

WE CONNECT

The INVINCIBLES

**Zoya Agarwal, Nikeeta
Takkale, Meghana Sakpal**
on redefining the cut

GRACE UNDER FIRE

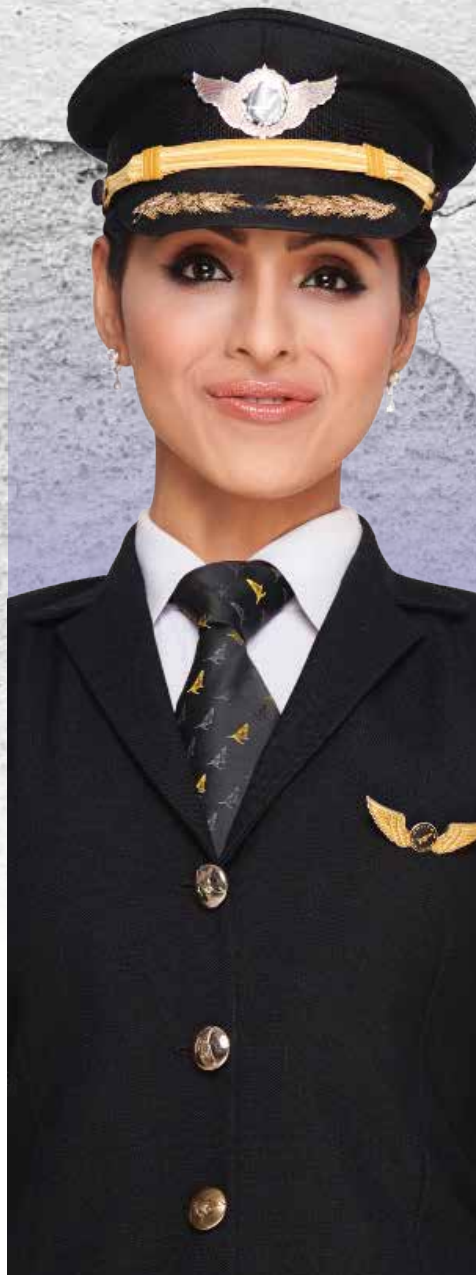
ACP Maya H More
on duty above & beyond

TURNAROUND QUEEN

Amrapali Chavan
rewrites her story

BEACONS OF EXCELLENCE

Dipti Kala & Maya Alagh
making it count!





IN-MIN'STM

READY TO COOK

NO ADDED PRESEVATIVE | NO ADDED COLOUR



For Franchise / Distributorship - 8484926015

Website: www.Inmins.co.in

INPRINT

Parag Mate
Founder

Gurbeer Singh Chawla
Co-founder

Anay Shirgaokar
Chairman

Tejas Gujarathi
Managing Director & CEO

Corina B. Manuel
Editor-in-Chief

Rashmeet Kaur Chawla
Associate Editor

Rashmi Singh
Content Strategist

Mahesh Dharamadhikari
Special Contributor

Altaf Pirjade
Mrunal Jadhav
Content Contributors

J Somnath
Design & Layout

Corporate Office:
1st Floor, Vithal Vista Building,
Rutuja Park Society,
Near Orchid School,
Baner Road, Pune - 411045
md@weconnectmagazine.com

Printed and Published by:
Tejas Gujarathi on behalf of
WE-G9 Publications & Events LLP

Printed at:
Fairprint, Narmada Para, Raipur
Chhattisgarh - 492001

Published from:
WE Connect, 2nd floor,
Raipur Tent House Building,
Opp. PNB Civil Station Road,
Raipur, Chhattisgarh - 492001
editor@weconnectmagazine.com



Inspiring inclusion



To paraphrase one of my oft-quoted adages *not all superheroes wear capes...* some of them don scrubs, lab coats, uniforms, racing or firefighting gear and sometimes even taken on the world draped in sarees, or face-off in ethnicwear! For me, March has always been a personal favourite. While the world slowly descends into the insanity that is, the Ides of March, I get to meet, hear stories and witness real-life heroes take centrestage while the world stops for a minute and doffs its hat to them.

Under the aegis of the International Women's Day, the month of March is all about celebrating a gender equal world—diverse, equitable and inclusive—sans bias, stereotypes and discrimination. I have been a staunch protagonist of raising awareness about indiscrimination, recognising a world where being different is both valued and fêted in equal parts. I believe that the International Women's Day is everyone's game, everywhere, every day. As one, we can — and must — learn to work and play together.

At *We Connect*, we did just that as we pulled out all stops to celebrate a gender equal world. *Our Hall of Fame* is filled with fiery women who had the grit, guts and gumption to shatter the glass ceiling and broke down rather big doors to carve an indelible place for themselves in often what is considered an all-boys club!

Meet our *Cover Women* — Capt. Zoya Agarwal, India's first female pilot to fly over the North Pole and the first Indian to be listed in the SFO Aviation Museum, San Francisco, ride shotgun with racing sensation Nikeetaa Takkale and then jump out of the way as the state's first and possibly *youngest* firefighter, Meghana Sakpal, chases fire.

For more inspiring moments, you ought to sit in on a conversation with Amrapali Chavan, the awesome Braveheart who survived the German Bakery bomb blast. That she refuses to remain a victim of an extremist's warped ideologies and insists that humanity is only thing that will make the earth spin on its axis is a tale worth re-telling!

Through our pages, we have honoured strong resilient women who have been unapologetically true to themselves. These tough women have cut a path for others, inspired, lead and lifted others along the way.

Truly, the first among equals, this girl gang!

Corina B Manuel
Editor-in-Chief

Table of CONTENTS

We Cover On Her Own

Discovering what makes Capt. Zoya Agarwal, Nikeetaa Takkale and Meghana Sakpal march to their own drumbeats.



03



10

We Honour Grace under fire

ACP Maya H More defines courage, integrity, duty, honour and doing the right thing.

We Respect Face the fire

German Bakery bomb blast survivor, Amrapali Chavan, is the definition of making each moment count.



14



17

We Mentor

Boardroom baronesses

Divya Momaya and Neha Shah, founders, MentorMyBoard, lend a whole new perspective about leadership through education and collaboration.

We Celebrate River of love

Nothing brings people together than a great cause. Case in point the My River My Valentine event was a blast.



20



24

We Aspire

Dreams on wings

From soaring to the skies to giving members of her sorority wings to fly—We Connect follows former Squadron Leader of the Indian Air Force Dipti Kala's incredible journey.

We Care Mamma mia!

Ghazal Alagh Co-founder, Mamaearth, on a mission for safe and natural personal care.



26



28

We Visit

Through the looking glass

News nuggets from around the country!

We Write We are listening!

Your feedback is important to us.



32

We Cover



On Her Own

Three young women – **Captain Zoya Agarwal, Nikeetaa Takkale** and **Meghana Sakpal** – three trajectories. One destination: The stars. While Captain Zoya Agarwal and Nikeetaa Takkale get candid with **Priyanka Chandani**, Maharashtra's first female firefighter, Meghana Sakpal shares insight into her journey with **Mrunal Jadhav**, all leading right up to that one moment of time when they shattered the glass ceiling.



