grow up imagining that one day I would serve as India's Minister of Law and Justice. I grew up far from the centres of decision-making, in circumstances where ambition was often shaped by limitation. What I carried, however, was a simple belief that fairness mattered and that rules,

"The Constitution is the bedrock of our nation's unity, integrity, peace and progress."

Union Minister of Law and Justice of India, **Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal**



when applied equally, could protect the vulnerable.

In my early years, the law felt distant. Only later, through education and public life, I truly encountered the Constitution as a living document. I realised it was not merely a legal framework but a social promise, one that ensured background would not become destiny and that opportunity would not remain the privilege of a few.

The Constitution empowers every citizen, yet there remains immense scope for improvement to strengthen legal and constitutional awareness. For many, the law is encountered only in moments of crisis, when it seems distant and intimidating. Legal literacy, therefore, is not merely a means to ensure ease of justice; it is a vital instrument for promoting ease of living.

As I reflect on my own life, I see the Constitution, often silent presence ensuring that opportunity remained open. My journey is not unique; it is one of countless lives shaped by constitutional values. For Bharat to remain just, confident and truly democratic, the constitutional spirit must guide our everyday actions. The Constitution is not merely a document to be revered; it is a promise to be understood and lived.

Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal
Union Minister of Law and Justice, Government of India, leading judicial reforms, legislative affairs and strengthening national legal governance frameworks.

✉ @arjunrammeghwal



Nand Ghar

Early Care, Lasting Impact

A

cross India, Anganwadis are often the first spaces where a child learns, eats and is cared for. Yet for years, many of these centres have operated with limited resources. Nand Ghar was created to change that reality. As the flagship social impact initiative of the Vedanta Group under the Anil Agarwal Foundation, Anganwadis are being reimagined as modern, technology-enabled community hubs that bring nutrition, early learning, healthcare awareness and women's empowerment together under one roof.

With around 11,000 centres across 17 states, Nand Ghar strengthens early childhood care during the most critical years of development. Children receive balanced nutrition and structured lessons that build confidence and curiosity, while

mothers and caregivers gain access to skills, financial literacy and income generation opportunities. The focus is not only on survival, but on aspiration.

By prioritising early intervention in the first 1,000 days through health monitoring, immunisation, nutrition support and early education, Nand Ghar works to break intergenerational cycles of malnutrition and inequality, especially for girls. Healthier beginnings lead to stronger schooling, delayed early marriage and wider life choices.

Nand Ghar envisions a nationwide, community-owned movement that strengthens India's human capital from the grassroots up, ensuring every child begins life with care, confidence and possibility.



“Earlier, the Anganwadi was only a place for childcare. Today, it is a vibrant space where our children learn, eat healthy meals and grow with care, while women like us learn, earn and support each other. Through our Self-Help Group, I gained skills, income and confidence. Nand Ghar helped us see ourselves not just as beneficiaries, but as contributors to our families and our village.”

- Rajni Rathore, Jahota village, Rajasthan



A 100-YEAR-OLD LEGACY. NOW BRINGING INDIA TO THE WORLD.



Riverside Studios is built on extraordinary foundations. The iconic stage in London has had a rich legacy of legendary performances. From The Beatles to David Bowie, Mick Jagger and Amy Winehouse through the years, this grand stage has played host to immortals in the world of performing arts for close to a century. Now, under the vision of Anil Agarwal, Chairman, Vedanta Group, it is set to showcase Indian creative talent to the world.

We invite the artists, filmmakers, musicians and performers of India to Anil Agarwal Riverside Studios. The stage is set. The world is watching. Let the show begin!

