

Shortcut or Setback :

How AI is Changing Creativity



Generative AI tools such as ChatGPT, OpenAI, ElevenLabs, etc, have taken the world by storm as they generate content in seconds. With a single prompt, AI can generate a story, a painting, a video anything you desire. The ideas that take hours to execute can be done in minutes if used right.

BY SAMIKSHA BHOWMIK

Dead Poets Society(1989), a popular film revolving around the beauty of art, literature, and creativity, talks about how art defines the human race. Robin Williams, playing the role of Mr John Keating, says, "Medicine, law, business, engineering, these are all noble pursuits, and necessary to sustain life. But poetry, beauty, romance, love, these are what we stay alive for." It perfectly sums up how creativity is the one thing that makes us human. Generations and eras have been defined by the art that society consumed, so much so that to understand art and literature, we need categorisation due to the vastness that comes with creativity. This begs the question, if we let technology and AI take over the creative endeavours, what defines us?

Artificial Intelligence, commonly known as AI, enables computers or technology to carry out jobs that are typically performed by human intelligence. As is obvious, change is the only constant in the world. Technological advancements are just one



of many changes that has happened and will continue to do so in the future. However, when technology starts to hamper originality, individualism, and intelligence, it's time to question where we stand.

"It's just an assignment" is the thought that goes around most people, perhaps, to justify the use of AI becoming a common part of their daily lives. But before long, the switch is flipped and you can barely form an original idea. Generative AI tools such as ChatGPT, OpenAI,

ElevenLabs, etc, have taken the world by storm as they generate content in seconds, quicker than you can settle comfortably. While browsers offer similar functionality, generative AI eliminates the need to sift through multiple sources for the perfect answer. Additionally, one needn't even format the answer before presenting it as one's own.

Although academia now prohibits AI for assignments, projects, and presentations, its personal use remains

unrestricted. AI, once intended for mundane tasks, now encroaches on creative work.

A recent example is the 10-time Oscar-nominee film *The Brutalist*, which used generative AI in the making of the film to enhance the Hungarian language spoken in the film. Even though the actors, Adrien Brody and Felicity Jones, speak the language only in a few instances, AI was used to make the performance more authentic. This causes you to think if cinema—an art form rooted in human expression—starts relying on artificial enhancements, does it lose its authenticity? When something so deeply rooted in emotions succumbs to the cold precision of technology, it raises the question of authenticity once again. Where once actors spent weeks perfecting their skills for a performance, now it is being replaced by shortcuts at the cost of the artist's integrity.

Anushree Shirkhedkar, 19, a design student, speaks about the use of AI in the field of art and how it affects the industry. "Being in a design college, I see around me all the time that people are using AI not as a tool to enhance their ideas but to generate new ideas from scratch and ways to execute it. The result ends up with a class of 60 having the same work back to back with no originality," she says. "Now, I'm not saying that one shouldn't use AI at all, but it's supposed to be used more as a tool to execute than ideate. The ideas that take hours to execute can be done in minutes if used right."

The generation before the rise of AI strived to fight for the existence of artistic talent. With capitalism prevalent in today's age, one has to decide between earning a living to sustain themselves or following their



passion. This put the art at risk, it made art a form or expression for the privileged. However, that has changed today. With a single prompt, AI can generate a story, a painting, a video—anything you desire.

The new generation, popularly known as Gen Alpha, includes kids up to age 14 (born between 2010-2014). These kids are the most exposed to the newest technology, including AI. From using it to refine their writing to getting ready-made answers for math equations, kids, especially middle schoolers, are more lost than ever. "My daughter uses ChatGPT to get quick and drafted answers on a few occasions. She certainly missed out on gaining in-depth knowledge about those topics, which she would have learned had she deep dived into the topic herself rather than using ChatGPT," says Viraj Patil, 40, father of a 13-year-old daughter. He added, "Using AI is just a shortcut. At max, it can be used to refine what you've already written, but it is

certainly not worth relying on it entirely. I keep reminding my daughter, too, that AI will save your time by giving you quick and good answers today, but it is taking away the opportunity of exploring and venturing into topics yourself."