Where eagle dares

Women in India have made significant strides in establishing themselves as pioneers on the global stage. In a groundbreaking achievement, four women, led by Captain Zoya Agarwal, etched their names in history by completing a journey spanning nearly 16,000 kilometres from San Francisco to Bengaluru by air — marking the longest non-stop commercial route ever undertaken. This landmark moment marked the first time an all-women crew ventured this route.

Zoya was next in line to lead India's Vande Bharat Mission, an evacuation operation aimed at repatriating Indian nationals from various countries back to their homeland during the COVID-19 pandemic.

individual to achieve recognition as a pilot in the coveted space. During this conversation, Zoya shares all that went into completing the mission, what it entails to be the first woman pilot to fly over the North Pole, braving emotional challenges, her many achievements, her life beyond work and more.

"The journey was indeed difficult, but I treasured every minute of it. It is truly breathtaking when you realise you will be crossing the North Pole when the compass will turn 180 degrees. Taking off and landing over the North Pole is not for the faint of heart," said Captain Zoya, who is the first female pilot to fly over the North Pole, feels honoured and humbled by the trust shown by the civil aviation ministry and her flag carrier – Air India. "This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to pilot a Boeing 777 on its first SFO-BLR flight, one of the world's longest flights over the North Pole."

Flying high

Having been announced the first Indian to enter the SFO Aviation Museum in San Francisco, Zoya is convinced that India has much to offer to the global aviation industry which should inspire women around the globe to follow their dreams. "If you ask an eight-year-old girl who used to sit on her balcony, looking at the sky and dreaming of becoming a pilot, it's a dream come true for me that this recognition has been

From North Pole to SFO Museum

In 2022, Agarwal secured her spot in the San Francisco Aviation Museum, becoming the sole

Capt. Zoya Agarwal
India's first pilot to fly
over the North Pole

given to me by the United States. I am grateful that I have inspired many women to pursue their dreams in every possible way," said the pilot.

Up where she belongs

While Zoya is thrilled with her achievements, her journey hasn't been easy, especially when it comes to braving emotional upheavals. The hurdles in her career began at home when she chose to seek an aviation career. "My mother was sobbing when I initially told her I wanted to be a pilot. My parents thought that a woman wanting to be a pilot was not 'normal', and they encouraged me to choose the conventional road that led to marriage and settle down. When I look back on all those hurdles, I feel that I have come out of it stronger with impeccable passion for my profession," said Zoya and added that working hard to learn and get recognition in the aviation sector is what finally helped her get her parents' support and appreciation. "My parents are still my biggest supporters."

Giving wings

Carving her path in a male-dominated world, Zoya is the fifth girl to join Air India. She said, at present, women pilots secure 5 percent of its strength globally. Until 2016, several airlines would not even consider employing female pilots due to sexism in the Indian aviation business. Zoya observes that the world is changing and so is the way to look at women. "I've had to battle hard to demonstrate to everyone around me the power of women in this industry and to dispel the gender stereotypes that surround aviation," she said. Unlike many other airlines in India and across the world, which did not allow women 17 years ago, Zoya cleared that she wasn't treated unfairly because of her gender. "There will always be people who do not believe in me, and I have utilized this as a driving force to stay on top of my game.

It all comes down to dedication, hard work, and passion," she said matter-of-factly.

Making the trap

More achievements come with more responsibilities and Zoya agreed to feel overwhelmed at some point. However, she has a healthier way to look at those circumstances by believing that she holds the power to bring change in this world. As a public figure, she feels that to bring change in society one has to take up the responsibility and lead the way for the masses. "I firmly believe that women are good at multitasking as they can pull off any responsibility that has been delegated to them. It gives me immense pleasure that I can work hard to achieve every milestone that comes my way and to inspire not just women but everyone across the globe," she stated.

Speaking about some of the most cherished moments of her life as a pilot, Zoya recalled a time when she, along with her team were able to save many lives during the COVID-19 pandemic. "When we flew a flight full of people amidst the pandemic (Vande Bharat Mission) and could help people meet their families and loved ones. It makes you realise that you have so much responsibility on your shoulders and people blindly put their faith in you and trust you with their lives. While I was walking out of the cockpit, I could see tears in people's eyes that left a massive impact on me. There was applause as everyone was appreciating our efforts, but the smile on people's faces was something that I will cherish for the rest of my life," she signed off. □

Zoya lead India's Vande Bharat Mission, an evacuation operation aimed at repatriating Indian nationals from various countries during the COVID-19 pandemic.



WE CONNECT

Speed Queen



Nikeetaa Takkale

Motorsport Racing
Sensation

In a relatively short span of time, 23-year-old rally driver from Pune, Nikeetaa Takkale, has achieved remarkable success. She entered the world of professional rally driving at the age of 21, and within two years, she has amassed 99 trophies, including the prestigious motorsport award for emerging Indian women in 2022. Nikeetaa's participation as the sole female driver representing India in the upcoming Asian Pacific Rally Championship (APRC) has served as an inspiration to aspiring female drivers, establishing her as one of India's most promising young talents in recent years.

Of markers and milestones

Born and raised in a "not-so-conventional" environment, Nikeetaa explored various career options before discovering her passion for motorsports during a visit to an autocross event in Pune. Her encounter with her present coach Chetan Shivram at the event ignited her enthusiasm for driving. She recalls, "He encouraged me to try autocross for fun, and I instantly fell in love with it." Motorsport wasn't initially a career choice for Nikeetaa, but her father's encouragement and her newfound fascination with cars changed her trajectory. With about 70 trophies won in a year, she quickly began to make her mark in the sport.

All-consuming passion

While motorsport is gaining popularity in India, it remains an expensive passion to pursue. Nikeetaa acknowledges this,



I've never been the type to stick with one thing for life. I've constantly made changing decisions, but it's only motorsport that has provided me with the thrill to pursue it long-term. I have many goals to achieve."

stating, "It undeniably demands substantial funds, and it's fair to say that this sport is often associated with the affluent. However, what you truly need is the courage and confidence to handle a sports car. I'm optimistic that the sport will become more accessible, allowing many more to participate."

Setting goals

Besides being a qualified cosmetologist and fashion designer, Nikeetaa now dedicates herself to inspiring youth, especially girls, to take up motorsports. She intends to pursue her passion as a career and has set her sights on the World Racing Championship later this year. She explained, "I've never been the type to stick with one thing for

life. I've constantly made changing decisions, but it's only motorsport that has provided me with the thrill to pursue it long-term. I have many goals to achieve."

Breaking into an all-boys club

While the realm of sports is gradually becoming more inclusive, it still has a long way to go. Nikeetaa emphasised the need for a more inclusive environment, saying, "Motorsport is predominantly male-dominated, but that doesn't faze me. When you compete with men and stand on the podium alongside them, that's how you carve out your space as a woman. You simply need to provide equal competition." Asked whether she has faced additional challenges as a woman in her racing career, she responded, "I've never felt that way. The people who have been part of my journey, my father and trainer, are men, and they have been incredibly supportive. I've never had to do anything I wasn't comfortable with. My aim has always been to excel in whatever I do. That's how I've continued to achieve and will keep doing so."

