

Hash#tag

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November 2021

5

GENDERLESS
Fashion Labels

*Jaipur's Oldest
Restaurants*

that have withstood the
test of time

Fatphobia:

Are We Living In
The Era of Fat Shaming?

VICKY
KAUSHAL

'READY FOR A CHALLENGE!'



"IT STILL FEELS
LIKE A DREAM"
Sri Lankan Sensation:

YOHANI



TRENDS
on the runway
LFW 2021



REVIEWS
TRAVEL
FASHION
& MORE

CONTENTS

EDITOR'S NOTE

PAGE: 03

Message from the Editor.

EVENTS IN TOWN

PAGE: 05

Plan your month ahead!



TRENDING NOW

PAGES: 06-09

Vicky Kaushal in a candid interview with Hashtag, riding the waves of success of *Sardar Udham*.

START UP INC

PAGES: 10-12

Meet the founder of **Paradyes**, India's first homegrown hair colour brand that provides semi-permanent, vegan, and cruelty-free dyes in vibrant fashion colours.

NGO

PAGE: 13-15

Learn about affordable nutrition through **Troo Good**, a brand aiming to change the way we approach healthy eating for the better.



DUSK TO DAWN

PAGE: 17-19

"It still feels like a dream" – rising star and Sri Lankan rapper **Yohani** on her recent hit single 'Manike Mage Hithe.'

RETAIL THERAPY

PAGES: 20-27

Founder of **Vibha Jewellers**, Anisha Yedma, on the latest trend in jewellery, including some hot tips on lightweight gold jewellery.



FASHION FORWARD

PAGES: 29-36

An exclusive Hashtag review of the best of the best from LFW 2021, and a look at some exciting upcoming fashion trends.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

PAGES: 38-45

In this age of digital activism and body positivity, are we harbouring fatphobia? We speak to experts on the rising double standards we hold against bodies and health.

FOOD INC

PAGES: 47-51

A popular hangout at Rishikesh is the Ganga Beach Café. We present you the charms of this serendipitous eatery!



ARTS AND THEATER

PAGE: 53-56

Highlighting art platform **MayinArt**, curated and made as a win-win solution for both artists and art lovers.

TRAVEL

PAGE: 57-59

A hodophile couple share their latest excursion to Dumbour Lake in Tripura, which led them to some exciting discoveries and left them with an experience to remember.

PETS

PAGE: 61-63

Bangalore based Pet recreation centre, DogNation, towards improving the quality of our four-legged family members, supporting and assisting the entire pet parenting journey.



STREAMING NOW

PAGE: 65-69

Of Style, Statement, and Celebrations – **2021 SIIMA Awards**. Hashtag brings you exclusive images from the event and the list of the winners on a much-awaited night.

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From the Editor

LEARN THE ART OF NOW!



now! Tomorrow, your land may or may not boom, your bitcoin may or may not double...that's for tomorrow. Today, don't miss out on the simple joys of life, only to come to regret it.

All we want for all of you is to have a cracking Diwali. Go enjoy the simple pleasures! Colour your hair green; featured in this issue is an organic brand to perfectly meet that need! Shop your heart out— our fashion section will help guide you with tips from experts and inspiration straight from the runway. If you are vying for a vacation, we have you covered with amazing discovers and scenic beauties, recommended and researched by our team of writers.

What's important is you learn the art of now...

Wishing all our readers a safe and happy festive season!

SINDURI VUPPALA



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Festive seasons are the perfect time to make new resolutions! While we clean our homes and spruce them up to welcome Lakshmi mata, I think it's also a great time to clean up and organise our minds. Of late, no matter where I go, all I hear are money making schemes—stock markets, land boom, cryptocurrency, women selling saris, jewellery—it's almost as if money is determining your worth.

Worse than that is how today's happiness is postponed to 5 years later, when the speculated market boom is expected. A lot of youngsters don't want to marry until they settle down. Families postpone travel plans or buying a house or even visiting old parents. While I am not advocating for materialistic pleasure, I do question the very aspect of settling down. Where is the fun in travelling at the age of 60 with knee pains while you could have easily done it at 30?

We already know that settling down is an imaginary concept; yet we place all our bets and happiness on it. We can always hire people to drive a car for us or even make money for us; material things lost can be found, but the one thing that can never be found once lost is life. Enjoy life, share it with others, watch your children grow, throw things around and even mess up the house because the one thing you can control is

**THE
HAPPINESS
CO**



**DELICIOUS
AND
CRUNCHY**

UPCOMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER 2021

Rann Utsav

Rann Utsav is a commemoration of the region's unique traditional customs held against the peculiar background of Kutch's whitish salt desert in Gujarat. This desert fiesta has mornings full of dancing, folk tunes, handcraft booths, wilderness adventurous activities, eateries, local excursions, and other activities. By dusk, visitors may discover a variety of luxurious and modest campsites on the dunes for a relaxing evening in the cold desert. This event is well-known for its spectacular full moon evenings, and specialized tents are built to accommodate attendees.

Date: 1 November 2021 – 22 February 2022

Venue: Great Rann Salt Desert



1
Nov 2021

India International Cherry Blossom Festival



11-14
Nov 2021

Hosted in Shillong in the middle of November, this festival invites all to view the spectacular fall blossoming of Himalayan cherry blossoms. Witness the white-pink blooms and see how they are beautifully illuminated at twilight. Numerous events such as fashion exhibits, musicals, a beauty contest, martial arts, Japanese cosplay, and a golf competition make for a thrilling nightlife.

Date: 11 – 14 November 2021

Venue: Shillong, Meghalaya

Time: 12 am

Pushkar Camel Fair

The historic camel fair of Pushkar will be held for nine days this year. Over 30,000 camels would be on display for trade, the highlight of the livestock show. There is also a camel pageant, camel sprinting, a camel march, a carnival, and vendor stalls amidst other competitions and activities. Evenings see people congregate around the campfire, basking in music and song.

Date: 11 – 19 November 2021

Venue: Pushkar, Rajasthan



11-19
Nov 2021

Bakers Technology Fair



18-20
Nov 2021

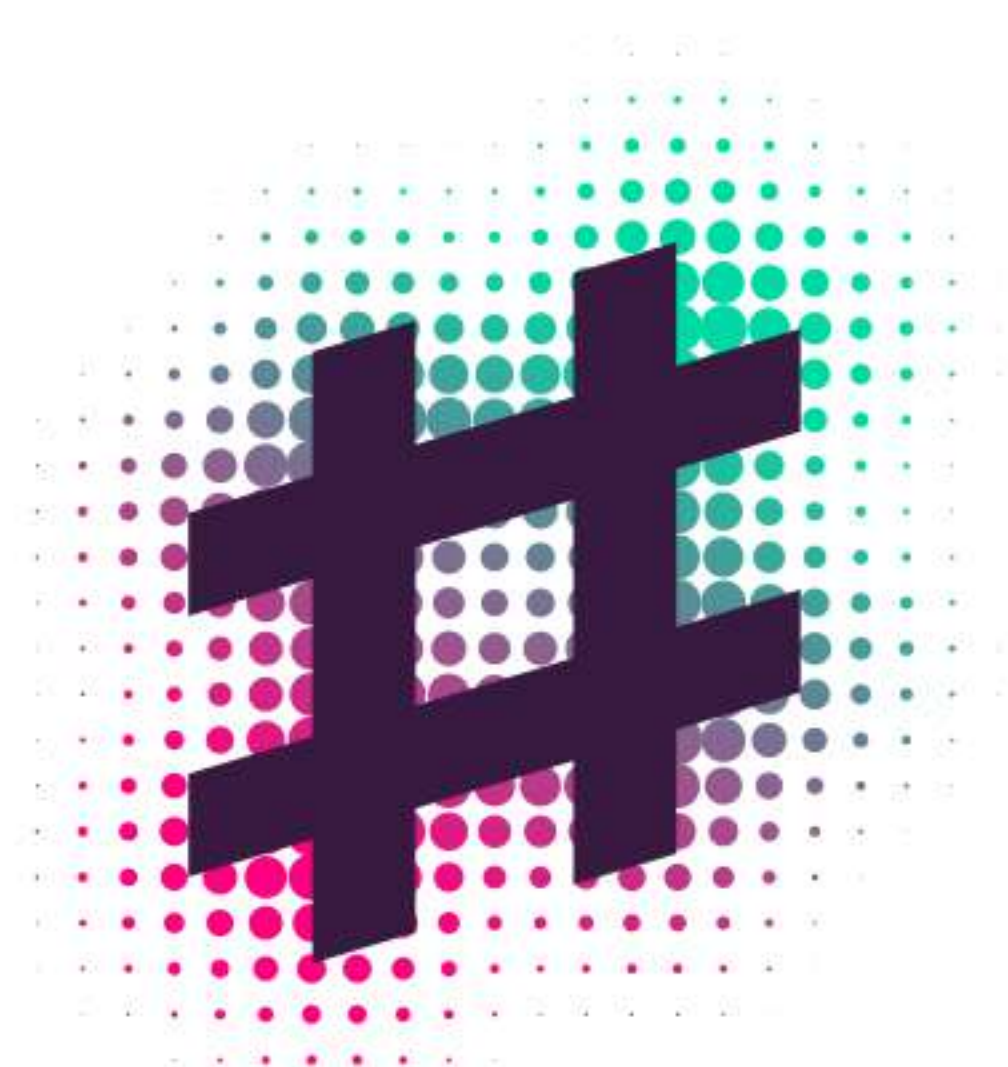
This fair provides an opportunity to study, interact, buy, and exhibit the most diversified variety of high-quality and cost-effective patisserie supplies, equipment, functions, and connected commodities and services. The exhibitions show all the necessary equipment as well as its uses. The expo is a great opportunity for all baking enthusiasts.

Date: 18 – 20 November 2021

Venue: HITEX Exhibition Center, Hyderabad

Time: 7 am – 3:30 pm

To get your events featured mail us at contact@hashtagmagazine.in



h a s h t a g

TRENDING NOW

TRENDING
NOW

Vicky Kaushal

THE PATRIOT ACT

Riding the waves of success of *Sardar Udham*, VICKY KAUSHAL talks of his most challenging role till date in a candid interview with LIPIKA VARMA.

Since its release, *Sardar Udham* has been making waves ripple across the entertainment industry. The Shoojit Sircar directed biopic is unhurried in its narrative and yet, profound in its delivery. The film tells the tale of the revolutionary Sardar Udham Singh, who assassinated Michael O'Dwyer to avenge the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, and has actor Vicky Kaushal playing the titular role. As has been the way with most films during the pandemic, *Sardar Udham* too released on an OTT platform, Amazon Prime Video. Adding to the list of accolades received, the movie was in consideration as India's official entry for the 2022 Oscars.

In an interview with Lipika Varma, we learn about Kaushal's experiences shooting the acclaimed biopic.

Shooting such an emotional film must have been difficult. Were there any scenes that stood out to you?

Yes, the shoot was difficult, and I broke down many times. Shooting the Jallianwala Bagh scene was emotional and difficult; it numbed me from within. Director Shoojit Sircar brought about a very real world, of 1919, where a crowd of over 20,000 people saw and lived through this incident. With such a huge crowd, there was no place to run away as the army was firing bullets one after the other. There were children and people of all ages comprising this crowd. Shooting such moments had shaken me completely.

Not many know that veteran actor Irfan Khan was roped in to play the role of Sardar Udham Singh.

Firstly, nobody can replace Irfan Khan *sahib*. It's unfortunate that he has left for his heavenly abode. If he had to do it, he would have done a great job. If I have delivered close to even a single per cent of what he would have done, then I will feel I have done great. He was a great actor across the world. It's a privilege for me to get the role that he was going to play. I have to keep up to the level of gravitas. It is a small tribute to him.



I had a sense of responsibility... You have to handle the subject with utmost sensitivity; it can't be presented randomly and frivolously.



How was it working with Shoojit Sircar?

I had to unlearn whatever I had learned. I followed his vision of what Sardar Udham Singh would have been like. He had kept this story with him for the past 20 years since he came to Mumbai. He couldn't make it as it wasn't possible for him then. He is very fluid and fast at his work. I truly got to learn a lot.



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***If I don't get food, I get
angry and cranky.***
aa

How challenging was it to play this role? What difficulties did you face?

It was challenging as I played both a 20-year-old Sardar Udham Singh and then, at 40 years of age. For the younger arc, I was asked to lose around 15 to 20 kilos in just 2 months' time. Later, to play him as 40 years old, I had to gain weight. We came to understand him through his photos. He would change his identity, so I had to live with different looks. There was a Russian, Serbia and Indian team to help me with this. We kept the costume, makeup, and setting very genuine to the times. Emotions and pain had to be lived alongside too. I had a sense of responsibility. Portraying this unsung hero through his film will enable people to resonate and remember him. You have to handle the subject with utmost sensitivity; it can't be presented randomly and frivolously.



How do you manage your intensity and anger while not acting?

I just remain cooled down. I like to be quiet, and I always isolate myself totally. I need an hour or so to come back to normal. If someone tries to talk to me then my anger may burst out. I deal with my anger with calmness. If I don't get food, I get angry and cranky. It also happens when I have done a lot of work. In most situations, I love to be quiet.

How has playing this role personally changed your self?

I would like to believe I have got some self-control in me now. Realising how one person could keep his ideologies within himself with patience has been a great learning experience for me.

Did you learn about the revolutionary and his actions in your school days?

Belonging to a Punjabi family, whenever Punjab was referred to in class, I would come home and ask my parents. They told me about the sacrifices made by our freedom fighters such as Bhagat Singh and Udham Singh, alongside others. Today, I realise how important it is to bring such stories to life through films so that we all know about the struggles our freedom fighters faced in their bid for independence.

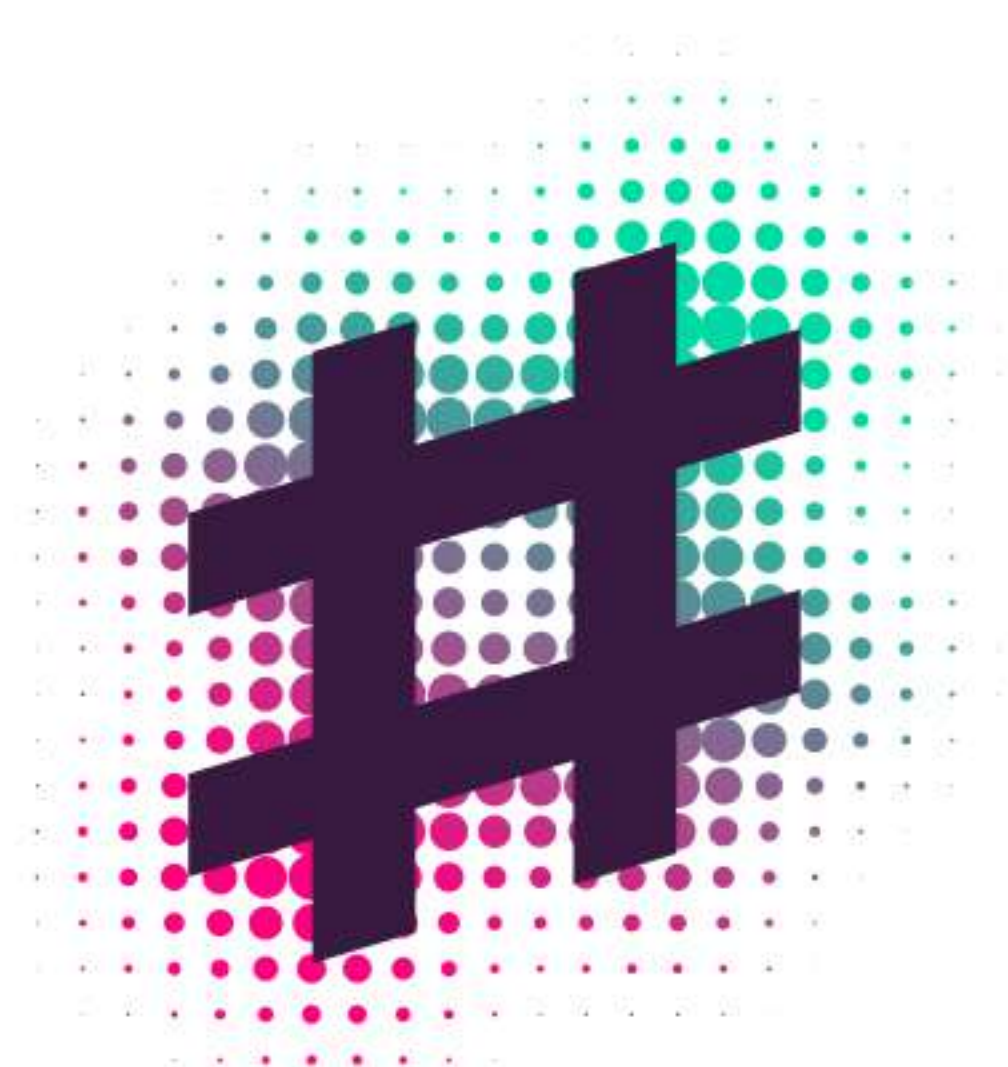
From the beginning of your career until now, you have worked across a vast variety of genres. We hear that you are all set to now add another feather to your cap, after being cast in a romantic role opposite Sara Ali Khan in Laxman Utekar's upcoming film?

Baat toh chal rahi hai! Talks are on with director Utekar. God is great to have bestowed upon me such opportunities. I'm also getting to do new and explore varied roles as an actor and I try to do different roles and grow. I have 2 upcoming films. One is with Yashraj Films and Dharma Productions; they will make the official announcements. There is also *Sam Bahadur*.



Realising how one person could keep his ideologies within himself with patience has been a great learning experience for me.





h a s h t a g

START UPS

To COLOUR

Or Not To COLOUR

Mehak Walia, in conversation with Yushika Jolly, the founder of Paradyes, India's first homegrown brand that provides semi-permanent, vegan, and cruelty-free hair dyes in vibrant fashion colours.

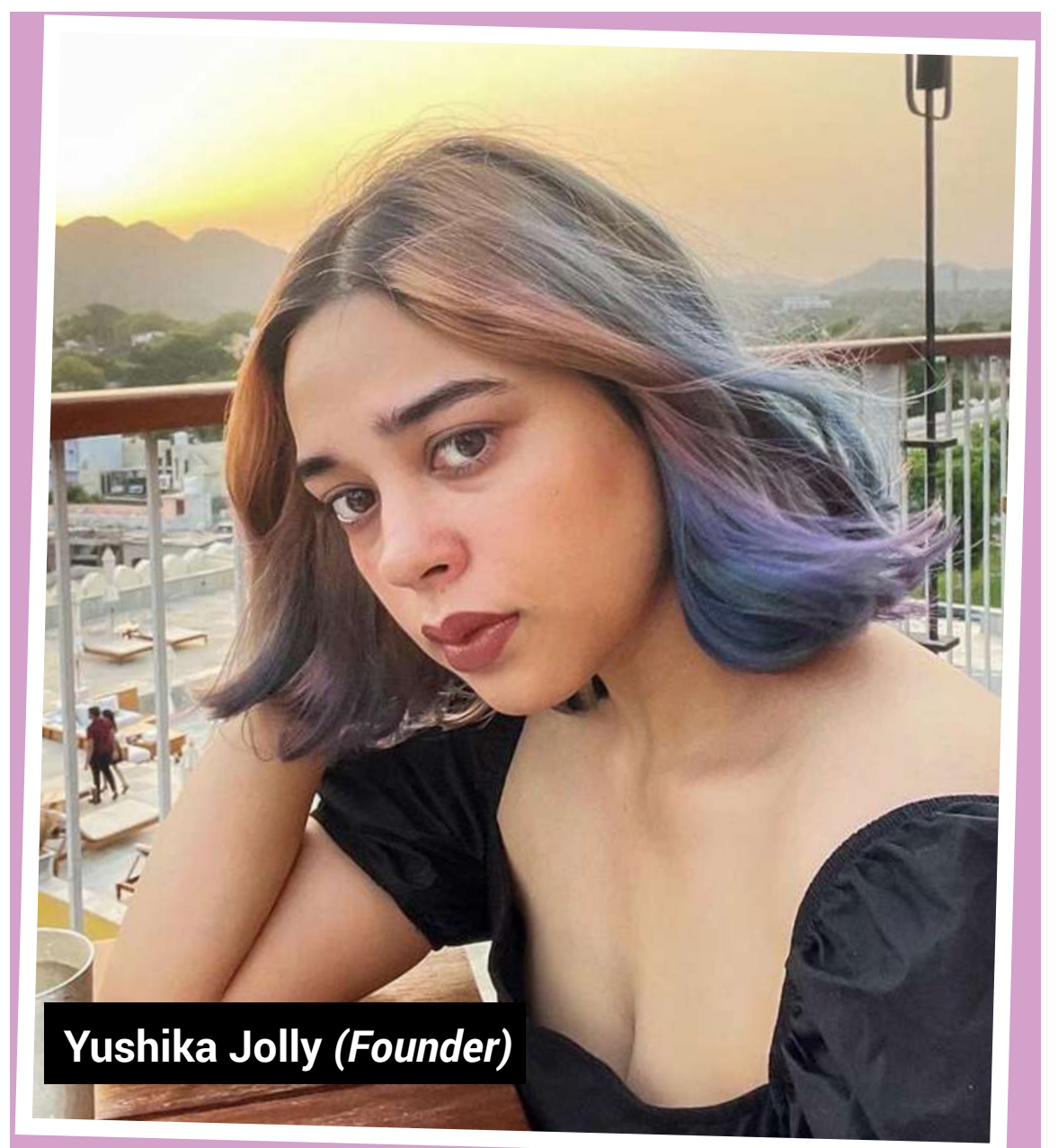


To colour or not to colour, that is the question. Hair colouring can be a source of great joy and stress at the same time. Meet Paradyes, the brand that is here to change the narrative around hair colouring for the Indian audience. It's time to cut through the everyday blacks, browns, and blonde to make space for some yellow, pink, red and blue!