Of wins and losses

In her brief but eventful career as a racer, Nikeetaa has learned to embrace victories and come to terms with losses. She stressed the importance of maintaining a positive outlook. "In sports, not everyone can win every day. Some days are yours, and other days belong to someone else. The key is to remain confident that the next day will be yours. What I've gleaned from this sport is the ability to turn any adversity in your favour. I've learned to be more optimistic," she said before signing off. □



Chasing fire

Women are excelling in almost every sector nowadays, aren't they? However, there are still areas where their representation remains limited due to inadequate infrastructure. It's not that women haven't attempted to enter these sectors, but rather that the existing infrastructure and systems haven't facilitated their participation.

Twenty-six-year-old Meghana Sakpal from Pune is different. She walked through doors not many considered knocking on or opening. She decided to join the fire brigade department of Pune Municipal Corporation, (PMC). Meghana becomes the first — *and youngest* — woman to join the department, not just in her city but in the state of Maharashtra.

First among equals

On March 1, coinciding with the global celebration of women, the Pune fire department welcomed its first woman firefighter. While the department had long intended to recruit women, not many applied for the position. However, Meghana is the first woman to join among 167 recruits this year. To achieve her goal, she moved to Pune from Mumbai, which this

third-generation firefighter says is “a dream come true”.

Circa 2019, Meghana started practicing for the dream job, including rigorous training. However, in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic brought the world to a screeching halt. “I resumed training in 2022 and then applied for the Mumbai firefighter recruitment. However, I didn't make the grade. I applied for Pune posting and cleared it after some preparations,” recalls Meghana.

Her father's daughter

Although Meghana is the first woman to become a firefighter, her dream runs in her genes. Both her grandfather and father served as firefighters in Mumbai. However, she had no direct access to the department for any guidance. “I have seen my father and grandfather work in the field. I used to speak to them about emergencies and what they do in the field. My father would show me videos and how they rescued people. It used to fascinate me, so it was natural for me to feel inclined toward the job profile,” said Meghana.

Walking the path less travelled

Venturing on the path that demanded courage but Meghana wasn't alone. Her family stood rock solid to support her, especially her father who played a pivotal role in her journey. “Once my college friends saw my father in uniform, they were awestruck. All of them insisted that I join the same department. I can't forget my family and friends' support when I failed the Mumbai ground

Meghana Sakpal
First Female Fighter
of Maharashtra



I have seen my father and grandfather work in the field. I used to speak to them about emergencies and what they do in the field. My father would show me videos and how they rescued people. It used to fascinate me, so it was natural for me to feel inclined toward the job profile.”

test. The motivation came from my friends to not lose hope,” reminisces the avid swimmer.

For her selection, Meghana worked hard on her physical stamina, running over hills, tracking, and swimming for hours. She says that she was aware of the demanding nature of the job, however, her determination was stronger than any challenge around the corner. “My father is my staunchest cheerleader. He taught me that if I put all my efforts and not give up, I will get the desired success.

Breaking barriers

Meghana’s journey serves as a reminder to face challenges and continue to head for your goal. Her words of encouragement resonate with all women striving for success, emphasizing the importance of resilience and determination. As Meghana takes on her new role as a firefighter in Pune, she not only breaks conventional gender barriers but also paves the way for other women to follow their dreams no matter how unconventional they are. □



Grace *under fire*

Through Assistant
Commissioner of Police
ACP Maya More's journey,
Gurbeer Singh Chawla
discovers how people
driven by integrity
and accountability
can truly make a
difference in law
enforcement





We Honour

Gurbeer Singh Chawla
Co-founder

Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Maya H. More of the Yellow Gate Division, Mumbai, epitomizes dedication and hope in a world where corruption and unfairness often exist. It is moot to say that ACP More has dedicated herself to helping her community with honesty, fairness, and determination.

Heeding her calling

For ACP More, working in the law enforcement division isn't just a job; it's a calling driven by her strong belief in improving society. She takes on corruption head on, working diligently to ensure everyone's rights are protected. Her efforts in the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) are vital in fighting one of the country's biggest problems. Maya leads many initiatives to combat corruption and hold those who do wrong accountable, inspiring her colleagues and the community. However, ACP More's influence extends beyond her job purview. She epitomizes integrity and kindness in everything she does — whether it's helping victims of abuse or aiding people recovering from addiction.

A virtuous impact

The journey of ACP More to her current position shows her commitment to doing her best to make this country a better place. Even though she has achieved a lot in sports like weightlifting, Kho-Kho, volleyball, and athletics, ACP More affirms true learning rests within the parameters of kindness and humility. She believes that real education is more than just academic success, "it's about continuous growth as a person and leading a meaningful and impactful life."

To serve and protect

Like anyone, ACP More was attracted to join the field for its prestige, power, and promotion attached to the job. However, soon

her initial excitement grew deeper than personal gain. Throughout her career, she overcame many challenges, showing her strong commitment to duty and service.

At the start of her career as a trainee in Nasik, ACP More led a squad of 30 officers. She handled complex cases with resilience and determination, leading her to become a Senior Police Inspector. One of the notable achievements of her career is when she led a raid on a rave party and caught nearly 350 people involved in unlawful activities.

Balancing act

Throughout her career, ACP More's priorities have remained clear; to work tirelessly for the justice of women, children, and senior citizens. She has been a relentless advocate for victims of domestic violence and drug addiction, earning accolades such as the *Rashtrapita Mahatma Gandhi Vysanmukti Seva Puraskar* for her outstanding work in drug rehabilitation.

ACP More not only dedicates herself to her job but also ensures a balance between work and personal life, with the strong support of her family.

This year, ACP Maya H. More has been chosen for the 'Police Medal' presented by the President of India





I want each woman to take control of their life and not let anyone break their spirit. You survived the abuse. You are going to survive the recovery. There's always support available."



Guiding light

ACP More's journey from being a trainee to becoming an Assistant Commissioner of Police, ACP of Yellow Gate Division in Mumbai stands on her guiding principles of determination and devotion to duty. She leaves behind a legacy of hope

and determination. "My priority is to work for the justice of women, children, and senior citizens," says ACP More matter-of-factly.

Staying strong

Over the years, her job has exposed her to several social and

political issues. ACP More believes that the most common and burning issue in the country today is domestic violence against women. To serve women better, each police station has a lady officer to help women with their complaints and guide them to get justice. "I want each woman to take control of their



The journey of ACP Maya H. More to her current position shows her commitment to doing her best to make this country a better place.

life and not let anyone break their spirit. You survived the abuse. You are going to survive the recovery. There's always support available," states ACP More.

Roll call of honours

For her outstanding work as a police officer, ACP More has received more than 160 awards including 'The Pride of India' presented

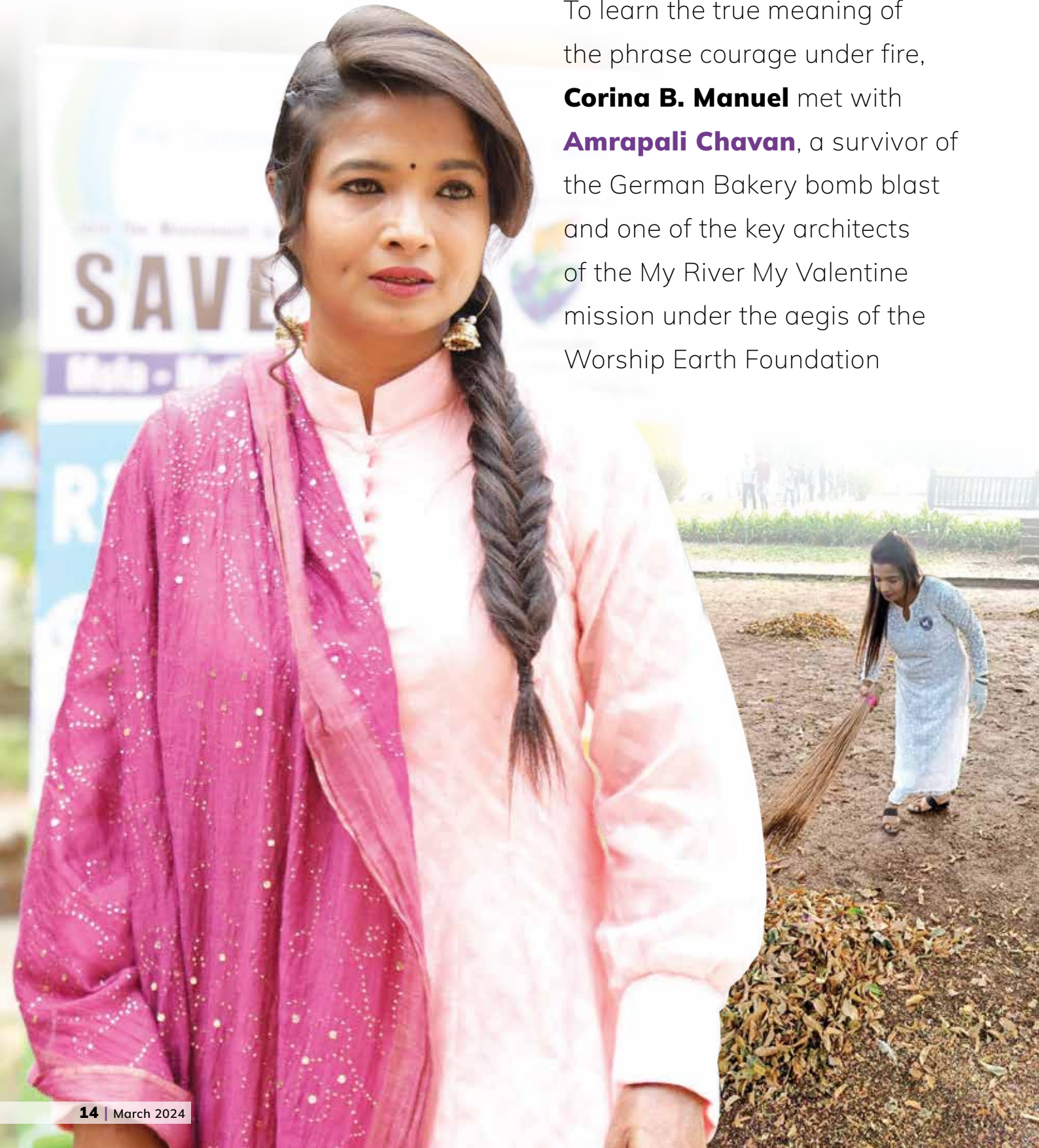
by the former late Chief Minister of India, Sheela Dixit. This year, ACP More has been chosen for the 'Police Medal' presented by the President of India - given to the officers for their devotion to duty.

Her accolades are a result of her dedication to service and the support of her family. Interestingly, ACP More doesn't see her awards as validation for her work but "an inspiration to do better". □



Face the fire

To learn the true meaning of the phrase courage under fire, **Corina B. Manuel** met with **Amrapali Chavan**, a survivor of the German Bakery bomb blast and one of the key architects of the My River My Valentine mission under the aegis of the Worship Earth Foundation



Fourteen years ago, an extremist set off a bomb in the premises of the German Bakery restaurant in Koregaon Park, Pune, and Amrapali Chavan's life was literally blown to smithereens in more ways than one. With 60 percent of her body ravaged, 300 non-surgical treatments, seven major surgeries, thousands of metal fragments still embedded in her body, countless bags of plasma, double that number of bottles of blood and permanent disability, later, Amrapali rose as a proverbial Phoenix from the ashes of anguish, despair, rage and unimagined levels of horrors to take back the night. As far as survivors go, the indomitable Amrapali Chavan is a force of nature.

A haunting memory

A quick trip back to February 13, 2010. At 6.40pm Amrapali Chavan headed to the German Bakery restaurant in Koregaon Park for a cuppa java with a friend. Her server, Gokul, guided the lady to a bench near the kitchen, which would later to light as the very spot where the bomb had been planted.

As Amrapali waited for her friend who was running late, she momentarily vacated her seat to join another friend at a different table at 6.50pm. Within minutes, chaos erupted as a deafening explosion shattered the stillness of the evening. Amrapali's memories of that evening is engulfed in memories of smoke, flames,

acrid smell of burning flesh and the tormented screams of fellow patrons. She personally sustained severe injuries, including burns to both legs and the traumatic loss of movement in her body.

Scars from the past

The memory of hearing her quietly relive the sheer horror of that fateful evening still gives me the chills. She softly recalls, "Help came after 45 minutes. Both my legs were burnt. My entire body was on fire. One of my legs was broken into three pieces, and the flesh was peeling off and bones were hanging by the skin. I remember an expat begging for help in the fire, but I couldn't assist due to the circumstances. Finally, three or four people picked me up and took me to Inlaks & Budhrani Hospital on South Main Road in Koregaon Park."

Light end of tunnel

Amrapali was in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) for about 60 days. "I couldn't hear or see. My body was completely immobile. Twice I clawed back from the threshold of death. My mental state was deeply affected," she reminisces. After nine months of mind-numbing resurgence, Amrapali took her first steps outside her home, stubbornly refusing to be confined to a wheelchair. Rejecting all possibilities of falling prey to the self-imposed limitations of her injuries, she ventured out with

the aid of an elbow stick, resolute to not let her disability become her definition.

"The bomb blast, carried out by fanatics, inflicted unimaginable devastation on countless lives, highlighting the destructive consequences of actions that go against nature. Experiencing first-hand those 60 days in the ICU made me realise the fragility of human beings. It was during that time when I gained a deep appreciation for the preciousness of life and the value of water itself." However, even in the darkest of nights, there is a sliver of light. For Amrapali, that faint beam of light shone through "the generosity of so many individuals who selflessly donated blood and plasma. Throughout my recovery journey, I was incredibly touched by their acts of kindness. To date, it serves as a powerful reminder of the solidarity and compassion that can emerge in the aftermath of a tragedy."