In The Beginning

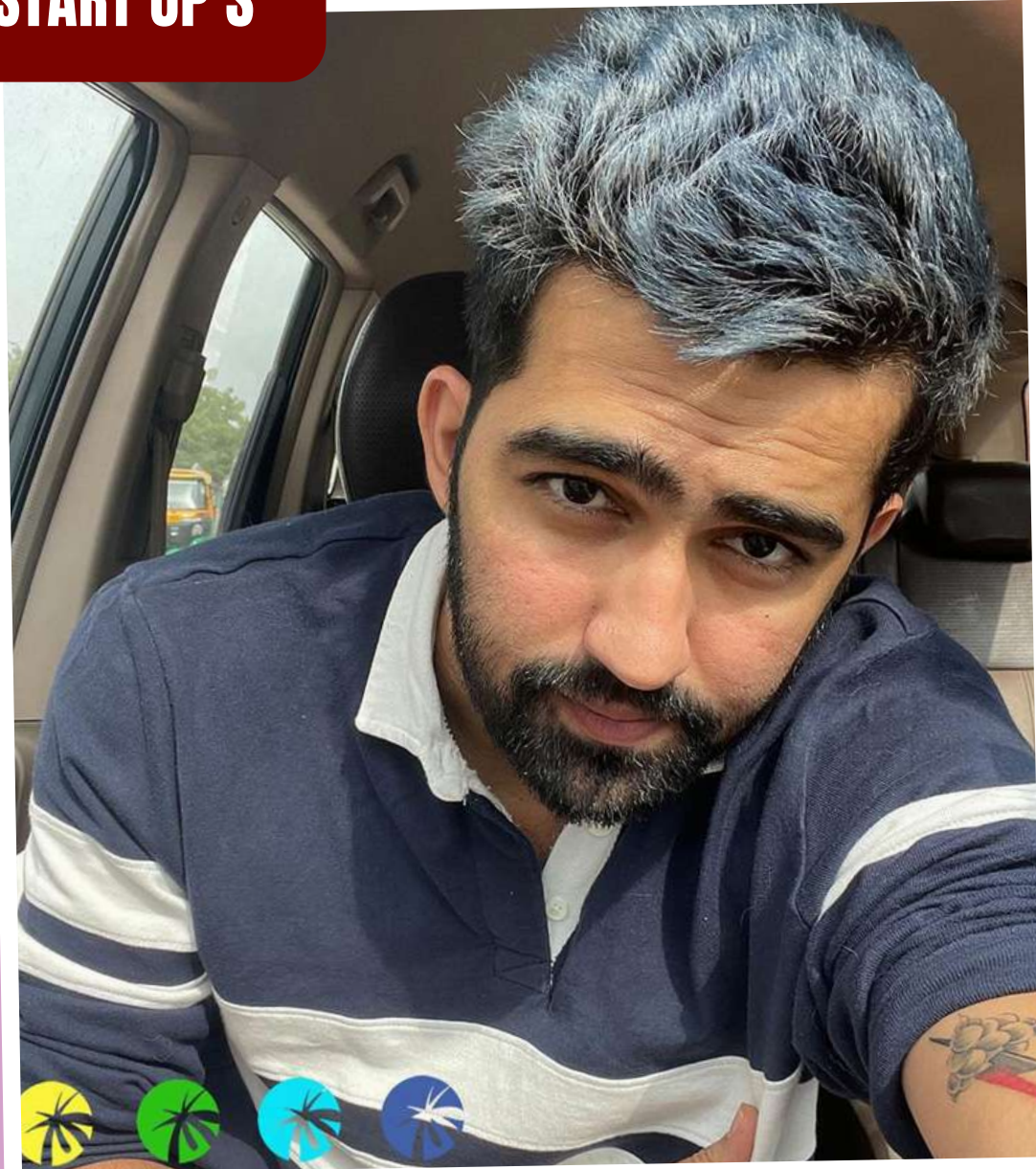
Yushika Jolly, the founder of Paradyes, started the brand with the hopes of giving the market a massive makeover. As for when the idea for Paradyes came to be, she says, "Back in 2013, one bad experience at a salon left me with a head of half bleached hair frantically searching for the perfect blue dye at local beauty shops, salons, and malls. The only colours available in the market were the standard blacks, browns, and reds that apparently 'best suit' Indian hair. Disappointed with the lack of availability of any fashion colours, I eventually settled for a deep brown shade in hopes of finding a way to resolve this unfortunate event on a better day."

She further adds, "Having always been fascinated by creatively coloured hair, I started experimenting with my hair by playing around with factory dyes being manufactured by my family business. These were not branded, formulated hair colours, just regular dyes. Colouring my hair boosted my confidence and soon became an indispensable part of my self-expression. I was sure many felt the same way, only being held back due to the societal pressure to look a certain way."



Yushika Jolly (Founder)

"Colouring my hair boosted my confidence and soon became an indispensable part of my self-expression."



“Whoever said *desi* can't go crazy hasn't tried our product yet!”

A Rising Star

Perhaps as intriguing as their products is the name of brand itself. (Birds of) Paradyes is cleverly crafted as an easy-to-understand pun. When asked about the name, Yushika responded with a laugh, “You see, the name just fits perfectly because I believe that, whenever you apply our colours, you're literally in paradise. That is what has made the brand name what it is today.”

Although a nascent brand, Paradyes is already off to a—dare we say it—bright start. Thankful for the brand's supporters and the eager response, Yushika comments, “The audience has been very supportive of Paradyes and they have been giving great reviews too. You should check our Instagram page—people look so stunning in the colours. So yes, the response has been amazing so far and I'm sure it will be even better in the future as it merges better with the Indian mindset.”

What does she then credit for the resounding success? “Overall, I think people are loving it. It's like a breath of fresh air; people were bored of seeing and using the blacks, browns, blondes, and burgundy. The brand gives them a fresh take on what hair colouring can do for them and what it is capable of.”

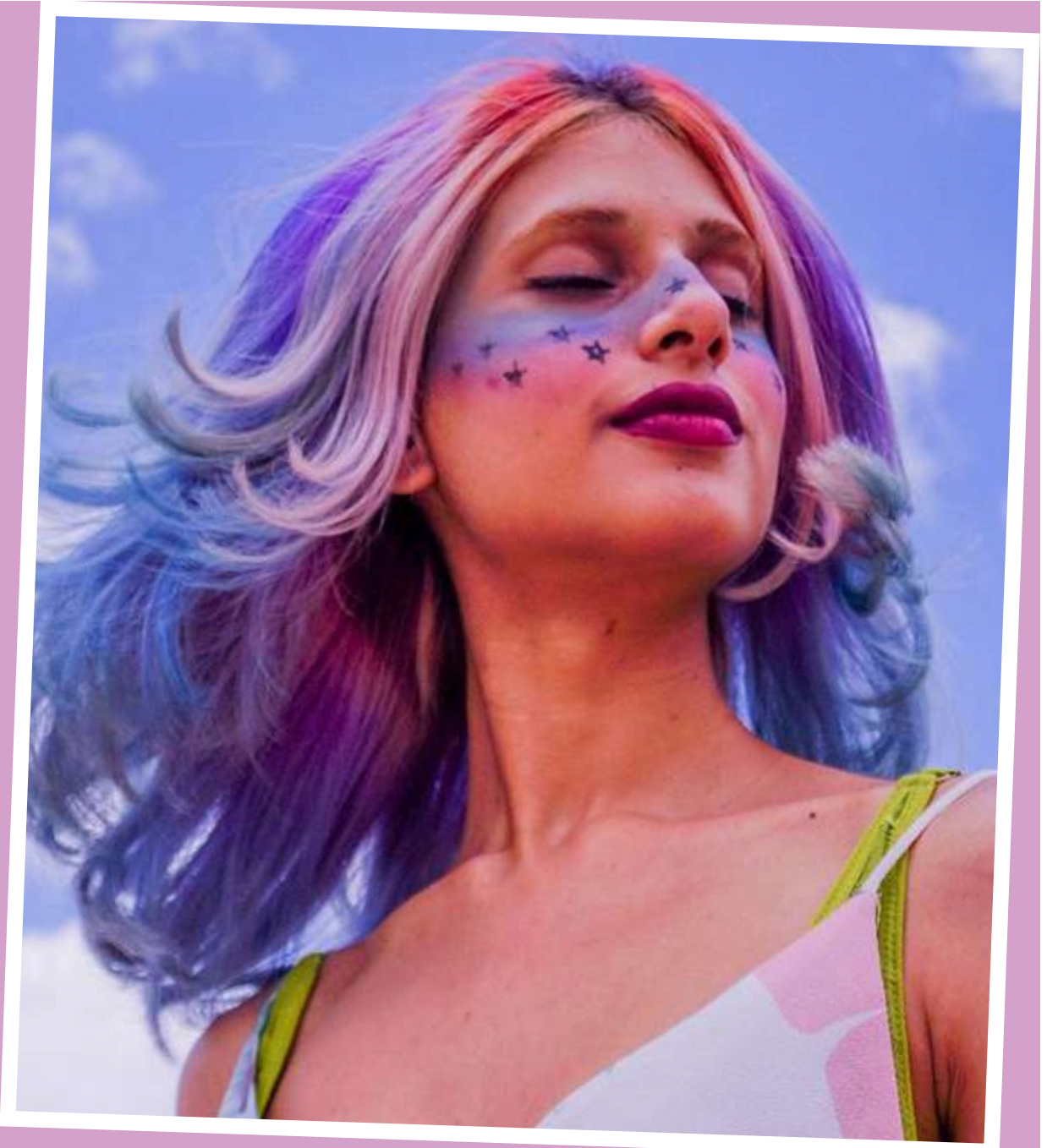


The Indian Story

Yushika soon found herself researching and experimenting with different brands and types of dyes. “In 2017 when I moved to London, I found a large variety of readily available fashion hair colours at local drugstores. This led to a year and a half of hair colour experiments, trying products from every possible brand available, and weighing the pros and cons. I had become the go-to person for hair colouring advice.” The market in India however, continued to fall short of expectations. “After returning to India, I once again faced the lack of readily available DIY hair colour options. I decided to turn years of experiments with my hair colour into the foundation for the brand that Paradyes is today,” she exclaims.

Brands like Paradyes are often perceived as ‘rebellious’, existing as they are in a culture that continues to be steeped in stereotypes regarding appearances and the urgent need to look ‘normal’ to be presentable.

Yushika says, “Paradyes isn't against our *sanskaar*, we stand for self-expression and a confident radiance that allows you to showcase your hair like a jewelled crown. Our colours are ammonia-free, paraben-free, PPD-free, and damage-free, made with amazing ayurvedic herbal extracts like *amla*, *bhringraj*, *bhrahmi*, aloe vera, and hibiscus to keep your hair healthy. It's about time that society rids itself of these taboos and typecasts, one head at a time. Whoever said *desi* can't go crazy hasn't tried our product yet!”



On The Horizon

As to what the brand holds in store for the future, Yushika gave a sneak peek into the plans. “We are planning to add a lot more options to our collection. Recently, we have also come up with our conditioner which is great for coloured hair. Apart from this, we are also experimenting with other products like our very own bleach in the labs. It's safe to say that the future is going to be very colourful and exciting for Paradyes users!” she concluded with a cheerful chuckle.

Still pondering if you should take the leap? The answer to your dilemma is simple – it's time to experiment and give yourself the makeover of the century. Paradyes colours are the breath of fresh air that your hair deserves!

More Details at:

Instagram: @birdsofparadyes

Shop at: <https://www.birdsofparadyes.com/>

Catch The Founder @yushikajolly



CHANGEMAKERS



TROO GOOD TO BE TRUE! HEALTHY SNACKING

Nutrition brand Troo Good's founder, **Raju Bhupati**, converses with **Divya Vallabhaneni** on how millet-based snacks are changing the way we approach healthy eating.

Snacking is undoubtedly our favourite part of eating food, but do we always eat a healthy snack? The answer is a resounding no. For most, the snacks we consume are undeniably tasty but are far away from hitting the mark for health and nutrition.

Proving this point otherwise is the start-up Troo Good, where the idea is to intentionally provide affordable healthy and nutritious snacks for the price-conscious Indian consumers. Converting this dream into reality required heavy research to discover cheaper but highly nutritious ingredients. Millets, it was found, ticks all the checkboxes—nutrition, taste, and affordability.

Founder of Troo Good, Raju Bhupati comes with rich global IT experience and an astute knowledge of business, along with a deep understanding of Indian consumers who aptly fit the bill for a start-up. He quit his job in the year 2013 and subsequently, launched his first cloud kitchen model, Hello Curry, in the



Raju Bhupati

year 2014. The state of the market back then, however, compelled him to sell his venture. Undeterred, he took the bold call to start Troo Good in 2018, with the idea of providing affordable nutrition to the masses. Affordable nutrition has always been the aim—Troo Good began to work with government school children to fulfil their nutritional needs through innovative and affordable product offerings.

Troo Good's products are made of healthy and nutritious ingredients, of which millets are the primary. *Chikkis*, bars, cookies, snacks, and atta are the main products, which are available across 3 states, spread over 10,000+ retail stores at present, with 16.5 million beneficiaries on the social front, which includes school children, pregnant women, and adolescent girls. One can also avail of their products through Amazon.

Troo Good originally started as 'M for Millet', with the idea of providing nutrition at a better cost and taste. "Expensive brands that offer nutritious foods are often far-reaching and imagine cost-effectively giving the same nutrition. It is too good to believe and that's why I have started Troo Good to give life to such expectations," he states proudly.



"Ours is a unique product since it is millet-based. Our *chikki*, which is made of millets and is sold at Rs 6 per piece, gives a tough new competition to all the pre-existing groundnut *chikkis* manufactured," explains Raju. He adds, "Within 24 to 36 months, we have reached 10,000+ schools with our products that are high in fibre and provides nutrition in the form of a snack, making them affordable, tasty, and also healthy."





Impact

Several thousand schools under the Andhra Pradesh government are providing the millet *chikkis* to their school children as a part of the mid-morning snack. Millets are rich in protein and fibre, besides their high mineral content, thus proving to be the best source of nutrition for growing children.

“We are targeting to reach 100 million kids across India through the millet *chikki* as it is a highly nutritious and economical product that gives abundant protein and minerals,” comments Raju. He emphasises, “A significant part of our products goes to the government schools in rural areas, where students could consume our nutritious products to maintain a fit body and healthy brain.”

Besides providing nutrition and health, the fun part about these *chikkis* is the brain teasers cleverly ensconced in the packaging. Children can enjoy the snack while solving the puzzles, engaging their minds in a healthy activity. Although their cookies, bars, and atta are popular products, the *chikkis* have caught everyone’s eye.



Millets benefit our body, mind, and overall health. They aid in better digestion and improve heart health. The nutrients in these are good for one’s brain and Troo Good aims at providing all these benefits in a form of ‘healthy snacking’ which is tasty and affordable. Around 1.5 to 2 crore such millet *chikkis* are sold every month, of which 1.5 lakh *chikkis* are exclusively brought by pregnant women. Millets serve as an excellent source of iron and help in increasing the haemoglobin levels during pregnancy, thereby making these millet *chikkis* a sought-after source of healthy food for pregnant women.

In terms of goals for the future, Troo Good, under the tutelage of Raju Bhupati, aims at expanding their products to rural schools across the country, hoping to provide healthier options and encouraging bright smiles and a bright future.

Shop at: <https://store.troogood.com/>

Instagram: @troo_good

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DUSK TO DAWN



"It still feels like a dream"

– Sri Lankan Rapper *Yohani* on her recent hit ‘**Manike Mage Hithe**’

DIVYA VALLABHANENI, in a moment with Sri Lanka’s princess of rap, **YOHANI**, on her trending single ‘Manike Mage Hithe’, and the subsequent rise to fame.



ee

Baby in my heart, every passionate thought is about you. It’s like a fire burning.

oo

Wondering about the sudden lyrical quote? These lines are a translation of the recent Sinhala hit song, ‘Manike Mage Hithe’, by the Sri Lankan singer, Yohani Diloka de Silva, who is popularly known as Yohani. The song has become so popular that it has been dubbed in various languages, including Telugu and Tamil. It has also gone viral across social media, reaching the likes of celebrities such as Amitabh Bachchan, and others, all of whom are fascinated with the track.

We catch up with the rising singer on her recent visit to India.



How does it feel to become an overnight sensation?

It's overwhelming. It's been great and thanks to all of you for the support.

How did this song come to be?

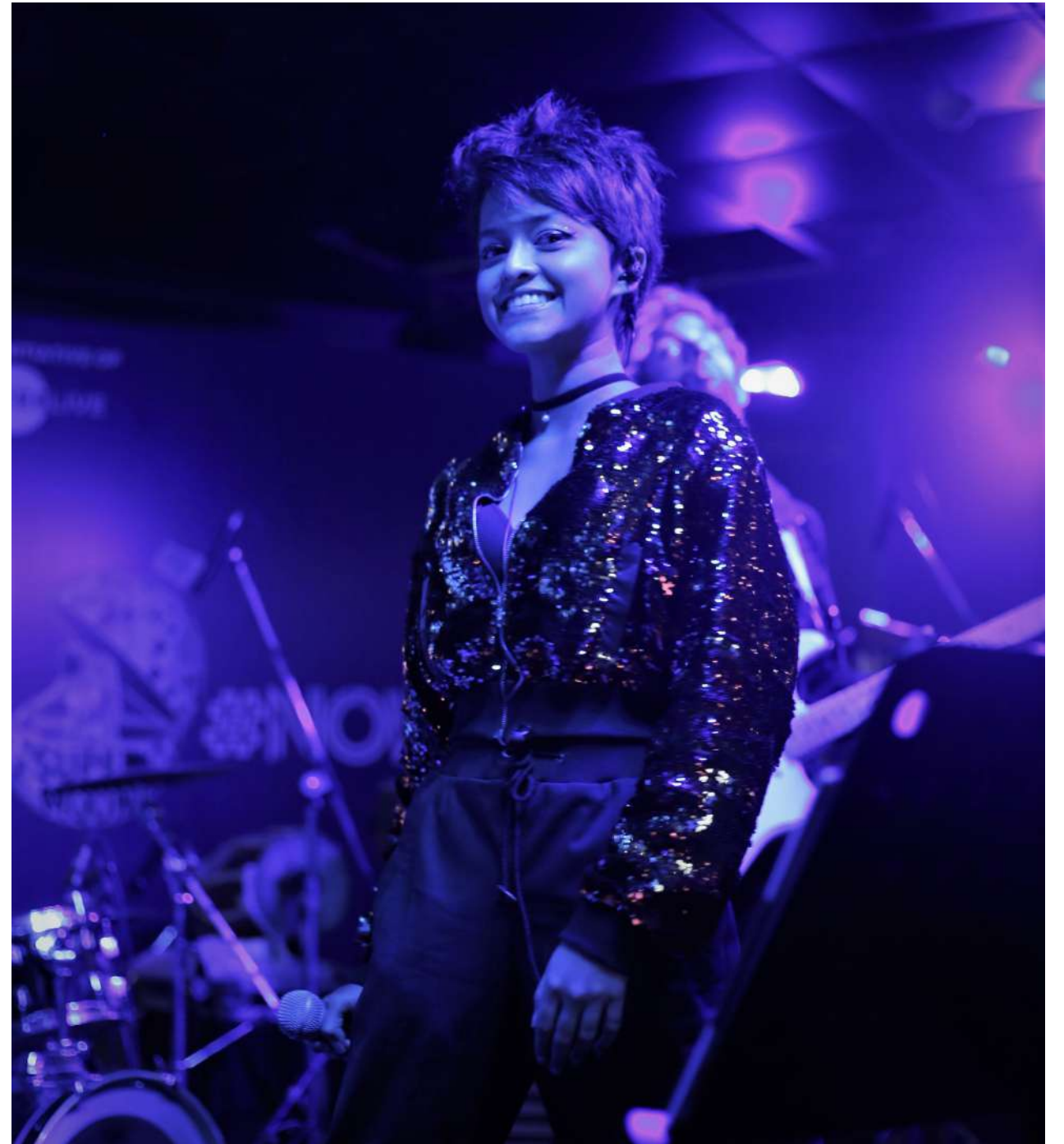
Initially I did a Tik-Tok video of the song and put it online. Later we decided to do a full version of the song. This was during the quarantine, and I physically couldn't go to the studio, so I did it from my home and sent the recording. We finished the music video in a couple of hours, edited and published it.