Finding strength amidst adversities

Cut to the present. In the truest spirit of the phrase, the soft-spoken Amrapali is a true survivor and an undefeated hero. She underwent over 300 surgeries and still bears thousands of metal shards in her body; she refuses to allow herself to remain a victim of her circumstances. Even though 60 percent of her body has been ravaged by the after-effects of the bomb blast, Amrapali's core



Throughout my recovery, I was incredibly touched by acts of kindness. It serves as a powerful reminder of the solidarity and compassion that can emerge in the aftermath of a tragedy."



remains intact. Where others would have dived into the abyss of despair and succumbed, Amrapali instead chose to grasp the jagged oft-slippery walls of the chasm and hoist herself back to the ledge of hope and light. Once she found safe purchase, she turned her life around by drawing inspiration from Parag Mate, her mentor and Chairman-Founder of the Worship Earth Foundation. At his bidding, she chose to pick up the cudgel and go to battle for her beloved Mulla-Mutha River on whose banks she had grown up—and one she considers as her personal Valentine.

Today, this gentle, yet fierce advocate of river conservatism has raised the bar by ensuring the safety of not just the Mula-Mutha River but also the myriad rivers that flow across India. But I am getting a little ahead of myself.

Becoming limitless

Refusing to let her frailties overpower her, circa 2015, Amrapali climbed 17,500 of the Stok Mountain. Why? “I refuse to let anybody, including me, put limitations on me,” she fiercely grins. Perhaps that is also the reason when exactly nine years — February 13, 2019 — after that horrifying evening, this Woman of Steel literally gave herself wings when she decided to celebrate the anniversary of that hell by jumping off the cliff and paraglided from a height of 2200 feet. Again, I asked her why? “Because I could...and can,”

Amrapali simply said.

Payback time

Amrapali became a protagonist of the environmental protection operation through her involvement with the Worship Earth Foundation and We Punekar. “Encouraged by the unwavering support of the people who had stepped up for me and forever in their debt, I made a promise to myself to pay forward the kindness by helping others and preserving our environment for as long as I live.” Helping her stay her course was Parag Mate, who continued to offer Amrapali his unwavering support and guidance akin to that of a father figure. Encouraging her to channel her energies into social work, Parag Mate ignited within Amrapali a sense of purpose and direction. Having spent her childhood by the banks of the Mula-Mutha river, Amrapali is acutely aware of the environmental degradation plaguing her beloved waterway. Motivated by a desire to restore vitality to the river that shaped her upbringing, she tirelessly advocates for its conservation and revitalization, embodying the ethos of ‘My River, My Valentine’ mission.

Moreover, in the last four years, Amrapali has gone the distance doing exactly what she set out to do. Consider this. She has served as an ambassador for the solid waste department of the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC). Not content with simply advocating for environmental

causes, Amrapali has now committed a large chunk of her time to counselling students on mental health issues, providing valuable support and guidance through the education department.

Not without my mentor

After all, there is no greater evangelist than one reborn. Ditto Amrapali who has made it her life’s mission to battle for the cleanliness of the river, inspiring scores of the young n’ the restless to share her devotion to preserving the essence of life. Her staunch resolve and commitment doubles as a beacon of hope and muse to all those who encounter her remarkable story.

Next chapter

Amrapali, along with the Worship Earth Foundation and We Punekar, mobilized approximately 5,000 enthusiastic youths for the cause. Their collective efforts yielded remarkable results, as evidenced by the retrieval of four-and-a-half tons of plastic and garbage from the banks of the Mula-Mutha River on Sunday, February 11, 2024. This concerted endeavor underscores the community’s commitment to preserving and revitalising the natural resource for generations to come... Her motto in life? “Unless you feel it, you will not change!”

More power to Amrapali. May her tribe continue to increase... □





Boardroom baronesses

MentorMyBoard, founded by **Divya Momaya** and **Neha Shah**, seeks to empower boardroom leadership through education and collaboration. **Mrunal Jadhav** delves into the platform's wider purpose and influence



In the fast-paced and ever-changing environment of corporate India, where boardroom choices resonate across the economy, two exceptional women, Divya Momaya and Neha Shah started on a remarkable journey driven by a common goal of governance excellence. Armed with their extensive knowledge and commitment, the two set out to pave the way for a future dominated by ethical leadership and strong governance. MentorMyBoard (MMB), their idea, has risen as a source of hope and enlightenment, ushering in a new era of empowered boardroom leadership.



To build a successful venture

Divya and Neha incorporated their experiences in corporate and securities laws and HR and compliance respectively.

Broader perspective

Founded in 2018, MentorMyBoard stands relevant to the rising demands of corporate management. To build a successful venture Divya and Neha incorporated their experiences in corporate and securities laws and HR and compliance respectively, with the mission to democratize governance education and empower board directors at all levels of a corporate hierarchy.

"We realized that education and training were key to bridging this gap

and empowering board leaders to make informed decisions," said Neha.

Smooth operations

One of the key components of the platform was to ensure a smooth operation. The subscribed members receive access to tools, networking opportunities, and customized learning experiences, creating an informed community of board leaders.

"Members go through various experiential learnings throughout the year which helps them in their board journey and also allows them



to network with other like-minded directors and board aspirants,” said Divya.

“The platform focuses on co-creation of good governance so it is a holistic platform that offers opportunities to all the members, mentors, and industry experts to share their governance best practices,” she added.

Training the trainer

While there are several existing platforms providing leadership solutions to corporate firms, Neha points out the gap between training promoters and founders and not just independent directors. “Unless we train promoters and founders on good governance, independent directors will not be able to participate effectively,” she explained.

Some of their programs within the platform are the Board Tattva Series, Women Directors Conclave, and Independent Directors Summit foster collaboration and knowledge-sharing among members.

“Members helping other members of the community to upskill, connect, and get opportunities of boards is the testament of our efforts in building collaborative communities for best-governed boards building stronger corporate citizens.”

 *The platform focuses on co-creation of good governance so it is a holistic platform that offers opportunities to all the members, mentors, and industry experts to share their governance best practices.”*

Building an ecosystem

Even though MentorMyBoard started its journey as a training company, over the years, it has evolved as a complete ecosystem for boardrooms providing knowledge, intellect, resources, human capital and even products or services needed by Boardrooms. The firm has also built over 1,00,000 virtual global communities to position itself as a global leader with local roots. □





River *of* love

Pune recently lit up with the **'My River My Valentine'** initiative, last month. It was a blast, recalls **Mrunal Jadhav** as she gets swept up in this love story on the banks of the Mula-Mutha river.



We Celebrate

Parag Mate, Founder-Chairman, Worship Earth Foundation leads from the front as he rallies the crowd to clean up the Mulla-Mutha river

Picture this: college students, Pune-kars, and a bunch of other people all gathered to show some love for our dear Mula and Mutha River. With these waterways flowing right through our city, keeping them clean is not just important, it's a must!

Clean up your act!

The initiative is all about spreading awareness on river cleanliness, and it's a cause worth getting hyped about. The event held right by the riverside, was a

sight to behold. It witnessed an impressive turnout of over 5,000 participants, showcasing the collective determination to address environmental challenges and foster a culture of sustainability.

Caravan of fun

The My River My Valentine initiative has now reached Ahmednagar as well. The neighbouring city hosted its first event in collaboration with Worship Earth Foundation, Ahmednagar District Election Office, and

Agri College Sonai. The event saw participants from several colleges, electoral literacy club, and students from the National Service Scheme, along with several social organizations.

All for one, one for all

In Wardha, volunteers from different colleges and organizations teamed up to show some love to their rivers too. It was a real community effort, showing that when we come together, we can achieve anything – even cleaner rivers!

WE CONNECT



'We swear to love and honour our river in good times and bad...' pledge Team WE Foundation



Clean up! Founding member and river conservationist Amrapali Chavan shows how it's done

Yes, we can...

As we look back on the My River My Valentine event, it is pertinent to mention that we need to keep the momentum going. Together, we can keep our rivers clean, environment healthy, and our spirits high. Here's to more sustainable initiatives and a future where our rivers flow cleaner than ever before! □



All praise! Chief Electoral Officer Shrikant Deshpande lauds the My River My Valentine initiative



This IS love! Snap shots of enthusiastic river conservationists from across the board cheerfully turn up to clean up the riverbeds all across the myriad districts



WE CONNECT

Flying high

From grabbing a mouthful of sky to redefining for millions the phrase that that sky is the limit, **Squadron Leader Dipti Kala (Retd)** of the Indian Air Force tells **Rashmeet Kaur Chawla** why it is important to reach for the skies



In every corner of the globe, there exists a group of women whose indomitable spirit, relentless determination and resilience have broken glass ceilings and redefined the meaning of success. From boardrooms to battlefields, laboratories to legislative chambers, women stand as pillars of inspiration paving the way for generations to come. Dipti Kala, Squadron Leader (Retd) of the Indian Air Force is no different.

Setting goals

From being an average student at school to securing admission in BTech, Computer Science and becoming an IAF officer, to now a dream coach, Sqn Ldr Kala has come a long way. With a plethora of achievements as an officer and as a motivational speaker, Sqn Ldr Kala is now a certified dream coach.

"Struggles are inevitable when you dream big. They are the reminder of your success so you can inspire many with your story," said Sqn Ldr Kala, who also majored in Aeronautical Engineering.

Negotiating air turbulence

Hailing from a family of 'faujis', Kala's decision to join the forces was met with initial resistance from her family. It was her determination and love for the uniform that led Kala to pursue her dream and join the Air Force. Her struggles to join the forces, she says, have shaped her as a person she is today. "Each challenge has made me stronger and more resolute toward my dream," said the dream coach.

Call to serve

While Kala joined the elite forces at the age of 21 as a short-service commission officer, the duty to the nation demanded more than rigorous training and sleepless nights. Her physical and mental stamina were tested to be the leader

"Struggles are inevitable when you dream big. They are the reminder of your success so you can inspire many with your story!"

— Sdn. Ldr Dipti Kala (Retd)

the force demands in a soldier. The officer feels honoured to have served the nation and calls herself a true soldier.

of technology can make a big difference," said Sdn Ldr Kala. □

Dream-catchers Inc.

Post her retirement from the service, Kala continued to sharpen her existing skills and opted for a certification course to become a Dream Coach. Through her coaching, she inspires others to overcome obstacles and pursue their dreams. For her, it is the self-discipline and ability to do what a dream demands, even when faced with challenges, hold the key to one's success. She emphasizes the importance of valuing time, delegating tasks, and standing up for one's dreams to take charge of one's own success.

Apart from hard work and determination, Kala also emphasizes the importance of staying physically and mentally fit which she learned during her Staff Selection Board, SSB medical examination. "Being fit is the most important thing for whatever you want to do. Moving ahead with time and harnessing the power



Mamma Mia!



Rashmeet Kaur Chawla

chronicles the Journey of
Ghazal Alagh, Co-Founder,
Mamaearth, who leads her
mission for safe and natural
personal care

In the world of business, Ghazal Alagh is a leader, thinker, and advocate for health. Her work with Mamaearth shows how passion, purpose, and hard work can bring about real change. A Corporate trainer turned artist cum entrepreneur Ghazal Alagh, co-founded Mamaearth, driven by the passion for making early parenting, stress-free. Ghazal started her journey into business because she saw a gap that needed a bridge.

It was after having her first child that she realized the need for safe and toxin-free personal care products for babies. Determined to fill this gap, Ghazal, along with her husband Varun Alagh, ventured on a mission to create Mamaearth.

Nurturing mother and baby bond

In 2016, Ghazal and Varun started Mamaearth. They wanted to make products that were safe, natural, and free from harmful chemicals for both babies and new mothers. Ghazal's own experiences as a mother helped shape Mamaearth's mission to give parents comfort with gentle and effective products. "We make sure our products go through all the required tests and meet the safety standards that parents expect," said Ghazal.

Along with safe products for babies and new mothers, the brand has taken several environment-friendly steps for the sustainability of the label. With eco-friendly packaging and conscious sourcing of the ingredients, the founder is committed to making a positive impact on the planet Earth. "We want our products to be both gentle and effective. We make sure to use the best available ingredients (natural, plant-based or manmade) which are both certified safe as well as efficacious in getting the job done," confirmed the co-founder. "No one understands a baby well more than a mother, even if it's just through intuitions,"



Mission earth

To stay true to their vision of sustainable and safe products, the brand constantly collaborates with a group of mothers who provide honest feedback after using their products. "We use their insights to improve the quality of existing products and develop new solutions, ensuring they meet the needs of both moms and babies. We have a 'Mamaearth Blog' and use social media to help moms feel valued and supported," she informed.

Within a short period, the brand has received accolades for its innovative product range, sustainable practices, and commitment to consumer safety. Mamaearth's rapid growth and impact on the personal care industry underscore Ghazal's ability to drive change and inspire others through her entrepreneurial undertakings. "I see Mamaearth not just as a brand but as a movement towards a healthier and more mindful way of living," she said.

Trust is key

To be every parent's friend through their products, Ghazal shares that they understand the challenges faced by parents and strive to solve them. "Our brand

is built on trust, dedicated to making the lives of moms and expectant moms better and more beautiful," says the entrepreneur. Through her leadership, Ghazal continues to inspire moms everywhere to choose products that are good for their families and the planet Earth. □



Through the *looking glass*

News nuggets from around the country!



MANAGEMENT INSIGHTS

The Jaipuria Institute of Management recently hosted its 11th Annual Management Conference themed 'Road to India @ 2047'. The panel comprised industry leaders and government officials who provided valuable insights and guidance on India's journey towards 2047.

The event was inaugurated by Shreevats Jaipuria (Vice-Chairman, Jaipuria Institute of Management), Urvashi Prasad (Director, Niti Aayog), Sachit Jain (Vice-Chairman, Vardhman Special Steels Ltd.), and Subhajyoti Ray (Director, Jaipuria Institute of Management, Noida).

Featuring engaging panel discussions and interactive sessions, the conference facilitated educational exchanges among students, academicians, industry professionals, and thought leaders. □



AUTOMOTIVE EVOLUTION

Tata Motors, a prominent global car manufacturer, commenced its journey in 1945 with the establishment of Tata Engineering and Locomotive Company, focusing initially on locomotive manufacturing. In 1954, the company embarked on a joint venture with Daimler-Benz, forming Mercedes-Benz, to produce commercial vehicles.

Strategically, Tata Motors expanded its product portfolio and market presence through the acquisition of various companies.