Tell us about your music journey?

Music has always been a part of my life since I was small. I used to play piano when I was small. Singing happened when I was in university. Before that, I played the trumpet and french horn in school, and learned to play guitar. I opened my YouTube account soon after I started to sing during my university time, and that's when I started doing the covers.

The song has been rapped in other languages as well. What's your favourite version?

I don't have a specific one. I have listened to all the songs in other languages, and I liked all of them.



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It's overwhelming. It's been great and thanks to all of you for the support.

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What was your reaction when you realised that your song was famous?

It still feels like a dream, honestly. The same goes with my team as well. We never expected such a great response and we are all happy over that.

Can you give us an update of your upcoming albums?

The album is *Killer* and the first song from the album will be published on October 9th.

Tell us in your words what does the song mean?

The language is Sinhala and it's a love song. The song is song by a boy to a girl. If you take the line "Manike Mage Hithe", *Manike* is something you call for love and *Mage Hithe* means in my heart, so it's like, 'baby, in my heart.'





RETAIL THERAPY

STYLE IT RIGHT: Diwali Outfits

ARUSHI DUSAJ speaks to fashion experts to gain tips and suggestions on dressing up for the festive season.

The season of giving is right around the corner and with it comes the chance to finally get a breather from our hectic WFH schedules. It is time to reward ourselves and celebrate all that we are thankful for. The perennial question lingers: what should one wear for Diwali?

Whenever there's an occasion, we always think of wearing either ethnic or traditional. However, most times it is difficult for us to decide, and we end up going shopping last minute to look for that one amazing outfit and be photo ready for Instagram. Here are some valuable insights on dressing up for the festive season from fashion bloggers across the country.

Mansi Shah
Fashion Influencer
Ahmedabad



“My first style suggestion is to start off with *Bandhej*; this one's timeless and right above my list because who doesn't love a little *Bandhej* moment. Moving on to Bohemian fashion—since Diwali comes right after Dusshera, we are still in that Bohemian phase and won't mind going a little extra with some chunky silver jewellery. While we are at it, let's not forget to talk about my favourite Indian piece—the *lehenga*. Nothing looks more beautiful than a classic *lehenga*, specially one done with mirror work and in pastel. Add minimal jewellery and pair with a messy updo for a festive ready look.”

Anupama Yadav
Fashion Influencer
Delhi

“Since the pandemic, all our celebrations have been intimate and low key. With Diwali right around the corner, here are some tips which you can keep in mind while planning your perfect outfit. Kaftans these days are super in, and you can style them your own way and look superb in any way. Co-ord sets are simple. Organza is also a great option. It gives off a royal feel and with some light make up, you can kill it with your style.”



Radhika Bharadwaj Prakash
Fashion Blogger
Mumbai



“My favorite and most loved look for Diwali would be fusion wear, pairing it with silver jewellery. What works even better is the Boho look. I believe in going out of the box and I always keep experimenting. There are multiple style options to pick from; right from the classics to a simple ethnic outfit with some jewellery can work wonders for your look.”

Khushi Seth
Fashion Blogger & Stylist
Ahmedabad

“Let’s talk about some of the most ‘in’ Diwali wardrobe ideas. This Diwali, the most favourite colour palette revolves around neutrals and pastels. Although, vibrant colours will never go out of style. Be it any colour, monochromatic looks with minimal accessories will make you look absolutely *à la modé*.”



Mahima Khosla
Fashion Influencer
Delhi



“Fusion is the thing for the upcoming festive season. Fashion outfits in my opinion...skirts and dresses paired with junky *kundan* or silver jewellery and belts is what I love! Flowers in your hair also add to your elegance.”

It’s time to style your best look yet for Diwali!

FLASH: GENDER-NEUTRAL FASHION IS SWEEPING THE WORLD



MEHAK WALIA talks about gender neutrality as it makes a popular entry into the world of fashion. What is this trend and is it here to stay?

Have you ever wondered what a world where fashion is equal would be like? A world where stores weren't divided into separate sections for men and women, where blue jeans and pink skirts could co-exist in the same closet without any excessive comments or questions from the ever-interruptive society?

Gender-neutral fashion or gender-fluid clothing is designed to liberate people from the binary code that caters to the needs of the cisgender. More popularly known as unisex clothing, gender-neutral or androgynous fashion is designed to push us to a future where gender doesn't limit us, crush our creativity, or become a barrier to our imagination. Sounds wonderful, doesn't it?

Gender Neutral Fashion: A Modern Concept?

Gender-neutral clothing is making its grand return to the world of fashion and is far from being a modern concept. In many ways, it reflects the broader social changes that have occurred throughout the 19th and 20th centuries.



Source: Theatlantic.com

USA

As far as the American fashion industry was concerned, the unisex movement came and largely went in one year: 1968. The trend began on the Paris runways, where designers whipped up an egalitarian age of simple silhouettes, graphic patterns, and new synthetic fabrics with no historical gender associations at all. This led to the birth of 'unisex fashion' which then spread around the globe.



Source: [Rebelsmarket.com](https://www.rebelsmarket.com)

Japan

The avant-garde has long been the theme for Japan with genderless clothing having a long heritage; from kimonos all the way to fashion pioneered by brands like Comme des Garçons and designers such as Yohji Yamamoto. It is not surprising then that genderless fashion fills the street of Harajuku every day. It is also no surprise that Japan was also the headquarter for the first South Asian movement against gender inequality.

Indian Brands Who Are Owning the Trend

Various Indian brands are leading the market now by owning this trend and adapting it for their customers. These homegrown brands deserve love, appreciation and support for their contributions towards gender equality. Let's have a look at some of these fabulous brands.

Two Point Two Studio

This brand, founded by Anvita Sharma, is an all-inclusive brand that is beyond just fashion. They focus on the movement towards gender neutrality and non-conformity. Accordingly, their clothes are of excellent quality and great durability along with beautiful designs and fashionable styles.

Instagram: [@twopointtwostudio](https://www.instagram.com/twopointtwostudio)



Source: [Lyricsniduniya.in](https://www.lyricsniduniya.in)

India

When it comes to India, we have had the longest history of genderless fashion—from *angrakhas* to *kurtas* and even *dhotis*. Both cisgenders have worn and flaunted them in style for ages.

Back in 1968 the now-famous song 'Kajra Mohabbat Wala' became all the rage. It featured actress Babita Shivdasani in a man's costume and actor Biswajit Chatterjee adorned in a woman's clothing; this was widely accepted and no objections were raised.

Interestingly, uniforms, be it for school or the army, are always the same for all sexes. This is done as a sign of equality and respect – why did we lose these ideals that we were so well accustomed to growing up?



Source: [@Twopointtwostudio](https://www.instagram.com/twopointtwostudio)

NorBlack NorWhite

This exceptional brand founded by Mriga Kapadiya and Amrit Kumar has been all the rage lately. They promote Indian crafts, cloth, and fashion to the world. They function as a creative studio that provides design and diversity consultancy, servicing, and collaborations as a whole.

Website: <https://norblacknorwhite.com>
Instagram: @norblacknorwhite



Source: @norblacknorwhite

Bonker's Corner

Bonker's Corner is the ultimate destination for fashion and lifestyle, being host to a wide array of merchandise including prints of art, music, games, quotes and more. They defy the barriers created by gender and unite people with the trends going on around all of us.

Website: <https://www.bonkerscorner.com>
Instagram: @bonkers.corner



Source: @bonkers.corner

Bobo Calcutta

This fun brand was founded by Ayushman Mitra and Jeet Shahi. They treat clothing as a form of art and a medium for colourful expression. Bobo Calcutta has a beautiful, vibrant, and colourful gender-neutral collection which is beyond just quirky and eclectic. It's a true mood-booster to shop here.

Instagram: @bobocalcutta



Source: @bobocalcutta

MIXX

MIXX is a brand that cares about urban culture and meets all their urban crowd's social as well as fashion needs. They believe that we're all en route to a gender-equal future and their clothes support the same belief. They aim to demolish all beliefs built around genders and start an equal movement.

Instagram: @generationmixx



Source: @generationmixx

Historically speaking, fashion was built equally for everyone. It is only later that segregation affected fashion, dividing it on its way to the present. Unisex and androgynous clothing poses the right challenge to this systemic change. Let's make sure it stays and build a beautiful, rainbow-laden gender-neutral future around it, shall we?



Light Weight Jewellery – The Emerging Trend

Divya Vallabhaneni talks to the founder of Vibha Jewellers, Anisha Yedma on the latest jewellery trends and about lightweight gold jewellery.

I have enough jewellery, said no one ever. With the current gold rates increasing each day and the list to buy all our favourite jewellery pieces never-ending, lightweight gold jewellery stands as the only option to serve the prerequisite. Anisha Yedma, the founder of Vibha Jewellers, tells us how one can own multiple lightweight pieces at the price of one.

The Hottest Pick – Light Weight Jewellery

People these days have grown a lot of fondness towards wearing jewellery pieces that are trendy, new, and that match their outfits. They are unwilling to repeat the same piece and hence the point of affordability and options arises. Buying many heavy jewellery pieces is something everyone won't be able to afford which is why lightweight jewellery stands out as the emerging trend. They come at an affordable price and allow you to opt for various designs for the price of one heavy piece.



Anisha Yedma founder

Trendy Recommendations from the Expert

Nakshi and Kundan mix designs are the latest trends now. Earlier we had one Nakshi set, one Kundan and one diamond set as a bridal collection, but now, post-COVID-19, Nakshi with Kundan as a set is trending. People also ask for Victorian polish designs. The Victorian-set is a Pacchi set with a black polish. It looks more like an antique piece but doesn't come with gold. It comes in diamond and Pacchi. The pastel collection is another trend.

How It All Began

We started as a small pastime initially. We didn't expect the store to become so famous and huge. Soon after we started, we saw a lot of customers show interest in our designs. They liked them very much and that's when we decided to make all the heavyweight jewellery lightweight. We noticed that many customers want a good piece within a good budget, so now we do all the heavy designs in a lighter weight, according to the customer's choice and as per the latest trends.

What makes Vibha Jewellers stand out?

In most gold shops, the customer is addressed by the salesperson rather than the business owners. Many shops also purchase the designs wholesale and sell them. At Vibha, we are in direct contact with our customers. We understand their requirements, tastes, budget, and make the jewellery accordingly. It is like owning a piece that speaks about your ideas and tastes. We make sure everyone owns a piece that speaks of their ideas.



Nakshi Kundan necklace



Temple jewellery

“Buying many heavy jewellery pieces is something everyone won’t be able to afford which is why lightweight jewellery stands out as the emerging trend.”



Showstopper!

Diamonds on a Budget – The Open-Close Jewellery Sets

The diamond sets earlier came either as an open set or a closed one. Now, we are doing the same diamond sets, in an open setting piece but resembling a closed set. These look like the traditional Chennai style diamonds, coming in a lower budget than the traditional closed setting piece. The shine of these sets comes out good and looks traditional.

What kind of statement pieces can one expect from the Bridal Collection?

Love for *Guttapusalu* and *Kasulaperu* is never-ending and though many jewellery trends have emerged, traditional jewellery always stands out. Earlier, small pieces of *Guttapusalu*, where the pearls were arranged in a small *haram* and *Kasulaperu*, where the Lakshmi kaasulu were designed as a medium length necklace are now commissioned as huge pieces. Matching jewellery with outfits is another emerging bridal trend. Earlier, we had dark coloured collections on the rise and now, it is the pastels that are trending.



Navaratnam choker with pachi

An emerging trend is the modification of old jewellery. How does one go about it?

Nobody wants to lose their antique collection. At the same time, we also want to try new collections. So, the current trend is to make some changes to the old pieces and refurbish them. Adding some *Nakshi* to the *Guttapusalu* set, adapting the temple style Lakshmi *vigrahalu* to the *haram* collection, or revamping the old *kempu* and *pacchi* set with a few modifications – all are good choices. All these old pieces of jewellery look trendy and the original piece is also preserved.

Style Suggestions for The Big Day

Reception: One can choose a closed open setting, or Victorian style designs with pearls, or pastel design jewellery.

Wedding: For the main event, one can choose from diamonds and *Guttapusalu*.

Ceremonies: For all the smaller occasions like *mehendi* and *sangeet*, one can choose designs from the Jaipur collection like the big Polki designs as well as *Kundan*, mixed with enamel elements.



Diamond Multi row long haar



Close open setting diamond set

“Earlier, we had dark coloured collections on the rise and now, it is the pastels that are trending.”

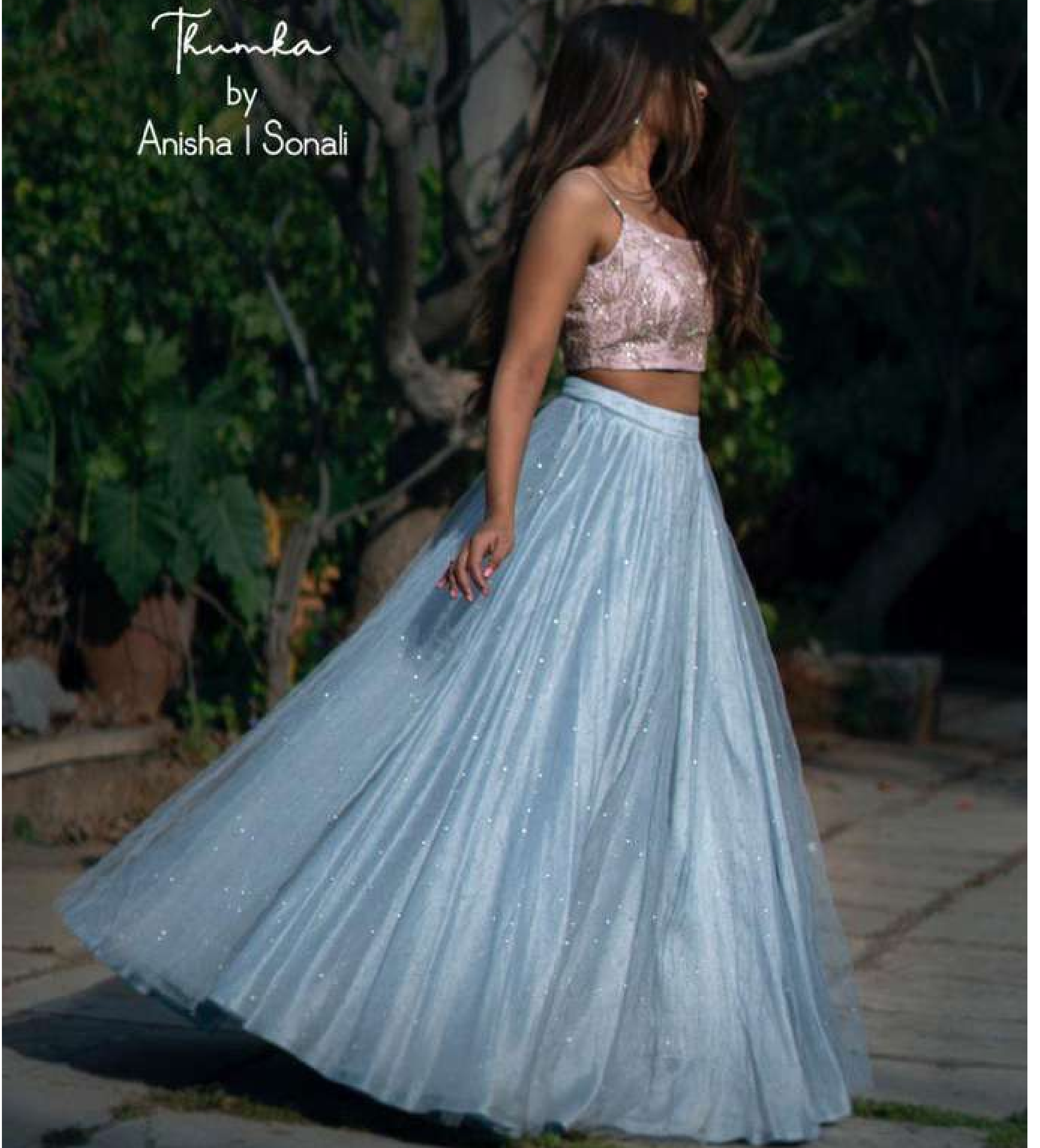
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Timings: 11 am – 8 pm



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FASHION FORWARD

LAKMÉ FASHION WEEK 2021:

Sustainability,
Tradition and
Splendour

HASHTAG reviews the striking designs and style sensibilities at this year's Winter edition of Lakmé Fashion Week.



October saw the Winter leg of FDCI X Lakmé Fashion Week for 2021 blow us all away. The bi-annual event showcased pieces and collections that artfully blended creativity, sustainability, and innovation with the designer's style. We have carefully handpicked for you some of the spectacular designs that were trending on the ramp to rev your style.

Collection : Tribal Fashion
Designer : Ranna Gill
Label : Ranna Gill
Hashtag USP : The perfect style symphony
About The Designer : Ranna Gill's work reflects feminist attitudes and the flavours of freedom.

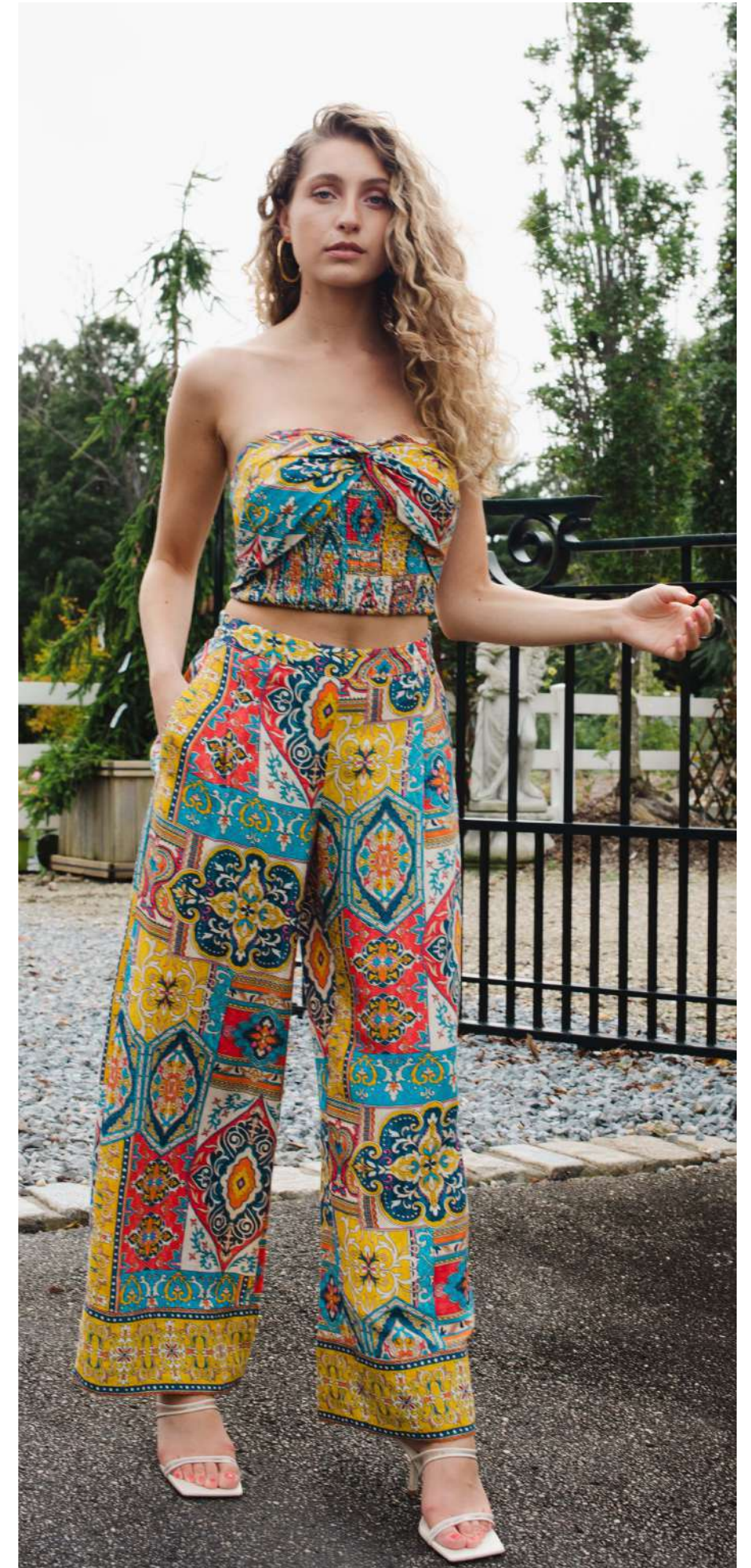


Ranna Gill

Collection Highlights:

Aimed at bringing comfort for a happy fun filled collection, Ranna's utterly feminine silhouettes had a dreamlike, ethereal quality about them. The beautiful cut-out work on maxis and tunics makes them ideal for weekend partying, while the feminine shapes ensured that the ensemble would be a timeless wardrobe addition.