By heavily investing in innovation and research & development (R&D), the company continuously develops cutting-edge technologies and innovative products. This dedication to innovation has empowered Tata Motors to introduce new and advanced vehicles tailored to customer needs and preferences.

The acquisition of Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) in 2008 significantly enhanced Tata Motors' global footprint and established it as a key player in the luxury automotive segment. □



SUSTAINABLE LAUNCH

India's Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, inaugurated Shashwat Bharat Setu, a pioneering initiative by The Eco Factory Foundation (TEFF). This innovative mobile learning and awareness center is dedicated to achieving Net Zero emissions and promoting sustainability nationwide.

During the inauguration, Anand Chordia, TEFF's founder, explained some of the key concepts such as waste management, water conservation, and energy efficiency. Minister Gadkari commended the initiative for its potential to revitalize the environment and

foster economic opportunities. He expressed optimism that the center would inspire collective action towards achieving Net Zero status in India.

Established in 2016 by Chordia, TEFF is a non-profit organization committed to spreading awareness about sustainable living across various sectors, including rural, urban, industrial, and individual domains. Shashwat Bharat Setu serves as a showcase for sustainable practices and aligns with national missions such as Mission LiFE and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, as well as the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. □



HEALTHCARE FOR MEN IN OLIVE

Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) recently offered Critical Care Beds to the Military Hospital in Secunderabad. Commodore A Madhavarao (Retd), who leads BDL, gave these beds for the ICU during a special event.

The initiative aims to strengthen healthcare infrastructure and support the medical needs of the community. Col B Hari Prasad (Retd) and Shri N Satyanarayana from BDL, alongside senior officials from both organizations, graced the event, showcasing collaborative efforts for a healthier future. □

A 'TRUE CALLING'

Leading caller identification app Truecaller has disclosed an AI-powered call recording feature for iOS and Android users in India. Available as part of the Premium plan, starting at Rs 75 per month, the feature allows users to record incoming and outgoing calls within the Truecaller app. Rishit Jhunjhunwala, Managing Director and Chief Product Officer of Truecaller, emphasized the tool's value for personal and professional use. Users can also transcribe



calls in English and Hindi. The service, initially launched in the US, will expand to more markets and languages. For iPhone users, recording is initiated via the Truecaller app, while Android users enjoy a dedicated recording button on the dialer. □

YOUR'S TRULY SONU SOOD

Actor and humanitarian, Sonu Sood is making headlines again for all the right reasons. After his remarkable work during the COVID-19 crisis in the country, the actor has now promised to pay for 50 kidney and liver transplants for needy patients without charging any fees for endorsements. This generous gesture shows Sood's dedication to helping others and how celebrities can make a big difference in society. □

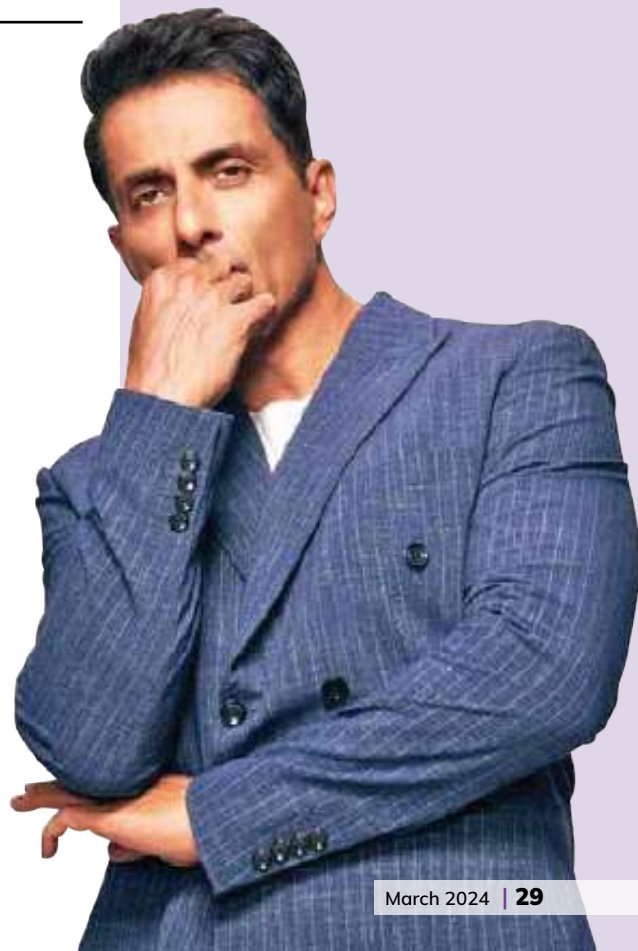


ON LOL RIDE

Get ready for a rollercoaster ride of wit and emotion as Indian entertainer Kanan Gill ventures into the literary world with his debut book 'Acts of God.' Drawing comparisons to the legendary Douglas Adams, Gill's writing promises a unique blend of humour and heart.

The book narrates a story set in a perfect future where funny and serious moments mix together. "You will laugh and think deeply as you read this book."

Sometimes it's silly, other times it's serious, but it's always interesting," said the comedian. So, get ready for a fun ride with the book that promises to make you laugh, think, and keep you entertained! □



BEAUTY MEETS BATTLING

Katrina Kaif's popular beauty brand, Kay Beauty, has collaborated with the Women's Premier League team UP Warriorz. This celebrity collaboration marks a significant milestone in women's sports. The partnership also emphasizes the brand's commitment to celebrating individuality and strength beyond make up and beauty.

Taking to her social media, the Tiger Zinda Hai actor shared a few pictures with the team supporting the female athletes. The actor and founder of the make-up brand, Katrina said that Kay Beauty continues to champion meaningful change and empower women on and off the field. □



REVAMPING LEGAL EDUCATION

G D Goenka University proudly announces the inauguration of its cutting-edge Judicial Training and Coaching Centre (JTCC) at the esteemed School of Law. This transformative facility is poised to redefine legal education, offering students a dynamic platform to cultivate crucial skills

for a successful career in the legal profession.

The ceremonial event was graced by the presence of the former Chief Justice of India, Justice K.G. Balakrishnan, as the Chief Guest, accompanied by esteemed legal advocate Vinakshi Kadian Singh as the Guest of Honour. □



REVOLUTIONIZING HEALTHCARE WITH AI

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly gaining traction in the healthcare sector as a transformative tool.

AI-powered mobile clinics, for example, are stepping in to offer medical services where traditional hospital infrastructure is lacking. With a focus on delivering efficient and cost-effective healthcare

solutions, AI is driving forward medical research and enhancing the overall healthcare experience.

Numerous studies suggest AI's potential in discovering new drugs, diagnosing diseases, predicting outcomes, providing online counselling, and maintaining long-term health monitoring for individuals. □

GOOGLING FOR CORRECTIONS

After facing criticism for inaccuracies in historical image depictions generated by its Gemini AI tool, Google CEO Demis Hassabis announced plans for a relaunch. The decision comes after temporarily suspending the tool due to detected inaccuracies.

Hassabis addressed concerns during a panel discussion at the Mobile World Congress, stating that they aim to have the tool back

online within the next few weeks. The initial rollout of Gemini AI had led to concerns on social media, causing Alphabet's shares to drop by 3.5%.