Working on a base of pure cotton, satin, linen, and chiffon, Ranna's versions of the tribal prints merged creatively with the textures. The line with embroidered bodices for white, tiered tulle skirts also had a feminine gown with cascading embellishments. There was a play of multi stripes for flouncy, gypsy style blouses and skirts, while off shouldered midis and stringy tie-up back *cholis* brought a fun but festive element to the ensemble.



Collection :

The Master's Words

Designer :

Rajesh Pratap Singh

Label :

Satya Paul Label

Hashtag USP :

A colourful and sustainable collection

About The Designer :

This designer is known for his minimalistic designs that are simple yet flawlessly detailed in their intricacy.



Rajesh Pratap Singh

Collection Highlights:

'The Master's Words' was the finale of Sustainable Fashion Day and paid tribute to the legacy of the late Satya Paul, while signalling the entry of Carbon Zero TENCEL™ branded fibres in India. Several of the dresses, trousers, and shirts featured in this collection were made with this sustainable fibre, which is produced by Lenzing. Entirely biodegradable, its only residue is water, making it a highly sustainable solution in the era of fast fashion.

In terms of style, the collection was a riot of colours and abstract patterns, showcasing a marked 70s and 80s vibe for both men's and women's garments. The brand's core—the effervescent *sari*—also added to the flavour of the collection.



Collection :

Sweet Escape

Designer :

Rina Dhaka

Label :

Rina Dhaka

Hashtag USP :

An ode to tribal inspirations

About The Designer : Rina Dhaka greeted summer fashion in her creative and energetic style as she unveiled her collection 'Sweet Escape'. Her feminine mix-and-match story was on a Blanc canvas, when she revisited Indian crafts for her relaxed line of clothes.



Rina Dhaka

Collection Highlights:

The collection was an ode to tribal designs and influences in fashion in the form of organic stitches and careful beadwork that brought the boho look to the forefront, with the additional synergy of textured fringes. Keeping sustainability at the forefront, Rina's policy of reusing paper and cloth, and engaging in zero waste practices to reduce environmental abuse was noted and well received.

Against a stark backdrop of white and neutrals the glistening mirror work brought a hint of rustic glamour. The fringed New Look belts give the waistline an emphasis as well as a feisty touch. In addition, the cut-away, voluminous sleeves, intricate pin tucks, elasticating and gentle ruffles added to the relaxed look of the ensemble.



Collection :

#ColoursOfIndia : Chiki-Miki, Prakriti, Grand Wedding Wear, Facets

Designer :

Sanjukta Dutta, Shikha and Srishti, Annu Patel, Megha Jain Madaan

Label :

Sanjukta's Studio, Shikha and Srishti Design Studio, Annu's Creation, Abstract by Megha Jain Madaan.

Hashtag USP :

Variety of Diverse Designer collections from the four creative designers



Divya Khosla Kumar for Sanjukta Dutta

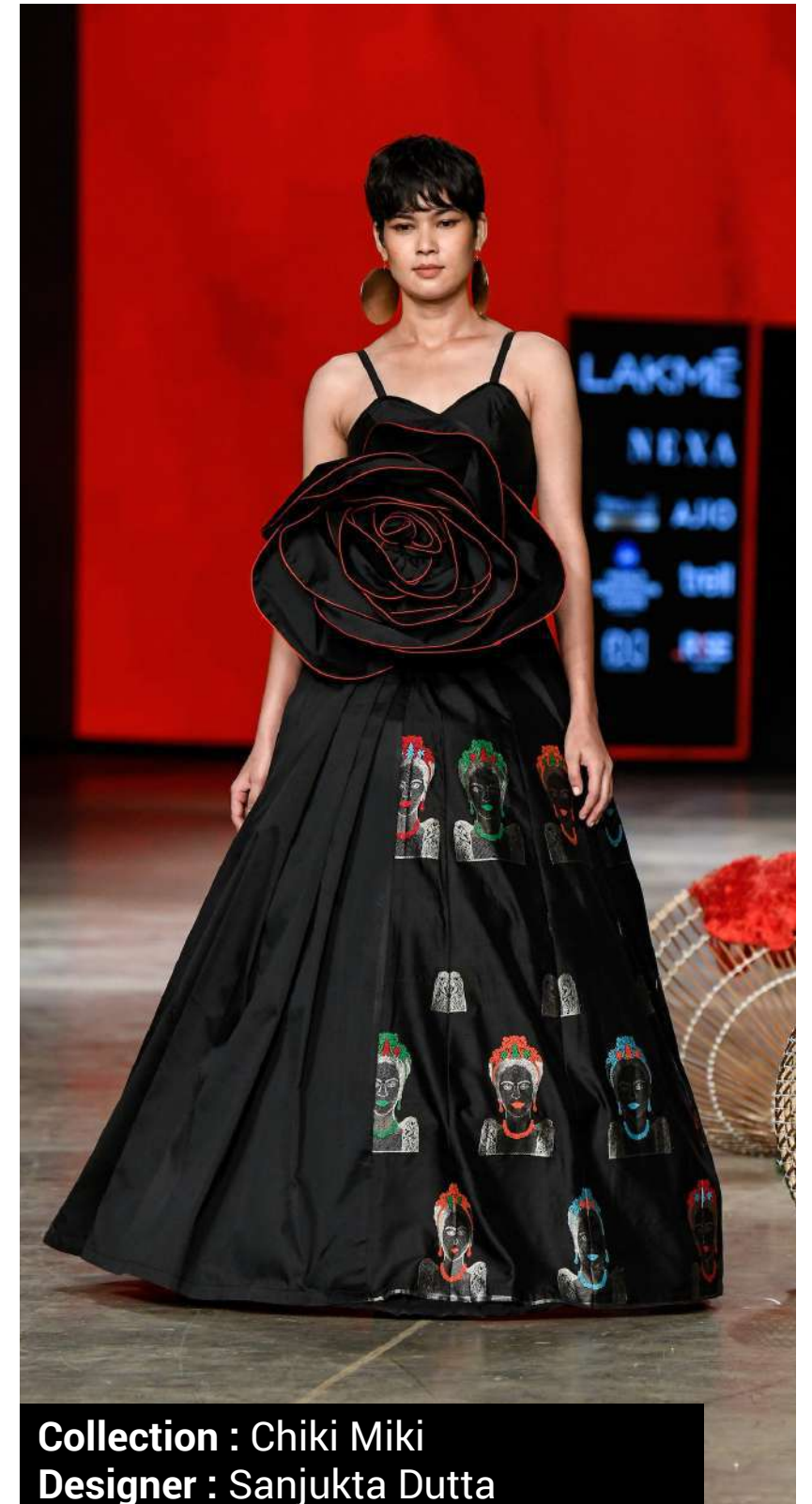
Collection Highlights:

The Sanjukta Dutta collection 'Chiki-Miki' well demonstrated its titular meaning of sparkling and bright throughout its display. The cleverly designed all-black ensemble with gorgeous, colourful weaves was dedicated to women of all shapes, sizes and age groups who desire to wear the beautiful fabrics of India.

Shikha and Srishti's 'Prakriti' truly was an elegant and romantic fusion of the ultra-glam looks. The fine selection of silk, organza and delicate tulle proved to be the perfect foundation for the fashion offering.

Annu Patel's Grand Wedding Wear featured designs set to delight brides during the upcoming season. The focal point of the ensemble were the beautiful motifs featuring a vast selection of flora and fauna.

Megha Jain Madaan's festive collection for her label *Abstract* was a luxurious line of creations that sought inspiration from the designs of ancient Greek pottery and revolved around geometrical and floral motifs adapted to fit dazzling embroidery patterns adorned with sequins and beads.



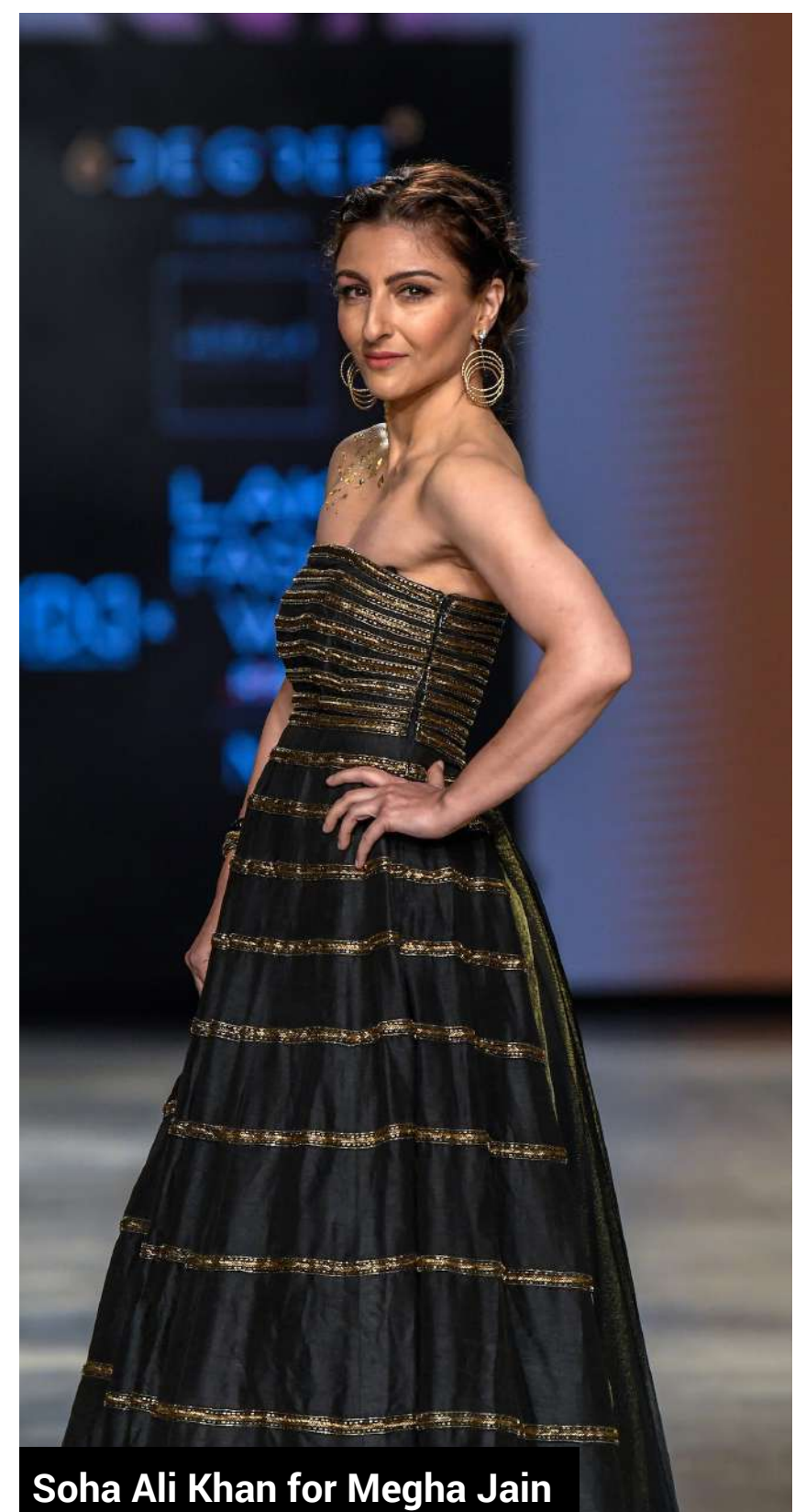
Collection : Chiki Miki
Designer : Sanjukta Dutta



Collection : Prakriti
Designers : Shikha and Shristi



Malaika Arora for Annu's Creation



Soha Ali Khan for Megha Jain

Collection :

Amalfi

Designer :

Pankaj and Nidhi

Label :

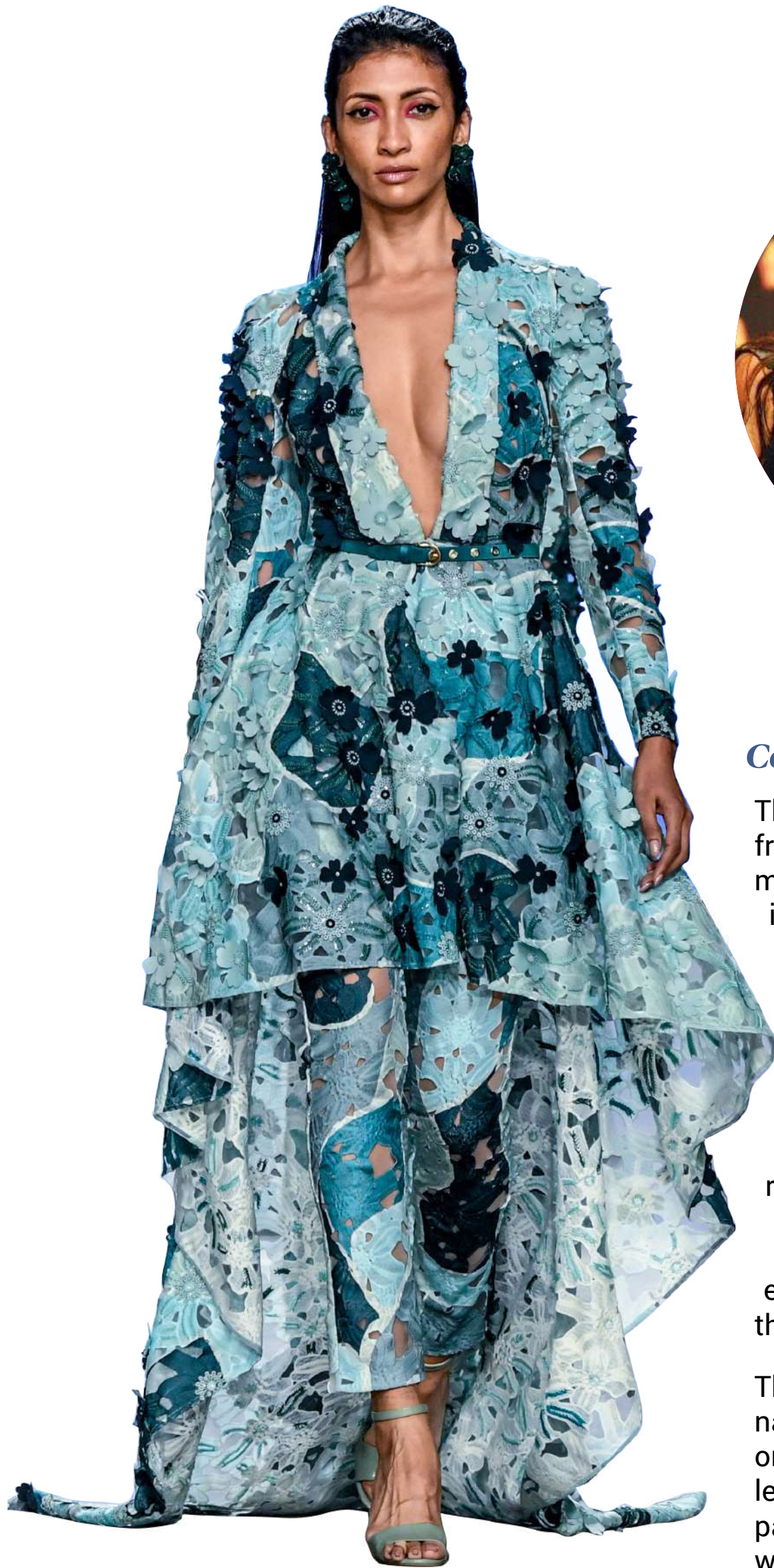
Pankaj and Nidhi

Hashtag USP :

A youthful vibe aiming at the trendy, culture-conscious buyer who cares for the Earth's resources.

About The Designer :

The husband-wife duo are widely known for their remarkable designs.



Pankaj and Nidhi

Collection Highlights:

The mood of the collection was from the designing duo's travel memories of the Amalfi Coastline in Southern Italy.

The serene landscapes from this dreamlike town were hand-painted in the most glorious abstract colours and forms and then transposed onto delicate organza, fluid, recycled chiffon and voile. An addition of cutwork lace and jacquards brought a luxe element to the style statement of the collection.

The colours were of a vibrant nature as coral pink, terrain orange, sapphire sea blue and leafy green were inspired by the pastel, chalky hues of the painted walls and frescos of the lush Italian region.



Collection :

The Raven

Designer :

Nidhi Yasha

Label :

The NY Studio

Hashtag USP :

Creating an intriguing impression with their dress sense

About The Designer :

With over 15 years of experience in design, Nidhi is known for costuming for famous television shows.



Nidhi Yasha

Collection Highlights:

Inspired by a deep colour palette for her 'Raven' line, Nidhi Yasha moved from prints and embellishments that started with fiery red and to flesh tones for the layered looks.

To create the multi feathered look for the feature, there was an abundant use of 3D appliques that were layered to create the perfect impact. Sheer minis appeared over bikinis, a corset on a black long-sleeved blouse worn with a high waisted skirt, and the off-shoulder black and white cocktail maxi all pointed to formal evening wear.



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HEALTH & WELLNESS

Having The Right Conversation: *Balancing Your Hormones*



AVINASH RAJAPET, co-founder & Program Director at Fitbee, shares some simple do's and don'ts that will help manage our hormones and busts some prevalent myths about our body.

With the fast-paced lifestyle we all currently lead, it is but a given that it would take a toll on our bodies. One of the most important yet frequently ignored effects is on our hormones. A hormonal imbalance occurs if there is more or less of a particular hormone in our body. If there is a small imbalance in hormones, your health could be significantly compromised. Changes in lifestyle and an increase in stress and anxiety, along with lack of consistent exercise are the most common reasons for these imbalances. To get your body back on track it is important to consider not just exercise but also nutrition, hydration and sleep.

There are plenty of ways to balance your hormones and improve your overall well-being. Hormonal imbalances are more common today than ever before. Identifying and accepting that you have a hormonal imbalance is the first and most important step.

DO's

- *Circuit training is recommended.* For maximum benefits, complete your exercises with little rest between each circuit session. It is the best type of workout for boosting testosterone and stimulating growth hormone, so you spend less time exercising while reaping more benefits. The training can be a combination of strength training (with or without weights), functional moves and a fun workout like cardio kickboxing.
- You need to *include various types of fats in your diet*, including saturated fats and cholesterol. Not only are these essential fats fundamental building blocks for hormone production, but they also keep inflammation levels low, boost your metabolism and promote weight loss.

- Nuts are a vital part of your daily diet. Walnuts and flaxseeds are good sources of *omega 3* precursors. These are responsible for producing anti-inflammatory substances that reduce internal body inflammation.
- *Consume millets* such as *ragi, jowar, bajra* as a part of your major meals. These are a good source of complex carbohydrates and fibre and do not spike up blood sugar levels.
- *Hydrate yourself* throughout the day, it will help flush out all toxins from the body. The thumb rule for water consumption is 1 litre for every 20-25kgs of body weight.
- *Eat Well:* Consume 3 wholesome meals and 1-2 snacks at regular intervals.
- *Get at least 7-8 hrs of sleep.* Keep gadgets away at night.
- Ensure you indulge in a physical activity routine of your choice. And stick to it for at least 4-5 times a week. *Exercise* has been researched to stimulate endorphins (feel-good hormones) that up energy levels and make you feel positive.



DONT's:

- *Avoid crash diets.* These are unsustainable and may harm your body in the long run.
- For those with jobs that require intense screen times, do not stay stationary in the same position for too long. Make a conscious effort to *walk around for at least 5 minutes every hour.*
- *All refined products,* including cereals and sugar, *should be minimised,* as they cause a sharp rise in blood glucose levels. Consuming these foods daily may increase the risk of insulin resistance and diabetes. Insulin resistance alone is a major risk factor for PCOD.



- *Avoid all packaged or processed foods.* Most of these products contain heaps of sodium or similar preservatives and artificial sweeteners. These also interfere especially with our adrenal glands, which helps balance blood pressure.
- *Dairy products may be avoided* in the case of lactose intolerance and other substitutes like soy milk, tofu, curd and buttermilk, almond milk, coconut milk etc., could be used as replacements. Please check with your doctor on what you can or cannot consume.
- *Avoid refined vegetable oils and include cold-pressed oils.* Other options can be olive oil or *ghee*, which are rich sources of monounsaturated fatty acids that keep body inflammation at bay.

Some Myths Related To Hormonal Imbalance:

- *“Don't work out if experiencing hormonal imbalances.”*

Fact - Exercising regularly reduces stress levels and also helps in regulating your hormones, such as insulin. In case of diabetes, metabolic disorder, or other conditions caused by hormonal imbalances, getting into a regular fitness regime can be one of the main ways to start feeling better.

Remedy - Women can begin with resistance training, breathing exercises, and yoga to get on a track for fitness.

- *“Our hormones don't shift around until we reach middle age.”*

Fact - Lifestyle changes are most responsible for hormonal imbalances and your age is not responsible for it always!

Remedy - The best way to cope with it is to get enough sleep, have a balanced diet and seeking professional help if needed.



- *“Eating soy is harmful to women's hormonal health.”*

Fact - Consumption of soy protein rather than animal protein decreases total cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, and triglycerides and is also extremely beneficial during menopause. It also improves heart health.

Remedy - You can consume soy in different forms such as salads, boiled soy, soy milk.

- *“You can't control your hormones.”*

Fact - It is often assumed only medical treatments can cure hormonal imbalances while the fact is there are non-medical remedies too that can help. You can also control “cortisol,” known as the stress hormone, which plays a vital role in influencing how we feel and behave.

Remedy - Going for therapy, practising daily self-affirmations, meditation, enjoying good food and keeping good company can always keep you away from chronic stress that in turn helps in treating symptoms of hormonal imbalances such as mood swings.

Hormonal imbalances can be attributed to genetics, lack of proper nutrition and an unhealthy lifestyle. However, it can be controlled by a healthy dose of exercise, diet, and sleep. Only resort to medication as a last option. It is possible to keep track of our health by just keeping an eye out for distress signals from our bodies!



Consecutive lockdowns and the ongoing pandemic has robbed us of many joys. It is safe to say many have been sorely missing soaking up the sun. **Divya Vallabhaneni** speaks to nutrition and wellness consultant **Dr Lahari Surapaneni** to learn how we can manage our Vitamin D levels now more than ever.

Absorbing **Vitamin D** while staying **Indoors**

While we know that Vitamin D is essential to our health, many are unaware of how important it can also be for our mental health. The recent pandemic and its continuous lockdowns have left people restricted to their homes creating room for a Vitamin D deficiency to form in our bodies. Dr Lahari Surapaneni helps us understand this magic vitamin and how we can maintain its levels for our good health.

How does one's body prepare vitamin D from the sunlight?

The sunshine vitamin, also known as Vitamin D, is acquired from various sources, of which sunlight is best known to all. A certain type of cholesterol that is present in our skin is responsible for absorbing the required nutrients from the sun's rays and it is carried to the liver by the blood and thereby converted into Vitamin D.

With the lockdown restrictions, how can one plan to not be Vitamin D deficient?

Vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin, and it can be stored in the body. One can plan as much as possible exposure to the sun so there won't be any deficiency despite the climate change and the ongoing pandemic. When we speak of being exposed to the sun, the majority thinks the exposure is restricted only to the face. But one must understand that the overall body needs sunlight to form Vitamin D and hence people are advised to wear clothes that help have overall body exposure to sunlight. The deficiency has an impact on both physical and mental health.



The darker your skin is, the more sun exposure one needs.

Melanin is a component in our skin responsible for absorbing sunlight and gives us our skin tone. People with darker skin need more exposure as more levels of melanin acts as a barrier to absorb the rays.

Can one absorb enough sunlight while staying indoors?

One doesn't essentially need to step out of the house to absorb the sunlight. Partial sunlight, the sunlight that enters our houses through doors and windows is also helpful. Exposure to such partial sunlight is also sufficient to maintain good levels of the vitamin.

Symptoms one can observe to check for the Vitamin D deficiency –

- Lethargy
- Constant fatigue
- Little to severe pain in bones
- Muscle weakness
- Disinterest in doing anything
- Hair fall
- Depression
- Mood swings



How the body takes a toll:

- A slow recovery rate from illness
- Brittle bones
- Falling sick easily
- There is a possibility that the deficiency of this vitamin is responsible for hormonal imbalances.



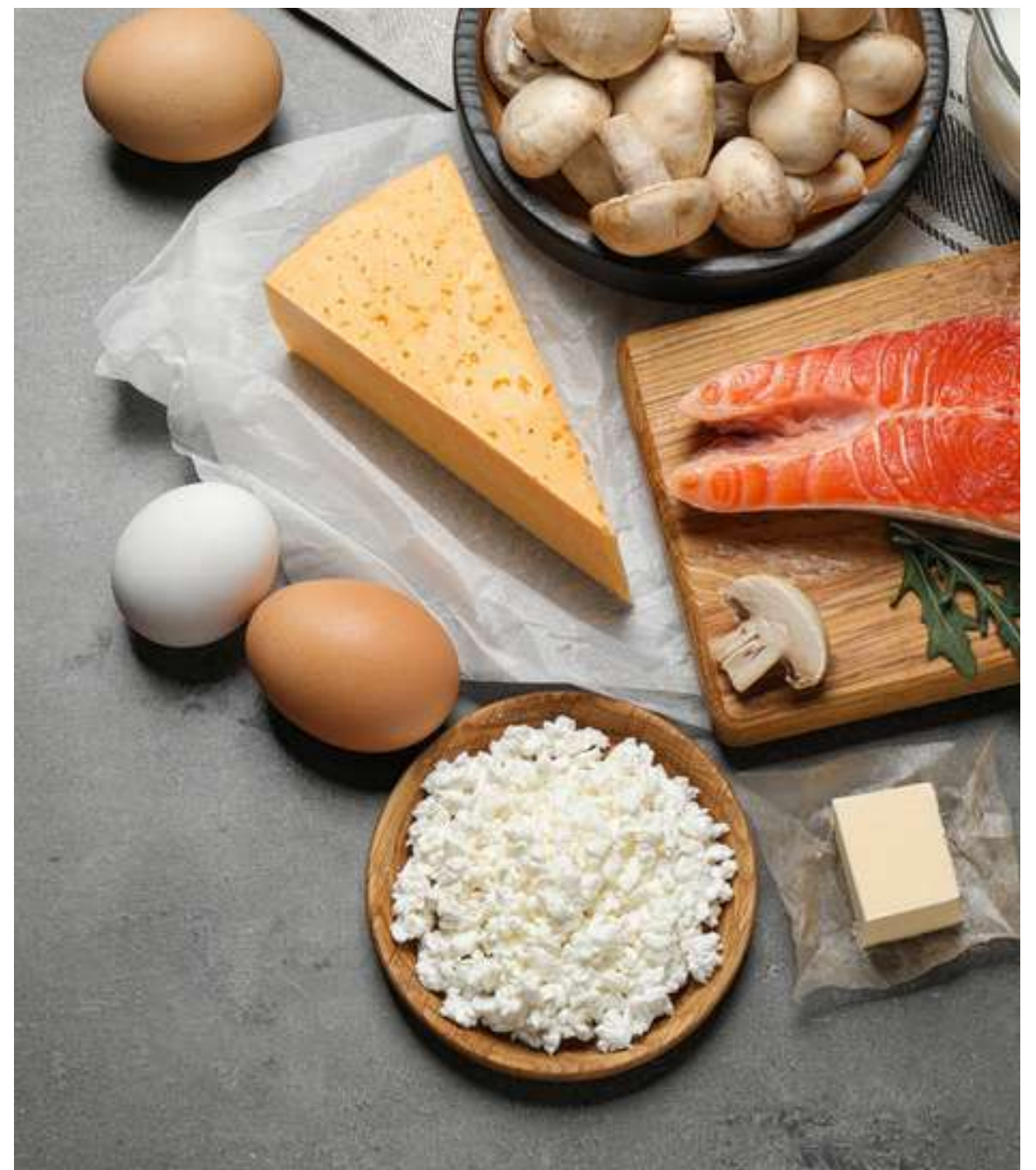
To what extent supplements are advised when there is a Vitamin D deficiency?

Supplements along with Vitamin D rich foods can help a person get back their actual levels of the vitamin but over usage of supplements in a long run can be toxic. Proper consultation on how to use the Vitamin D supplements is highly recommended and self-medication, in this case, is not advised. Overexposure to sunlight can never be toxic.

What are the foods rich in Vitamin D?

Vitamin D is found in animal-based foods since it is a fat-soluble vitamin. It is also available in a few fortified foods, where Vitamin D is added to them. Mushrooms, plant-based foods and egg yolk are few other sources.

Dr Lahari cautions, "Food alone won't help maintain good levels of Vitamin D unless you are consuming a large amount of these foods, which is why sunlight is a must to the body and is also the primary source for Vitamin D. When you have good levels of Vitamin D, supplements could be a help to maintain the levels, but one can't directly depend on supplements alone."



Is it Vitamin D deficiency or something else?

Dr Lahari clarifies: "It's highly impossible to understand and differentiate the symptoms of Vitamin D deficiency from similar medical conditions. Therefore, self-diagnosis is not advised in this case. Getting enough exposure to sunlight as needed, with some physical exercise and seeking professional help in case of any symptom is the only way one can maintain good levels of this vitamin and survive the current scenario."

FATPHOBIA:

Are We Living in The Era of Fat Shaming?

In this age of digital activism and body positivity, are we harbouring fatphobia? **Mehak Walia** speaks to experts on the rising double standards we hold against bodies and health.

We live in a world where the standard for what is considered beautiful and desirable has been set and fixated upon so rigidly by society that a huge chunk of the population lives their life feeling inadequate and ugly. The percentage of people who face this painful situation has only increased day by day, all thanks to social media and the unrealistic beauty standards set by Photoshop. This makes us question; do we live in the era of fat-shaming? Are we governed by fatphobia?

We speak with experts—psychologists Purvi Shah and Shivli Shrivastava; Ameya from the well-known podcast *Fat. So?* and, Avantika Mehta, founder of The Ladies' Compartment—on the same.

Social Media's Era of Shame

"I think we've been in the era of fat-shaming for a while—possibly since the 1960s when super skinny models like Twiggy came on the scene. Honestly, I think fat-shaming, or rather weight stigma, is as pervasive as air pollution. Social media made it worse; it's impossible to ignore the social cues (direct or indirect) that our bodies aren't acceptable for one reason or another. What spurs this along though is that it is profitable for companies to magnify stigma around young women's bodies—this was confirmed to some extent by Facebook's whistleblower recently—because how else do you get people to buy things they don't need? You make them insecure and render them in a constant state of wanting," comments Avantika, who is an independent journalist writing on law, crime, and social justice while also being the founder of The Ladies' Compartment.



Avantika Mehta

This era only seems to be adding gasoline to a fire that has been burning for ages. Purvi Shah, a psychologist who has been practising since 2011, a TEDx speaker and the founder of I Purvi Shah, says, "We've always been in that era according to me. We might think that with the country being developed, we'd be doing better but sadly, not with regards to body positivity and body shaming. Social media has been such a strong influence that we have been going exactly the other way."



Purvi Shah

The Traumatic Side of This Social Evil

Fat-shaming, as we have ascertained, has been around for ages. Most of everything in the world, be it chairs and clothes to doctors and dating, constantly serve to make us conscious of our bodies. Curves are seen as a sin, and many of us grow up uncomfortable with our bodies and with the way they look.

"Fat shaming is traumatic. It makes people hate themselves and their bodies. It makes them internalise other adjectives that are associated with the word fat, like lazy, stupid, etc. It also makes everyone terrified of being fat because they know how they will be treated. People become more susceptible to emotional abuse and manipulation because they believe they have no value. They remain in abusive relationships, don't speak out about physical and sexual abuse, and sometimes abuse their bodies with eating disorders," says Ameya, co-founder of the podcast *Fat. So?* which talks about being fat—the pain, the joy, the learning, the dark humour, and the silver lining.

Implications of Fatphobia

Fatphobia has become an unofficial rule governing society. The measurement of our waists, it seems, governs if we are deserving of respect in our everyday.

“Most of my clients come with concerns related to their bodies; it can affect mental health and how one views themselves as a person and a sexual being. Their self-confidence and their will to live, for that matter, is hindered. Many think they are not worthy enough to be who they want to be or wear what they want to wear. It is very heart-breaking to see. They feel guilty for what they are eating if they are eating at all. They are constantly told things in terms of what *to* do and what *not* to do. A lot of unwanted comments come their way, hampering their understanding of what is appropriate for them,” exclaims Shivli, co-founder of Shivtensity™, as well as a counselling psychologist, sexuality educator, PhD scholar and entrepreneur.



Painfully enough, such horrid ways of thinking have been taught to us very early on in our lives, running way deeper than we can imagine.

“I have a 5-year-old boy as a client right now. Kids, they don't know why they're here in therapy. He comes to me because his parents are going through a tough phase. When I asked him why he thinks he's here, his response shocked me. He said it's because he has a very big stomach. I asked him, 'So it doesn't work? What do you think the stomach's work is?' to which he replied, 'To mix stuff.' I then asked him, 'Does it do it well?' and he exclaimed, 'Yes, it does!' When I asked him, 'Then what's the problem?', he had no answers. It's shocking to see how deep these thoughts run sometimes. We are sadly in a system where if we are shown two people's pictures and asked the difference, we automatically answer with their weights—one is thin and one is fat. Nothing else is noticed before that and I think that needs to change,” observes Purvi.

She further adds, “It doesn't just stop there. When it comes to the medical industry, even doctors are biased. The moment a healthier person walks into their office, their first piece of advice is to lose weight. They wouldn't even consider their problems in some cases! When the doctors themselves are doing this, how will things get better? We need to spread awareness everywhere—not just about body positivity but body neutrality as well. This is surreal. This is real. We need to talk about it.”

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Fat shaming, or rather weight stigma, is as pervasive as air pollution.

oo



Ameya adds, “Fat shaming can make you hate your body and what it looks like. You feel like you can't connect with your body, which could trigger body dysmorphia. Indian families can give you mixed signals: you're too fat to get married or you're too thin to get married—it depends on who is telling you that. We use the word fat to tease people 'with love' and we harass people 'out of concern for their health' about their food, exercise, diet, and looks. Both hurt and leave marks.”

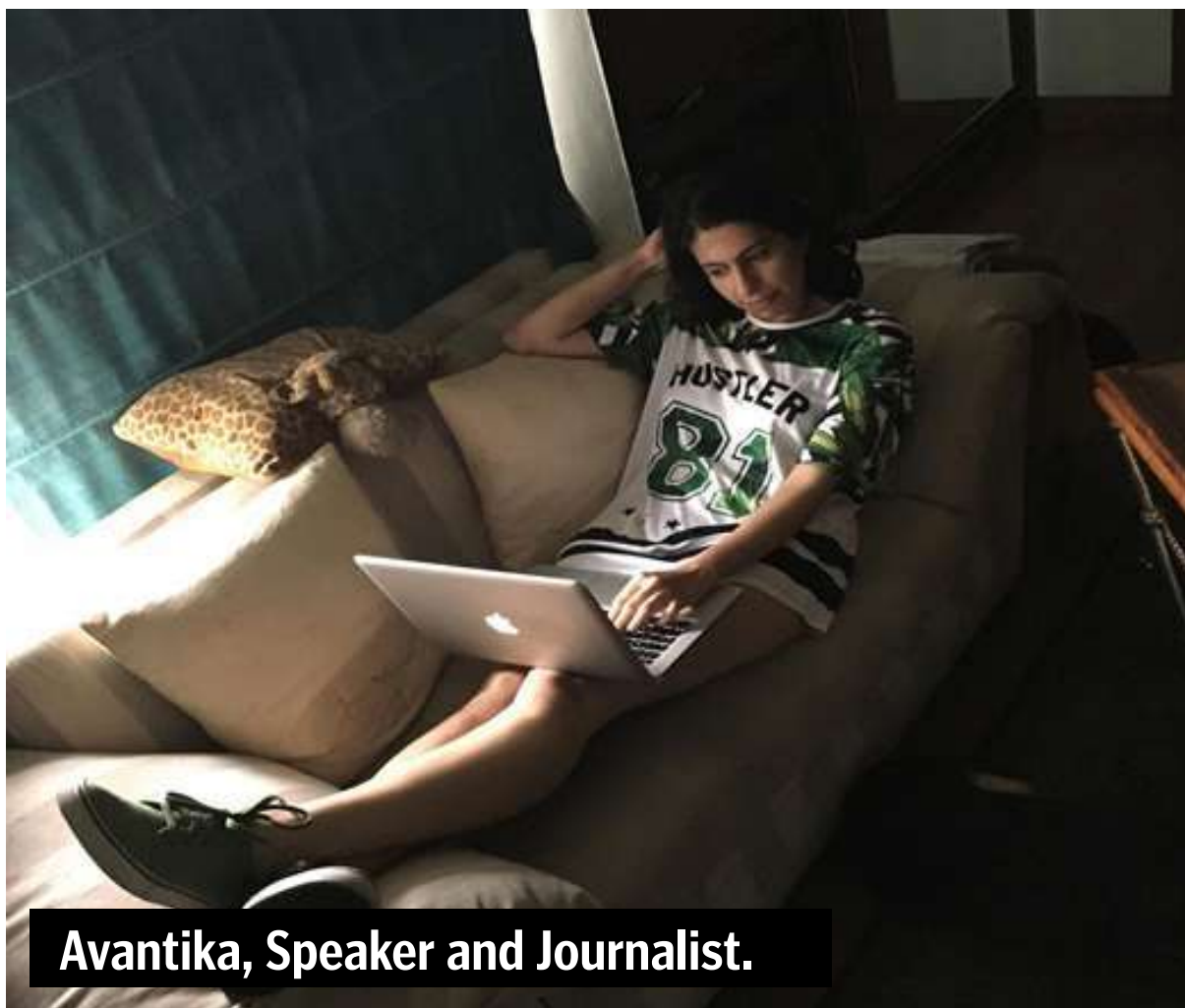


A Personal Testimonial

“Stigmatising weight has serious implications, from affecting emotional health to long-term physical implications from fad diets and eating disorders. It is cruel and counterproductive, even when done with the best of intentions. Speaking just for myself: I’m 5’8 and 59 kilos. Can you imagine that slimming down to a Meg Ryan kind of tiny? It’s impossible and frankly, ridiculous to the point of satire. I spent so much of my teens and my twenties obsessed with exercising and dieting to the point of being grossly unhealthy; my college roommates would joke about how I only had 100 calories at a time, and they weren’t wrong. Frankly, I looked just fine but no one stopped me. What a monumental waste of my time and energy. It’s just dumb luck I didn’t permanently damage my body. Between tough love comments, the media putting up pictures of women’s ‘fat bodies’, a thousand diet ads...how would one know?”

People love you when you’re tall and skinny, but no one ever talks about big-boned tall girls, unless they’re telling you to lose weight or comparing you to some model. I cannot think of a single instance where someone shaming me for my body and weight has led me towards a healthier lifestyle. Instead, it has taken me to a place of low self-esteem and reinforced unhealthy behaviours like comfort overeating or hiding till my body was ‘acceptable’.”

- Avantika Mehta



Avantika, Speaker and Journalist.

Body Dysmorphia and The Indian Mindset

The Indian mindset is so heavily built around the concept of ‘the perfect body’ that we have reached a stage where we are experiencing mass body dysmorphia. It’s a mental issue that’s more focused on perception over reality. For a person with body dysmorphia, even the tiniest of flaws seems like a big deal.

Usually a result of past-lived and observed experiences, it can happen if your caregiver talks about appearances all the time. For many with siblings, the constant comparison serves to be detrimental to their self-perception.