Despite setbacks, Google still wants to make better AI, especially because of competition from Microsoft. Gemini offers paid plans for better thinking abilities. Fixing problems like this is important to make people trust AI more. □

SUSTAINABLE DRIVE

BMW India, as the Sustainable Mobility Partner for Raisina Dialogue 2024, presents dignitaries with the luxurious BMW iX for transportation. The Raisina Dialogue convenes global leaders to address pressing issues, showcasing a collaborative effort to shape the future of the world.

Vikram Pawah, President of BMW Group India, expressed pride

in this partnership, underscoring BMW's commitment to sustainability and innovation.

The BMW iX, an all-electric vehicle equipped with advanced e-mobility technology, offers a premium travel experience. The luxury automaker conducted fleet demonstrations and chauffeur training to ensure a seamless experience for delegates. □



INTRODUCING IPHONE 16 PRO

Apple Inc. is gearing up for the highly anticipated launch of the iPhone 16 later this year, and leaks are already circulating online. Among the rumours, reports suggest that the focal point of the iPhone 16 line-up will be a significant overhaul of its camera capabilities.

According to sources, Apple's upcoming flagship series will include five distinct

models, with an unexpected twist. The iPhone 16 Plus SE model is set to replace the traditional 6.7-inch Plus variant.

Adding to the speculation, an image leaked by renowned leaker X (formerly known as Majin Bu) on social media offers a sneak peek into the new model's camera module. □



BIG WIN

Actor Sanya Malhotra won the Dadasaheb Phalke Award for Best Actress for her comic role in 'Kathal' in Heela. Her compelling performance in the film perfectly captures the character of Inspector Mahima Basod. The 'Dangal' actor is also applauded for her excellent comic timing. Sanya's last releases were 'Jawan' with Shah Rukh Khan and 'Sam Bahadur' with Vicky Kaushal.

Sanya is currently gearing up for the release of 'Mrs', which is a remake of the hit Malayalam movie 'The Great Indian Kitchen'. The film is directed by Aarti Kadav. She will also be seen in 'Baby John' opposite Varun Dhawan. □



Well done

I quite literally bumped into the We Connect magazine when I knocked over a pile of magazines at a friend's place! While putting them back on the coffee-table, I picked up the December 2023 edition of We Connect. At the first glance, it looked like a college magazine or one of those in-house magazines that corporates publish as an exercise in team-building. However, one of the headlines on the cover snagged my attention more than the cover picture. Curious, I picked up the magazine to casually browse through it and before I knew it, I had made myself comfortable on my friend's window-seat and was neck-deep reading the magazine—cover to cover! What an incredible host of luminaries from across the country your team has covered! It made for very interesting reads. I especially liked the in-depth, painstakingly researched, and lucidly written stories on Messrs Gurinder Pal Singh Josan and Vardhaman Shah, which were unique and awe-inspiring... Kudos, Team We Connect!

- Manjit Singh Rathore, Jaipur

Reviving a simpler time

I have been an avid reader of We Connect since its debut a year ago. I must that not only have you guys not dropped the bar on excellence but have upped your game. I particularly find your choice of Cover stories very intriguing. While other magazines across the spectrum choose to play up the glamour card to sell the product, you guys have steadfastly decided to carry 'real' people minus the filters and photo-edits How incredibly refreshing! While I have nothing absolutely nothing against the glamour brigade and I do keep up with the fast fashion trends, I find it very uplifting to read through your magazine... Much like the late American President John F. Kennedy's immortal inaugural address: '...ask not what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country...' I like the fact that you focus on what is being done instead of what can be done... your choice of stories put a whole new spin on giving back to society and nationalism. Salute to a more positive reality!

- Tara Darius Kalyanivala, Mumbai



Unity in inclusivity

Last week, I came across your rather moving magazine We Connect and let me tell you, it was like finding a treasure chest of motivation. What hooked me right from the start was its first story. Milind Kamble, through his story I learned it is not enough to just better ourselves but to reach out and include everyone during our tryst with excellence. Now, I eagerly await the next edition filled with inspiring tales!

- R. Maheshwari, Mumbai

Between the lines

Reading is good for your health, and it keeps you mentally active. Never has this axiom proved truer than when I delved into the story of Mandar Joshi, who has become a part of growth of startup industries. There is nothing more stirring than witnessing a modest idea receive the support it needs to blossom into reality, fulfilling the dreams of an ordinary individual. As a third-year-student of economics who aspires to carve my own path that might not get societal approval has been proven wrong by these illustrious men and women. Bravo, We Connect!

- Aradhana Upadhyay, Baroda

POWERING
INDIA'S
TRANSITION
INTO THE
EV ERA



**1 LAKH STATIONS,
10 LAKHS CHARGING POINTS
ACROSS INDIA**

EVards



INDIA'S FIRST
REWARDS PROGRAM
FOR EV CHARGING



My EV

Offering a range of Electric Vehicles, Pick your favourite 2,3 or 4 wheeler.
Attractive finance options also available.



E SCOOTERS



E RICKSHAWS



E AUTO GOODS



E AUTO RICKSHAWS

CHARGERS



Pi Bee



Pi One

Chargers available from 3.3 to 120kW.

**CHARGING
STATIONS**



Pi Falcon



Pi Sparkle



FIND THE NEAREST Pi EV
CHARGING STATION NEAR YOU
SCAN TO DOWNLOAD THE APP

INVESTORS
FRANCHISEES
DISTRIBUTORS



**CONTACT US
FOR EXCITING
OPPORTUNITIES**

Contact Us: Phone/WhatsApp: +91 9049450350, +91 96650 01234, +91 99300 49350 | Email: solution@piev.world

www.piev.world



Available at



VITAMINS & MINERALS

Phytostreol

HIMALAYAN
LEH-BERRY

Polyphenols

14 Minerals

Omega 3 6 7 9

18 Amino Acids

17 Vitamins

Anti-Oxidant

190+Bio-active
Nutrients

Carotenoids

Fortified with Goodness of Himalayan Sea Buckthorn (Leh-Berry)

Most aptly called Sanjeevani Booti of the modern age.

Contains vitamins B1, B2, C, E, betacarotene (Vitamin A), and K with Omega's 3, 6, 9 and the rare Omega 7.

Also contains carotenoids, flavonoids, phenols, terpenes, 5-HT (serotonin) and at least 20 mineral cofactors which is obtained from the earth surface only, as the roots of sea buckthorn plant goes to 200 meters deep in the earth excavating the goodness from there.

AVAILABLE IN NUMEROUS TASTY FLAVOURS



MediNATURAL PVT LTD

Address : Flat no:-4 B. Uday park. Near Rahul Nagar Kothrud. Pune- 411038., Pune, India, Maharashtra

Order now: www.medinatural.in | **Give your valuable feedbacks at:** info@medi-natural.com

Contact us/ customer support: +91-8446010668/ +91-7276115367/ +91-7276180169

Made available in **Premium Stores** pan **Goa** by **P & PV2 India Pvt. Ltd.**,

Shop No. 2, Pandava Complex, Opp. Forest Dept, Aquem, Margao - Goa - 403601

Contact: +91 79729 26556 +91 91300 19156