“Body dysmorphia can be very extreme and can lead to high levels of anxiety and depressive episodes. One will agree to do anything to get their perceived flaw removed or fixed. The sad thing is that this is often encouraged by their families. It’s a fact that Indian families are used to fat-shaming their children; it could be as blatant as ‘you’re fat and you should lose weight,’” Shivli remarks.

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It’s a fact that Indian families are used to fat-shaming their children; it could be as blatant as ‘you’re fat and you should lose weight’

oo



Dr. Shivli, founder of Shivtensity, Psychologist

Ameya sighs and adds, “When your family fat shames you, the effect is stronger because one’s family, especially parents, are supposed to love you no matter what and be the ultimate safe space. Yet, they become the most traumatic and painful space, which can have severe effects on your self-esteem, self-worth, and your ability to navigate the world safely.”

What Does Research Say

“The truth is, as studies reveal, again and again, quite the opposite: weight is largely governed by our genes, and people can’t lose more than 5-10% of their body weight without dangerous and extreme measures. People seem unwilling to acknowledge these facts In India, like various other countries,” Avantika explains.

As Purvi states, “Body shaming from families is often the reason why people end up in therapy. If people don’t seek help, it can end up getting to a point where you don’t like yourself and this, unfortunately, ends with the person attempting suicide. I know it’s scary, but it happens. The numbers are on a rise.”

There is a fervent need for change in our society. The personal experiences noted here only continue to serve as a reminder of how we fail our people. However, change will not begin unless together, we work towards the same. Ultimately, change begins at home, and it often starts small. Take care to remind your loved ones of what they mean to you and affirm them just the way they are. Explain to them how essential it is to embrace and love themselves. Together, we can ensure this era ends with us.

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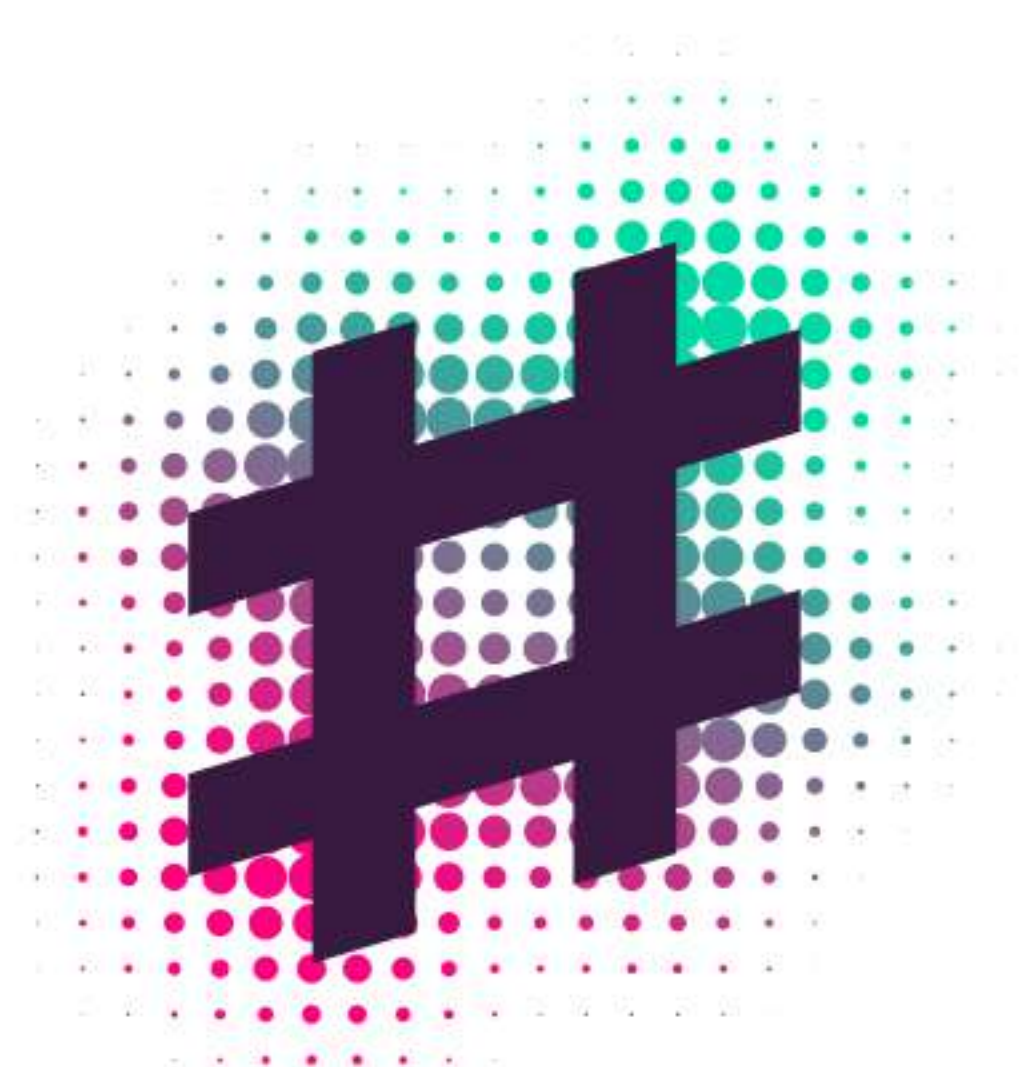


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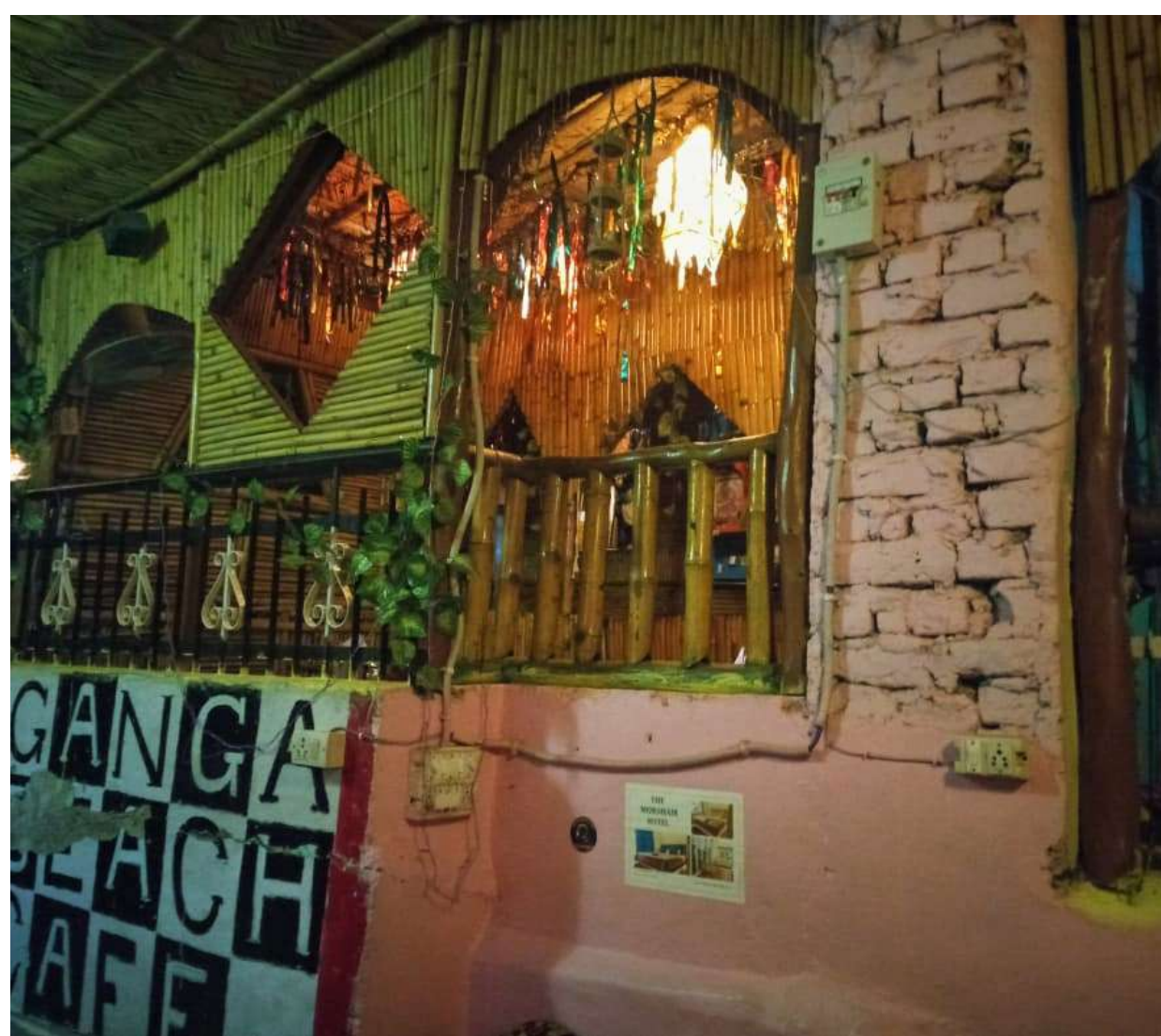


Taking the offbeat route is certainly enticing, but we seem to forgo the eye-catchers in this quest. **Nikita Biswas** and **Abhishek Dubey** challenge our thirst for travel by taking us to a popular hangout at Rishikesh, the **Ganga Beach Café**. Read their first-hand account to find out the charms of this serendipitous eatery!

Food for the soul: *Ganga Beach Café*

Our journey through the northern parts of India brought us to many fascinating places, many by chance. Some places, however, were on our checklist, and worth the while. The famous Ganga Beach Café at Rishikesh was one such spot, and oh, how it delivered!

On our second day in the holy city, we decided to walk and embrace the atmosphere around us. By the time we reach Lakshman Jhula, we were exhausted. Having crossed the beautiful and scenic bridge, we found ourselves near Trimbakeshwar Shiva Temple, popularly known as the *Tera Manzil Mandir*.



A few blocks from there found us at the illustrious Ganga Beach Café. Decked out in the trademark style of Rishikesh cafes, there were coloured mattresses and pillows laid against the short tables to make up the eating area. Colourful lamps added a decorative touch to the place, syncing the ambience with the magnetic location. We found ourselves seated alongside the mighty Ganges River and were enraptured! The scenic sight of the river, and the Lakshman Jhula ensured that we stayed put for a good time – no talking, and no looking around, just glued to our awakened senses courtesy of the mighty Ganga River.

Where: Ganga Beach Café, near Trimbakeshwar temple, Laxman Jhula, Rishikesh
Time: Open between – 8:00 AM to 10:30 PM
Cost for two : Rs 500 (approx.)



The most surprising aspect of this experience however was the food that we were served. The big menu boasts of a range of Israeli dishes, a cuisine we have been eager to try for quite some time. We ordered the 'Falafel plate with Hummus', alongside the white sauce pasta and some green tea, and were not disappointed. The hummus was creamy and well-seasoned, and the falafel cooked perfectly, keeping intact the flavour of the vegetables inside. Being in Rishikesh and experiencing Israeli food cannot be better than this.

Cuisines Available -

- Israeli
- Indian
- Continental

Amenities -

- Breakfast
- Takeaway
- Vegetarian Only
- Indoor Seating
- Outdoor Seating

How to get there:

Road – From Natraj Chowk, one can take either a share auto or a single auto to Tapovan. The share auto will drop off passengers at Lakshman Jhula, from where one can walk to the café. Single autos will charge anywhere from Rs 150 to Rs 200 and drop one off at Tripti Guesthouse or Green Hills Cottage.

Train – Upon reaching the Haridwar Railway Station, one can opt for an auto or a private car directly to the location.

Flight – The nearest airport is at Dehradun. Rishikesh lies 35 KM from there. One can opt for a private car service from the airport to the location.

If you like challenging your palate, then this is a place to give it a shot. You will find an evening well spent by the Ganga, accompanied by great Israeli food to treat the taste buds, set against the perfect location!

Siddhant Vashista takes us through the lanes and alleys of Jaipur on a lip-smacking food trail to be remembered.



HOW JAIPUR'S OLDEST RESTAURANTS HAVE WITHSTOOD THE TEST OF TIME

From fine dining to roadside grub to the *mithai* shop around the corner, featured here are some of the most popular restaurants with their best on offer in the city of Jaipur. As old as time, these restaurants boast of serving patrons ranging from the *Maharajas* to the present-day Chief Minister.

Lassiwala Since 1944

Lassiwala serves spiced and sweet variants of just one thing—*Lassi*, a cold yoghurt drink made out to perfection with a dollop of *malai* on top. Set up on MI Road by Kishanlal Agarwal in 1944, the shop has served several generations of Jaipuris. Karan Agarwal, who represents the fourth generation of the family-run business, says that the *lassi* here is much beloved not just by the locals of Jaipur but also by tourists visiting from abroad and even celebrities like Amitabh Bachchan and Mithun Chakraborty. While the pandemic might have affected sales, business is booming again, helped by the fact that the quality of this quintessential summer drink has never changed since the start of the shop.

Quick Bites

According to Karan, the *lassi* comes in earthen cups called *kulhads*. One can have sweet or salted *lassi*, with sugar-free *lassi* having been recently added to the menu. The *kulhads* are of two sizes – 'small' with a capacity of 190 ml and 'large' at 390 ml.

Address: 312, MI Rd, Jayanti Market, New Colony, Jaipur 302001.

Timing: 7:00am to 4:00pm

Price: ₹ 35 - ₹ 70



Fresh Kulhads of Lassi



Sudhir Gupta,
Natraj's owner



Natraj Restaurant

Since 1967

Natraj Restaurant is one of the stars among the old eateries on Jaipur's MI Road. Its friendly owner, Sudhir Gupta, tells us that the restaurant has been graced by the presence of Rajasthan's Chief Minister of 17 years, Mr Mohan Lal Sukhadia. It was also visited by Mr Jagdeep Dhankar, Governor of West Bengal, on his recent visit to the city. The restaurant has a beautiful traditional ambience, with a lush, marbled interior and comfortable upholstery. A grand mural (pictured) frames the back. The bright gold and dark wood contrast to render a feeling of nostalgia, as one enjoys the authentic Rajasthani cuisine.

Quick Bites

Natraj is known for its sweets, especially the oblong *Gulab Jamun*, a Natraj speciality, and the *Ghiya ki Barfi*, with the latter costing ₹380/kg, one hundred lesser than the *Gulab Jamun*, coming at ₹480/kg. The *Gulab Jamun*, milk-solid balls dipped in thick, fragrant syrup, are soft, sweet, and sinfully delicious. *Ghiya ki Barfi*, a famous sweet cooked for festivals like Diwali, is spongy and chewy and made from bottle gourd (*Ghiya*), milk, and copious amounts of *ghee*.

Address: MI Rd, Panch Batti, C Scheme, Ashok Nagar, Jaipur 302001.

Timing: 10:00 am to 10:00 pm

Price: ₹ 700 for two



Ghiya ki Barfi

Laxmi Misthan Bhandhar (LMB)

Since 1727

Perhaps the oldest on the list, LMB is as old as the city itself and boasts of having a business that had Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II, Jaipur's founder, as its patron. According to the owner, the *Maharaja* had helped people settle in the newly built capital, and a group of *halwais* (sweet makers) had set shop in Johari Bazar. The present name was given to the shop in the 1940s by Seth Maliram Ghodawat, a descendent of the *halwais*, and a hotel was set up above the shop. The family business is now led by Ajay Agarwal, who is of the 13th generation.

The restaurant has had its fair share of harrowing history, having survived the passage of time and even bomb blasts—a bomb had exploded in the near vicinity of the restaurant during the 2008 Jaipur serial bomb blasts.

Quick Bites

LMB is known for serving authentic sweets of Jaipur such as *Pheeni*, *Mishri Mawa*, and *Paneer Ghewar*, an LMB speciality. With sweets being their primary offering, LMB also has an in-house restaurant that offers Rajasthani and Indian food.

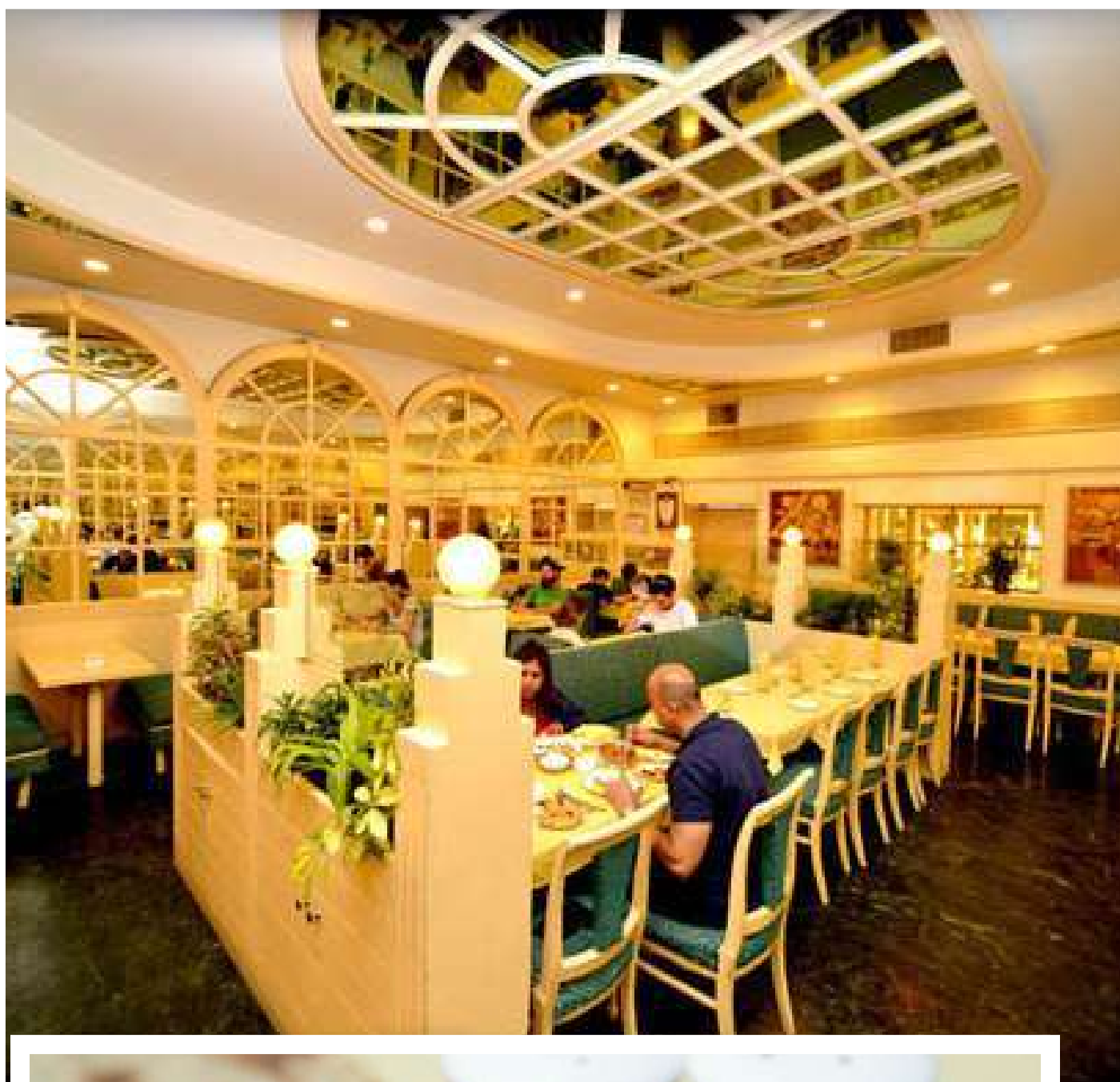
Address: No. 98, 99, Johari Bazar Rd, Bapu Bazar, Biseswarji, Jaipur 302003.

Timing: 9:00am to 10:00pm

Price: ₹ 1300 for two



Ghewar



Niros

Since 1949

The journey of Niros has been the journey of Jaipur itself. Founded in 1949 by Ved Prakash Pardal, a Partition refugee and ex-Army man from the Jhelum district in Pakistan, the legacy of Niros owes its continuation to hard work, innovation, and personalised care.

Being one of the first restaurants to serve Chinese and Continental in the city, Ved Prakash had to create a market for himself when Indians did not prefer eating out. However, his vision paid off. Niros has been, for the past five decades, patronized by celebrities, royals, and locals. From when people rode camels and buggies to the present era, the restaurant has not lost its touch.

The spacious interior has a chic, modern decor that celebrates clean lines, natural light, and reflective surfaces and gives off a cosmopolitan feel—no wonder the likes of Naomi Campbell and Ranveer Singh have had food here. The stunning murals by acclaimed artist Satish Gujral showcase Rajasthani kings and queens playing *chaupad* (a board game).

Niros is famous for its non-vegetarian food and affordable fine dining, along with its menu of alcoholic beverages. It is run by Mr Hamit Pardal, who is of the third generation of this family business.



Lal Maans on display at Niros

Quick Bites

Lal Maans, *Butter Chicken*, and *Chicken Tikka Masala* are Niros's special offerings and have a taste unique to the restaurant. *Pindi Channa* is a dish whose recipe has remained constant for the past 73 years since Niros's start.

Address: 80, Ashok Nagar, MI Road, Near Panch Batti, Jaipur 302001.

Timing: 10:00 AM to 11:00 PM

Price: ₹ 1500- ₹ 1600 for two

Surya Mahal

Since 1954

Surya Mahal Restaurant, Ice-cream Parlour, and Bakery, also known as Bake Hut, is an old enterprise known for its vegetarian food, offering Indian and Asian cuisines. The restaurant boasts of a central location and a varied vegetarian menu. Bake Hut was also one of the first bakeries in the city to offer premium eggless cakes. The Jal Mahal ice cream parlour has come up with tantalising flavours like the 'Brownie Waffle,' 'Earthquake Sundae,' 'Chocolate Fudge,' and many more.

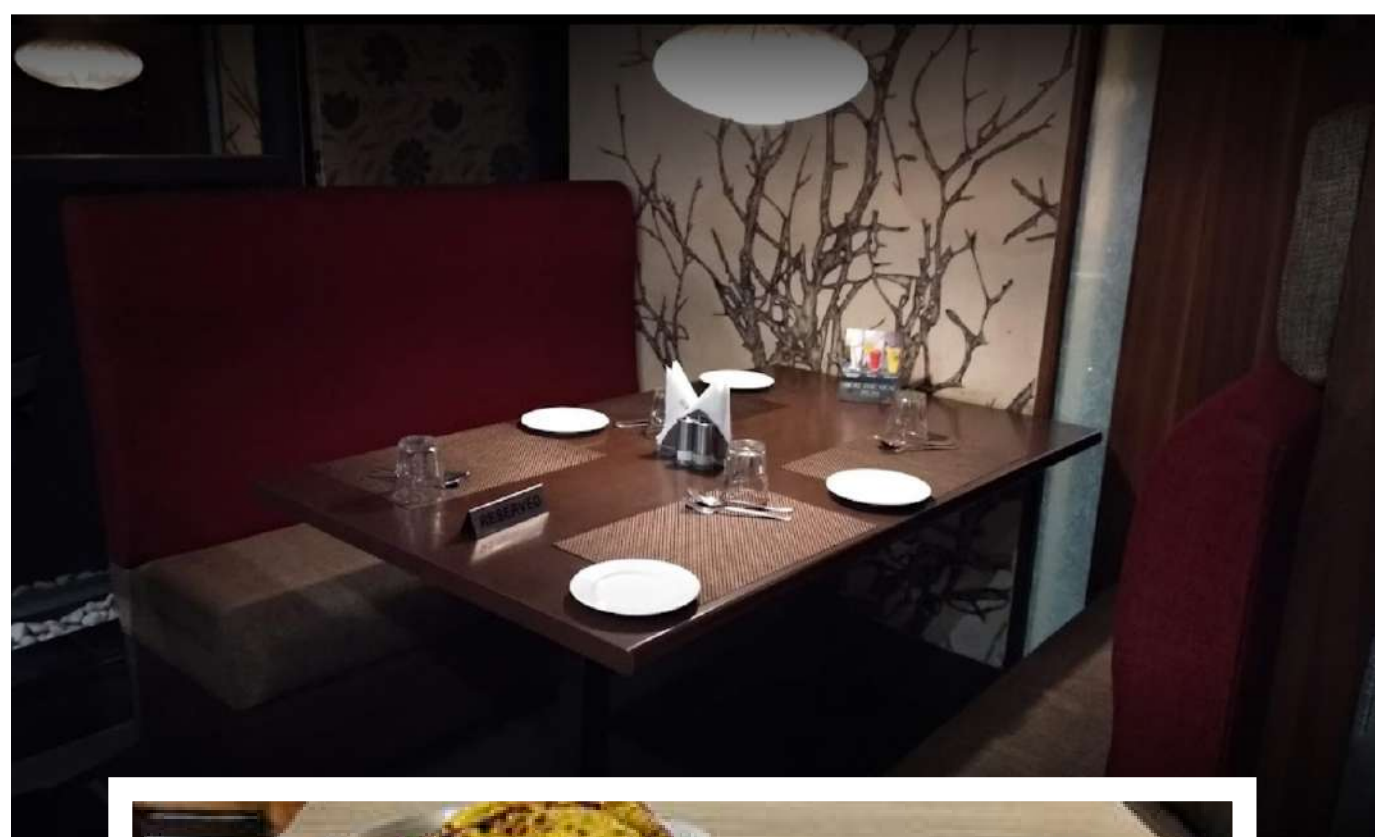
Quick Bites

Surya Mahal's *Rajasthani Thali*, *Paneer Butter Masala*, and *Special Dal Makhani* are top recommendations by its owner Harpal Singh Pali.

Address: 2nd floor, Surya Mahal Tower, K 44, Lal Bahadur Nagar, Arya Vihar Colony, Income Tax Colony, Milap Nagar, Jaipur 302018.

Timing: 8:00am to 11:00pm

Price: ₹ 1000 for two



A typical Rajasthani Thali at Surya Mahal



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ARTS AND THEATRE

When ART IS HOPE



Surela Chakraborty is in conversation with **Krish Datta**, Founder and **Avik Bandyopadhyay**, Co-Founder of MayinArt, an interesting uncle-nephew duo, who have created a one-of-a-kind curated online art platform.

Art aficionados Krish Datta and Avik Bandyopadhyay discovered a gap between artists and art enthusiasts, created due to geographical, socio-economic, and linguistic differences, and found a way to bridge it effectively. The curated art platform, MayinArt created by them gives a win-win solution for both artists who live in the remote corners of South-East Asia and India and art lovers who live across the seven seas. MayinArt was established four years ago with the aim of democratising art.

The name 'Mayin' stands for Lord Brahma and Shiva who are the creators of the Universe. This name rooted in Sanskrit also means those who have the skill of enchantment.



Their recent show at Singapore, 'Discover the Undiscovered' sold 30 pieces. They plan to hold another exhibition around July in Indonesia.



Avik Bandyopadhyay, Co-Founder

On display are a fine collection of works by both award winning and emerging artists. This gives the new artists opportunity to shine and learn along with the masters. The team at MayinArt promotes the artists' works via social media and through international gallery openings. Apart from doing shows, they work on references and leverage digital marketing strategies. They also have online catalogs and guided 3D virtual gallery tours.

The aim is to educate a large group of potential buyers so that they develop a taste for art. They also want to bust the myth that art is very expensive and is reserved for the elite and that one can be cheated to buy fake art. So far, 140 artists have signed up with MayinArt.

They want to make art a household item by tempting buyers with fresh, unique, and non-traditional artworks.

So, what inspired them to take the leap of faith? Avik reveals, "There were so many artists with creative talent inherited through thousands of years of cultural blending who did not get an opportunity to showcase their works beyond local markets. Many so-called common people like us wanted to possess and learn about art but did not have the means to own pieces of creative art."

Krish Datta who spent more than fifteen years working in Indonesia, traveled extensively to the farthest corners of the country. There he found many talented artists who never came into the limelight. This inspired him to start an online art gallery which focused on Indonesian artists. This explains their bias towards Indonesia. However, as MayinArt shaped up they chose to include a fair share of Indian artworks for its unparalleled depth and beauty.



He explains, "MayinArt was created with a couple of clear objectives. A large majority of artists who are excellent in their craft struggle to make ends meet. I wanted to create a platform where we curate such artists and their works and bring it to a larger audience in a cost-effective manner."

They have supported artists both during the lockdown period and post lockdown by organising a physical show in Jogja, Indonesia in November 2020 titled 'Ataraxia' and another recently concluded show in Singapore titled 'Discover the Undiscovered' between January and March 2021 to promote artists. They don't charge them for wall space, marketing and digital promotions.

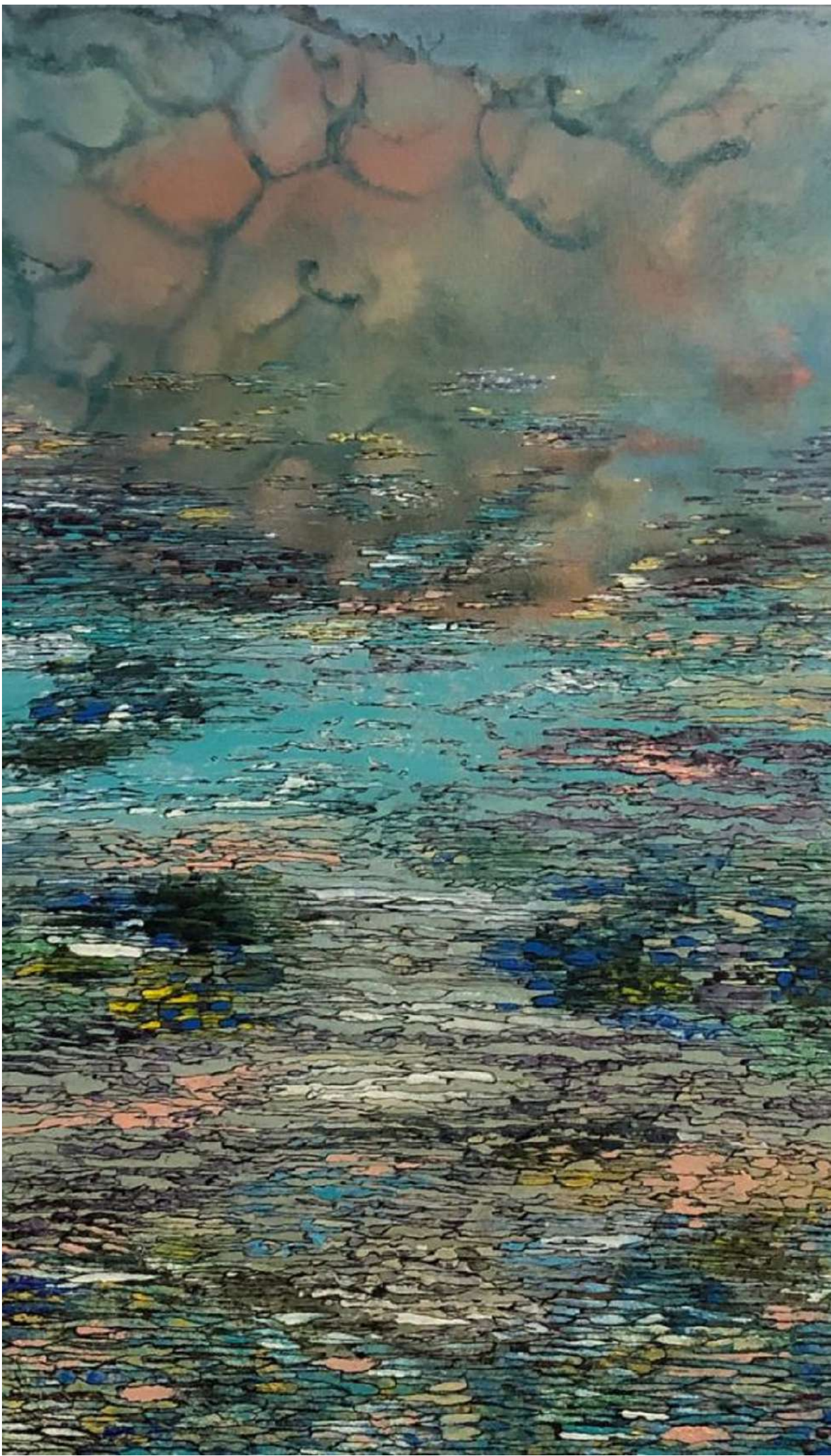
Most of the artworks can be priced in between a few hundred dollars to \$3,000. One can buy art for home and office. Since work from home has become the new normal, there are artworks that can perk up one's work station. There are art pieces for hotels and restaurants too. Artworks are categorised into medium, style and subject. The names of artists are neatly placed under broad categories such as masters, established, emerging, under 30 talent, sculptors, photographers and batik artists. There are many who want to seek expert advice for buying art, that is where team MayinArt comes in to provide practical guidance.



Founding an online art platform came with challenges. Avik informs, "We are a Singapore based company. In South Asia, there are two to three long term and reliable players who are online and we are one of them. The challenge we face is that art is still very visual and only slowly, with digital trust and visualisation it is improving. Online art purchase is still in its infancy. We have a long and wide path to go. We do have a competitive element with hundreds of physical galleries of which fifty are in Singapore itself. However, we have the advantage of reach and a much lower price point given the quality of work we offer."

One might ask on what basis do they choose the artists. They spend quality time meeting the artists. Some of their curators even live with the artist community if possible. While judging their style, they look for novelty. The curators find out what they want to express and why. The key consideration while selecting artworks is of course visual appeal. They put themselves in their customer's shoes and think "Would I or my customer want to see this work again and again?" They also select artists who have made art their passion and livelihood. They choose artists who are evolving, productive and are keen to improve.





Avik describes the neatly chalked out plans for future as, “In the long run, we want to leverage technology to improve our offering of a superior visual experience by providing a view of art in various settings through 2D and 3D visualisation, to give as close an experience as possible to the physical artwork in different settings. As we have noticed that the millennials and young buyers are more comfortable with online displays.”

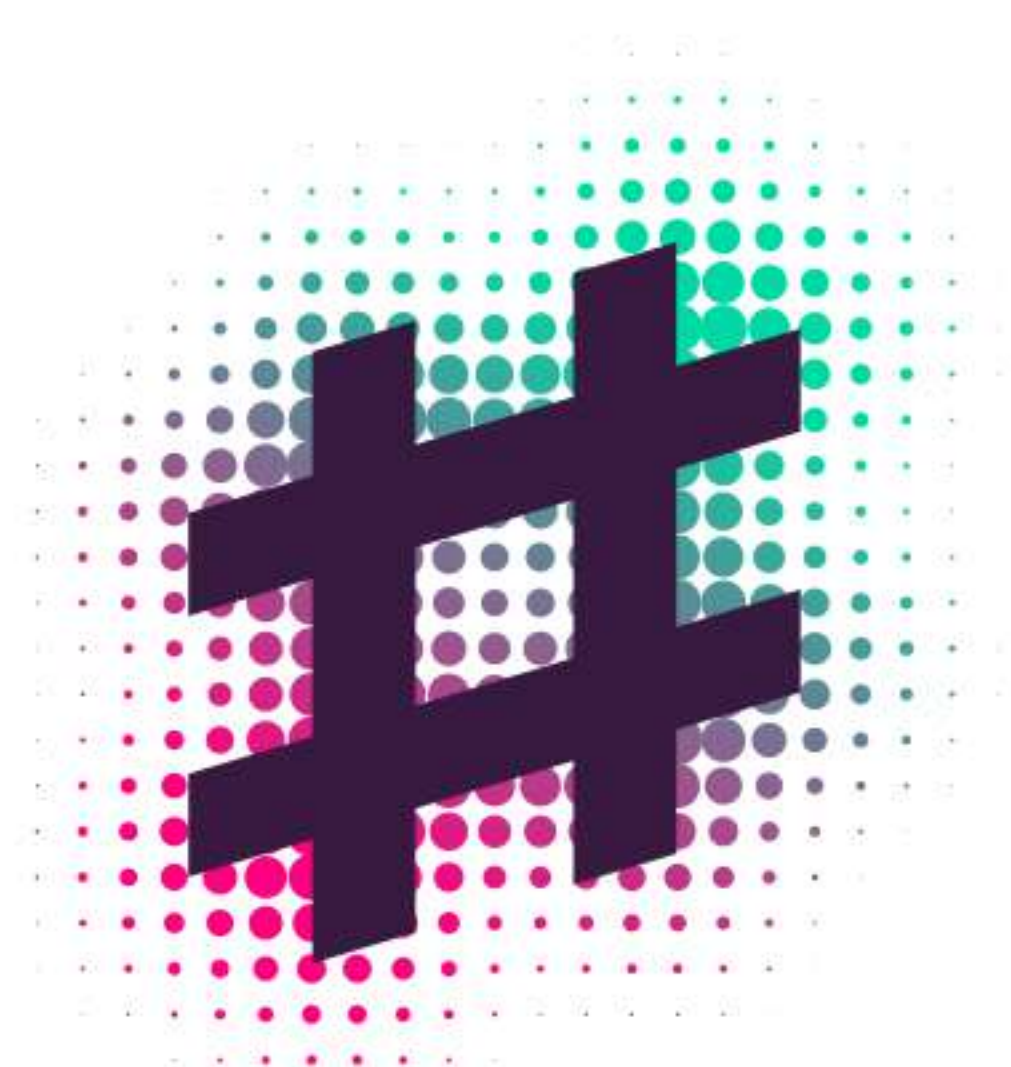
Pulling through the Pandemic: The artist communities in Indonesia were in great distress due to the pandemic since many were driven to abject poverty and faced an existential crisis. When hunger strikes and basic necessities are not met, getting access to basic art stationeries becomes difficult. This is when MayinArt placed trust in the collective spirit of humanity and reached out to their art patrons and received immense support. However, MayinArt team did not seek donations as the artists prefer to hold their heads high and sell art to sustain their family.

How to make that perfect choice with MayinArt? Avik advises, “By focusing on what the art makes you feel, looking at how the art has transformed the place rather than who has painted and how much it is priced. Art appreciation can be improved by sharing more on how art can transform a place, how one feels after seeing an artwork in their home. For some, it is important that they study the background of the art and the artist. Hence, we do add that content to our website, even though it takes a lot of hard work from our side. Knowing the artist, the emotion behind the work and the meaning of the expression often creates a far greater appreciation for the work. We encourage art lovers to read the contents on our website and we also do social media postings of their works and inspirations behind it. We answer any questions and do sessions where we invite artists to talk. All these will help create a greater appreciation.”

Avik informs, “Over the last two years MayinArt has sold over 110 artworks to collectors and buyers across USA, UK, Canada, Philippines, Italy, Switzerland, Australia, Indonesia, India and Singapore.”

“Art creates positive energy, uplifts the space where it is displayed and often becomes the highlight of your house,” says Avik.





h a s h t a g

TRAVEL



Avid travellers **Nikita Biswas** and **Abhishek Dubey** recount their recent experience, travelling to **Dumboor Lake**, Tripura, and the island called Narkel Kunja.

Travellers' Day Out: DUMBOOR LAKE, TRIPURA

A trip has been long on the cards, the pandemic making the wait only longer. We finally set out for Tripura, masks on and safety precautions completely in hand. It has truly been an experience like no other...

The journey to Dumboor Lake

Tripura is a beautiful state. Our excitement could hardly be contained. A long drive was to be undertaken in an SUV – and yet, the 3-and-a-half-hour-long journey did nothing to quench our thirst for adventure. Tripura is a state with a huge Bengali population, a testament of which can be seen on the billboards, signboards, and sweetshops around the state. We experienced a good, pleasant weather, something that was unexpected considering the ongoing heavy showers. Since we undertook this journey during Independence Day, we were fortunate enough to join the convoy of the tourism minister, accompanied by other dignitaries. It is this convoy that took us to the junction from where we could journey the resplendent Dumboor Lake in a boat.

Best for :

- Group Tour
- Adventure Tour
- Family outing
- Weekend Outing
- Romantic Getaway

Ride to Narkel Kunja

Dumboor Lake is surrounded by mangroves on all sides and was a truly a sight for sore eyes. Our boat ride allowed for a view of the lake and its surrounding like no other and gave us the opportunity to film our experience as the eye sees. We were able to see how the lake is used by the locals in their everyday lives, ferrying across in hand rowed boats.

The experience, however, was only beginning. We were informed that the occasion of Independence Day saw a tribal boat race occur, where men and women would race each other in friendly

competition.

Our destination however, was the popular coconut island, known locally and officially as Narkel Kunja. The islanders met all visitors warmly, and we found ourselves swept up in the hustle and bustle of a happening and lively day. It is through our interactions with the locals that we found that there are around 14 islands in the area itself, and Tripura Tourism provides the resources and amenities for their upkeep and promotion, aiding the living standards of the tribes of the region by boosting economic growth.





A Spirited Boat Race

Hooting, cheering, and whistling signalled the start of the boat race. With a total of 272 participants, this was clearly an event much awaited. Each longboat was composed of rowing team members. Men's team would have 7 members while the women's would have 9. For all those who enjoyed the closing ceremony at the Tokyo Olympics, this boat race was no less. The sight seemed to have jumped out of a period Hollywood movie, all gearing up to win for the sake of honour and of course, prize money!

Any further and we risk giving you spoilers for a journey that is meant to be experienced first-hand. Our photographs and videos hardly do the lake and its scenic beauty justice, least of all in encompassing the warmth of the people around us. For those looking for a short trip out of town, we strongly recommend this experience of a lifetime.



Cost

- **Hired car:** INR 6000/night
- **Boat:** INR 7000 for complete reservation. Boats here accommodate 15+ people.
- **Island stay and activities charge:** Seasonal, depending on tourist influx

How to Reach

- **By Train** – one can book a train from any location depending on the availability as lesser number of train travels in this route. However, a train from Kolkata is easy to book and take less time to reach Agartala, Tripura. One can then book a cab from Agartala Railway station to Dumboor Lake. The cab shall take 3.5 hours to drop you to the start point of the boat journey. From here, you hire a boat (1.5 hours) to reach Narkel Kunja island.
- **By Flight** – This is the easiest way to reach Tripura. One can book flight from almost any airport to Agartala's Maharaja Bir Bikram Airport. From here, book a cab to your destination. The cost ranges from INR 4000-INR 8000.
- **By Road** – Road travel is currently closed owing to COVID-19 and usually requires a passport and permit, owing to the shared border with Bangladesh.

Highlights:

- Although open all season, it is best to travel during the winters for a wholesome experience.
- We recommend booking your trip through the Tripura Tourism website for easier access and better pricing.



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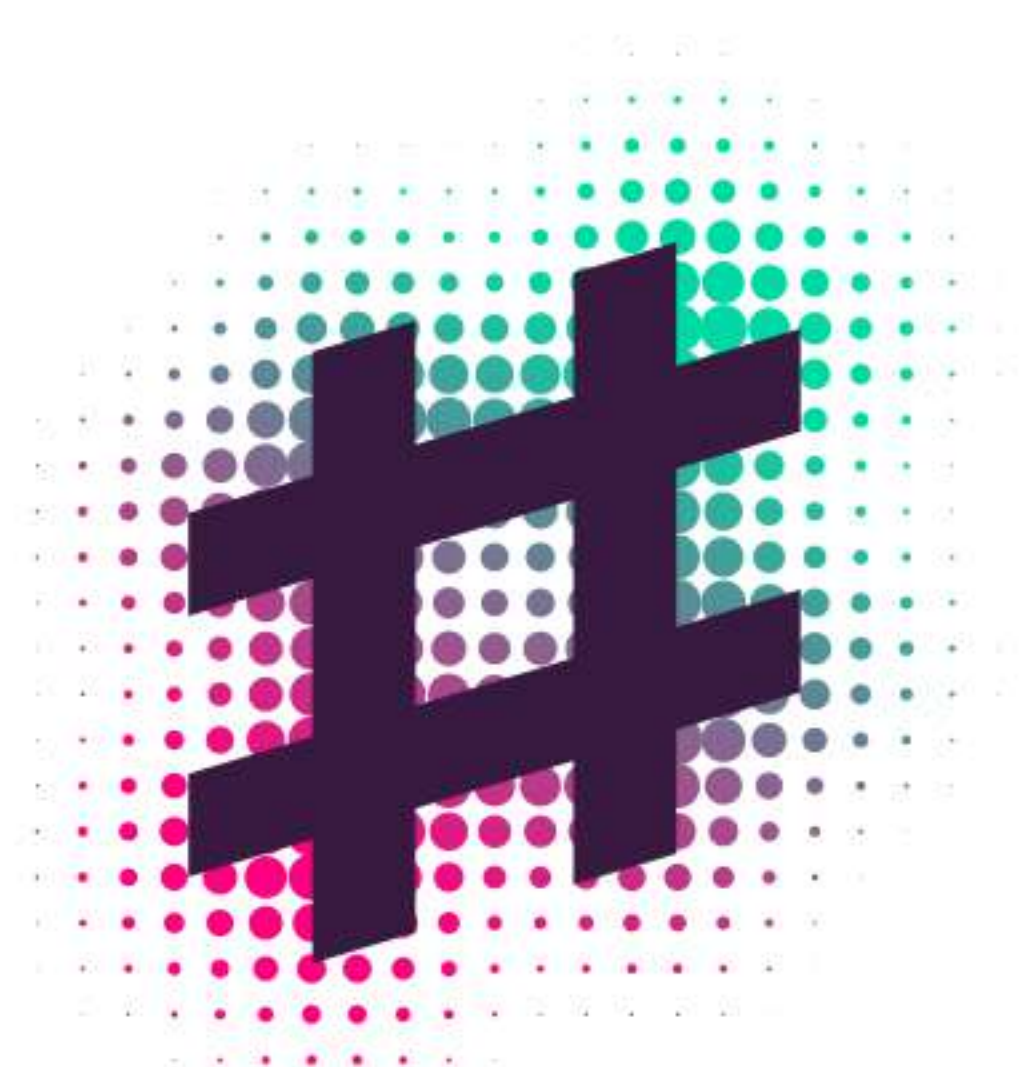
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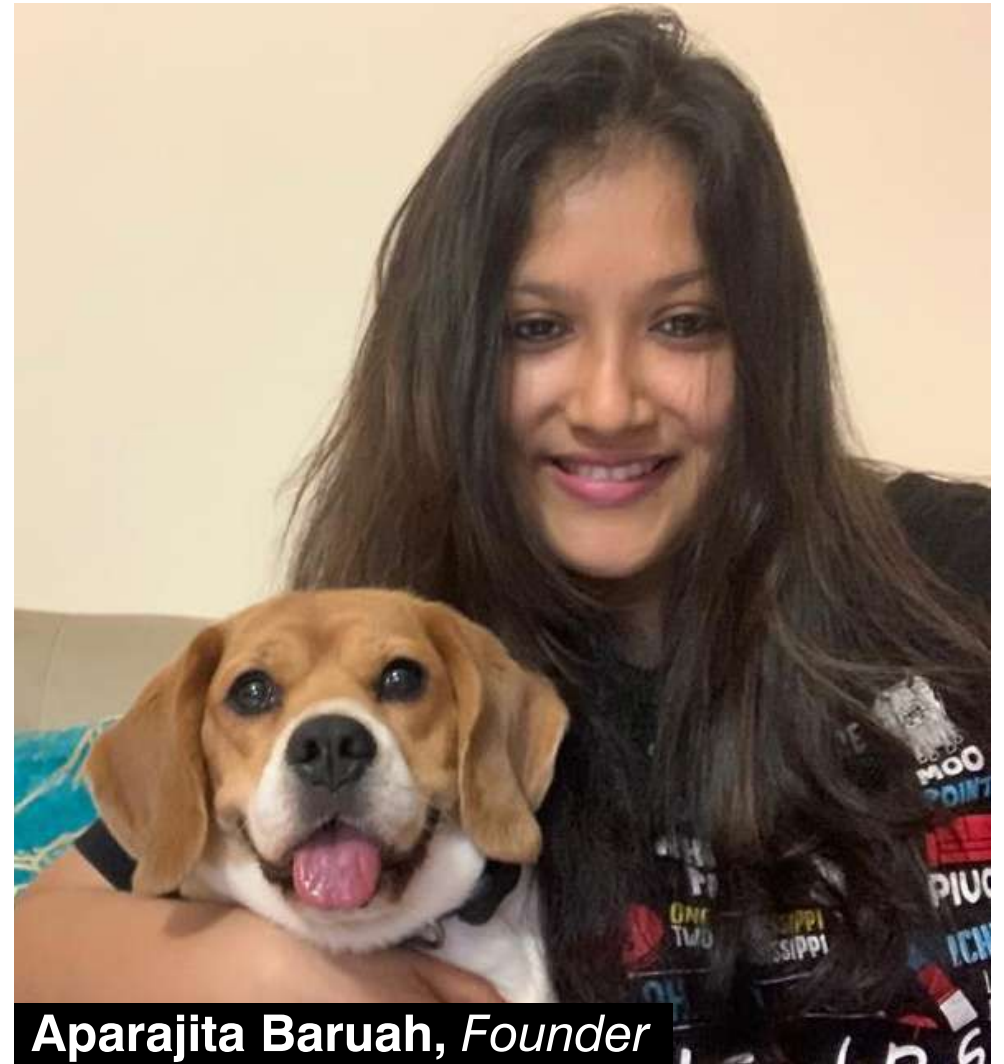
PETS

Pet Recreation Centre

That Pampers Your Pet The Right Way

DIVYA VALLABHANENI talks to the founder of a Bangalore based pet recreation brand DogNation, **APARAJITA BARUAH**, who is determined towards improving the quality of our four-legged family members, putting the pet's needs above all.

Have you ever been in a situation where you had to leave your pet and go out of the station? Did you find yourself nervous about leaving your furry friend in a pet-care centre? Are you a pet parent who has been scared about your pet's well-being while leaving them in a shelter? If you answer yes to any of the above, DogNation is at your rescue. DogNation is a lifestyle brand that focuses on providing a healthy environment to your pets.



Aparajita Baruah, Founder

What is DogNation all about?

DogNation is a pet day-care centre, where the boarding programmes are pet friendly to help your pet stay safe and feel comfortable in an open environment. Most of the dog boarding centres either leave them in a kennel cage or leash them up. Socialisation with the other dogs isn't encouraged in most of the centres; thus, dogs tend to become anxious and nervous. At DogNation, the focus is on the overall wellbeing of your pet. They help your pet grow physically as well as mentally by curating activities that help them socialise and stay in an environment that's happy.

A Glimpse Into Their Programmes

At DogNation programmes are planned with plenty of structured and unstructured play designed for the mental and physical stimulation. Activities include swimming, agility training, snuffle mat, mind games, and puzzles. Right from puppyhood to senior dogs, they have something to offer that supports and assists the entire pet parenting journey.

They also have add-on features for their subscriber base like monitoring your dog activity through an app based tracker which gives you the satisfaction of knowing what your dog have been upto while they are at DogNation.

Their USP is their focus on the dog patron's wellness and recreation for an overall development making it a lifestyle choice rather than a utility based requirement.



“Statistically, about 35% of the dog population is over weight; this can lead to various serious illnesses like arthritis, breathing issues, and reduce life expectancy in dogs. A lot of times, parents are unaware of their dog’s obese condition or the adverse effect it can have on them. DogNation offers programs on weight management to help tackle obesity,” shares Aparajita.

SERVICES AT DOGNATION

- Socialisation
- Day-care
- Boarding
- Swimming
- Training
- Grooming
- Spa and massage
- Fresh food
- Events

“In the long term we want to expand our chain of centres across India to offer a seamless experience to our subscriber base.”



How did the idea of setting up a professional dog care centre start?

Having grown up around dogs all her life, Aparajita has always been passionate about pets. “My father used to be consulted by vets for behavioural issues and train them for basic obedience, so I felt I had the background and the expertise to add value to the dog community.”

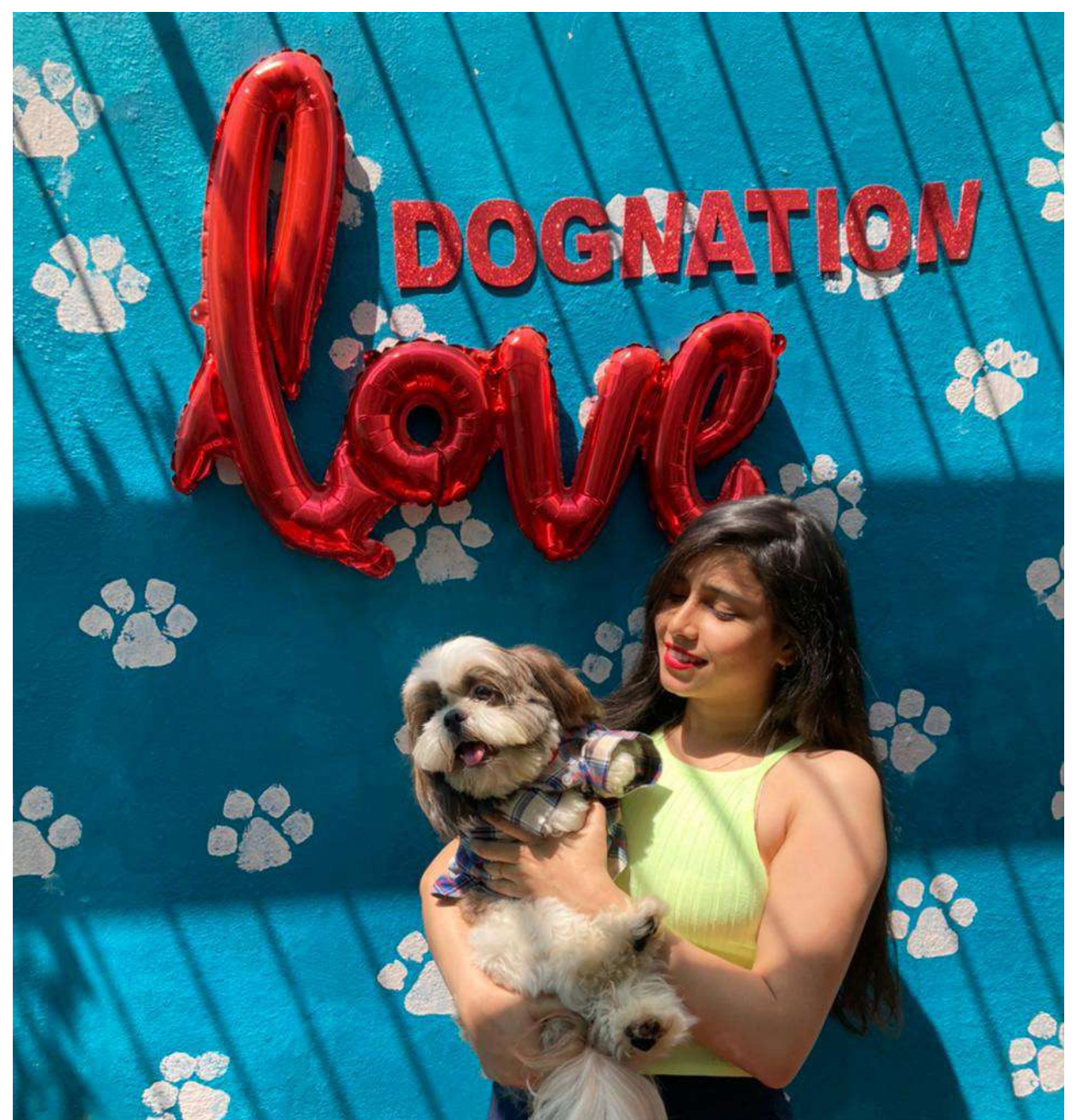
The idea for a boarding centre started when she needed to find an accommodation for her beagle Zahra, “I had a very bad experience with her returning from boarding being underweight and full of ticks and fleas. I realised that the quality of service provided in the pet space is greatly lacking in India and needs to be addressed. You have to be a pet parent yourself to understand the demands or requirements of a fellow pet parent. Hence, ideating the business model while putting yourself in the customer’s shoes was not very difficult for us. We understood that we were dealing with someone else’s baby, and this became the core value of the business,” she explains.

Brief on the App Tracking

Even though we leave the pet at a boarding centre, there is always some kind of anxiety that pops up when we think about how they are being taken care of. Subscribers at DogNation can get access to the app-based activity tracker, through which they get access to monitor the progress and activities of their pets. “This helps build transparency, trust and reliability,” Aparajita says.

Membership and How It Works

A subscription package is for dog parents who want to be regular to DN and become an exclusive member to give their dogs a happy and healthy lifestyle. “Since we offer a range of services, pet parents can make their own selection and build their own package depending upon their requirements and then subscribe to it either on a monthly, bimonthly, quarterly, half yearly or yearly basis” she says.



KNOW MORE

Location: 3rd Cross Road, Rustam Bagh Layout Main Road, S R Layout, Bengaluru, Karnataka 560017

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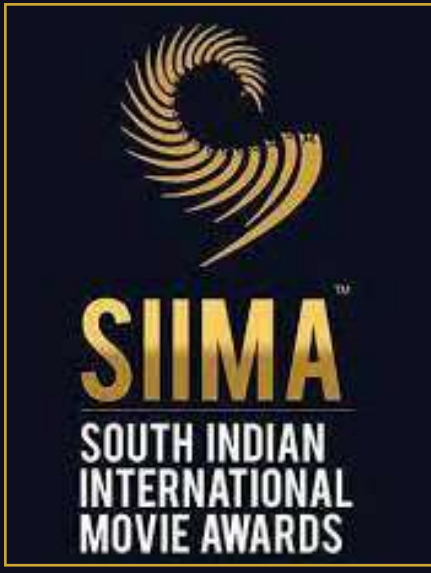
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Of Style, Statement and Celebrations – 2021 SIIMA Awards



Glam: Pooja Hedge



Stunning in black: Shanvi Srivastava

The South India International Movie Awards returned after a gap of one year, its previous iteration cancelled due to the ongoing pandemic. Hashtag brings you exclusive images from the event and the list of the winners from a much-awaited night.



Presenting an award: Sai Kumar



Candid conversation: Chiranjeevi and Raadhika Sarat Kumar

SIIMA 2020 Malayalam Winners

Category	Winner Name	Movie
Best Film	Gold Coin Motion Pictures	Ayyappanum Koshiyum
Best Director	Mahesh Narayanan	C U Soon
Best Actor In A Leading Role	Prithviraj Sukumaran	Ayyappanum Koshiyum
Best Actress In A Leading Role	Shobana	Varane Avashyamund
Best Music Director	Jakes Bejoy	Ayyappanum Koshiyum



Awards galore: Mahesh Babu



Ravishing in red: *Rashmika Mandanna*



Big Day: *Pooja Hedge and Allu Arjun*



Best Director: *Vamshi Paidipally*



Fun together: *Allari Naresh and Nani*



Just for laughs : *Yogi Babu*



Winning the award : *Basil Joseph*



Looking on : *Krithi Shetty*

SIIMA 2020 Tamil Winners

Category	Winner Name	Movie
Best Film	2D Entertainment	Soorai Pottru
Best Director	Sudha Kongara	Soorai Pottru
Best Actor In A Leading Role	Suriya	Soorai Pottru
Best Actress In A Leading Role	Aishwarya Rajesh	Ka Pae Ranasingam
Best Music Director	GV Prakash Kumar	Soorai Pottru



Dapper : *Rana*



Happy crew : Allu Arjun, Trivikram and Pooja Hedge



Bagging awards : Prithviraj Sukumaran



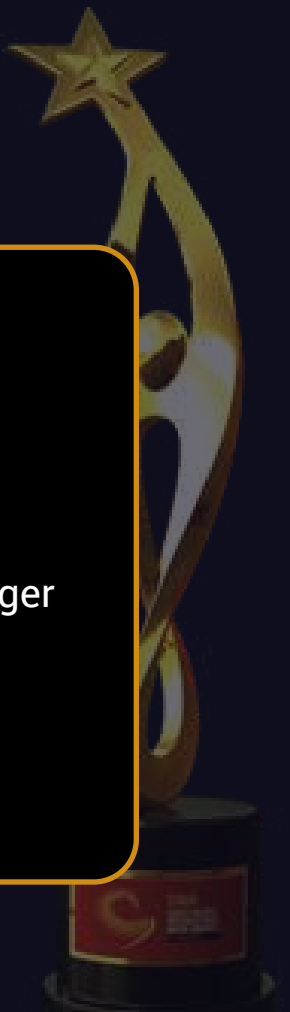
Ever green : Shobana Chandrakumar



Pretty : Ritu Varma

SIIMA 2020 Kannada Winners

Category	Winner Name	Movie
Best Film	Krishna Talkies	Love Mocktail
Best Director	Pannaga Bharana	French Biryani
Best Actor In A Leading Role	Dhananjay	Popcorn Monkey Tiger
Best Actress In A Leading Role	Milana Nagaraj	Love Mocktail
Best Music Director	Ajaneesh Lokanath	Dia





Musical note : SS Thaman



Fun : Vennela Kishore



Classy in white : Armaan Mallik



Stage on fire : Aishwarya Rajesh



Show Stopper : Sruthi Hassan

SIIMA 2020 Telugu Winners

Category	Winner Name	Movie
Best Film	Haarika & Hassine Creations & Geetha Arts	Ala Vaikunthapurramuloo
Best Director	Trivikram Srinivas	Ala Vaikunthapurramuloo
Best Actor In A Leading Role	Allu Arjun	Ala Vaikunthapurramuloo
Best Actress In A Leading Role	Pooja Hegde	Ala Vaikunthapurramuloo
Best Music Director	Thaman	Ala Vaikunthapurramuloo

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