AI is unavoidable today. You can open a social media app like X, formerly Twitter, and be greeted by their AI model, Grok, or use a software specifically made for creatives like Adobe and meet their generative AI, Firefly. Instead of being a helping hand, AI poses a threat to artists all over the world. Think of any art form, and AI can present it to you in seconds. Is this not a thing to be afraid of by creatives? Not only that, but the constant use of AI will soon lead to homogeneous AI-generated content devoid of the warmth that humans bring, leading to the death of originality. All art forms are in danger. AI learns from existing art and creates everything you dream of—but at the cost of human intelligence, creativity, and perhaps, one day, even emotion.

THE VALLEY RUNS GENERATION SPEED MOTOR FEST



Scale Model Display

These were the Displays that were showcased for the attendees. It was a place where every biker and every lover came together. Cars have always been thrilling and fascinating. So here was a festival that cheers to every car lover and rider by being a part of it. Gen 2025 has established itself as a prime automated festival, catering for the growth of motoring and festivals like these.



Lonavala hosted the inaugural edition of Generation Speed 2025. A motorsport festival dedicated to speed and performance. GENERATION SPEED housed more than 200 vehicles on the racing track, where the inauguration of various new motors took place, allowing the riders to interact with each other.

BY KAJAL BHALERAO

Lonavala hosted the inaugural edition of Generation Speed 2025, a motorsport festival dedicated to speed and performance, on February 22-23 at the Aambay Valley Air Strip. Martin Da Costa, the CEO and founder of 70EMG, the maker of Indian Bike Week, organised one of the largest car shows for the first time in the history of motor shows. The show was named "GENERATION SPEED" and housed more than 200 vehicles on the racing track, where the inauguration of various new motors took place, allowing the riders to interact with each other. Generation Speed 2025 has featured a curated lineup that includes Indian formula racers, rally and drag cars, classic sports cars, rare supercars at "Speed Shikharis Den," and race bikes from Hero Motorsports and Royal Enfield.



A special exhibition lap let attendees see these powerful machines in action, while guided tours also offered

insights into the exhibits. The event also welcomed renowned motorsport personalities, including Rohit Isaac, Vicky Chandhok, Veer Sheth, Sanjay Takale and Adil Darukhanawala, whom every rider knows. Additionally, the festival was keen to shed the spotlight on

women in motorsport, with drivers like Aashi Hanspal and Kajal Prajapati sharing their journeys.

Attendees experienced motorsport firsthand with activities such as drift taxi rides, go-karting, off-roading and the Defender Experience. The competitions of the

show include 'Speedway Shootout' featuring high-performance cars like the Nissan GTR and Audi R8, 'GS Drift Championship', 'FMSCI-sanctioned Autocross Championship' and 'Pitstop Challenge'.

Beyond motorsport, the event's special corner, 'Adventure Square,' also offered zip-lining, rock climbing, and paramotoring. A dedicated Gen S Kids Zone and camping options made the festival family-friendly.

The Main Stage hosted some announcements from the motorsports community. Sportec's Drift Baleno was unveiled, and the most exciting part? Information about the Indian Supercross Racing League Season 2, the 19th Edition of The Palar River Challenge, the FMSCI Indian National Rally Sprint Champion 2025, and the Clash of Motoclans Season 2 was shared with attendees.

Curated Displays

A glorious parade of

horsepower and history! From savage speed demons to jaw-dropping custom builds, it was a lineup that brought out childlike excitement in you. Curated collection of the fastest cars with seat-sinking 0-100 times. Driven by speedsters, on display at Generation Speed.

Speed Shikari Den

The wildest, purpose-built machines, so far from stock—personally handpicked by the Modscout after a nationwide hunt.

Mod's Own Country

Garage goals dreamt by many! Owned, driven and displayed at Generation Speed by collectors

Collectors Corner

Performance icons that have set their legacy in stone, undoubtedly the greatest of their time and era.

Legacy Lane

The celebration of cars that solidified its place in the hearts of all enthusiasts alike.



Curated by Evo India.

Gone But Not Forgotten

Crew picked cars from the premium parking at the festival that deserve to be showcased under the spotlight

GS Garage

Love for cars comes in all shapes and sizes. Here, one could see the most celebrated scale model collections from enthusiasts around the country.



Gokundi Waterfall

Maharashtra's Best-Kept Secret



Gokundi waterfall located near Pune, known for its stunning natural beauty, lush greenery, and a unique attraction for thrill-seekers. One of the standout features of Gokundi is its crystal-clear natural pool at the base of the waterfall. Adventurous visitors can indulge in cliff jumping, with varying heights.

BY RITESH EDKE

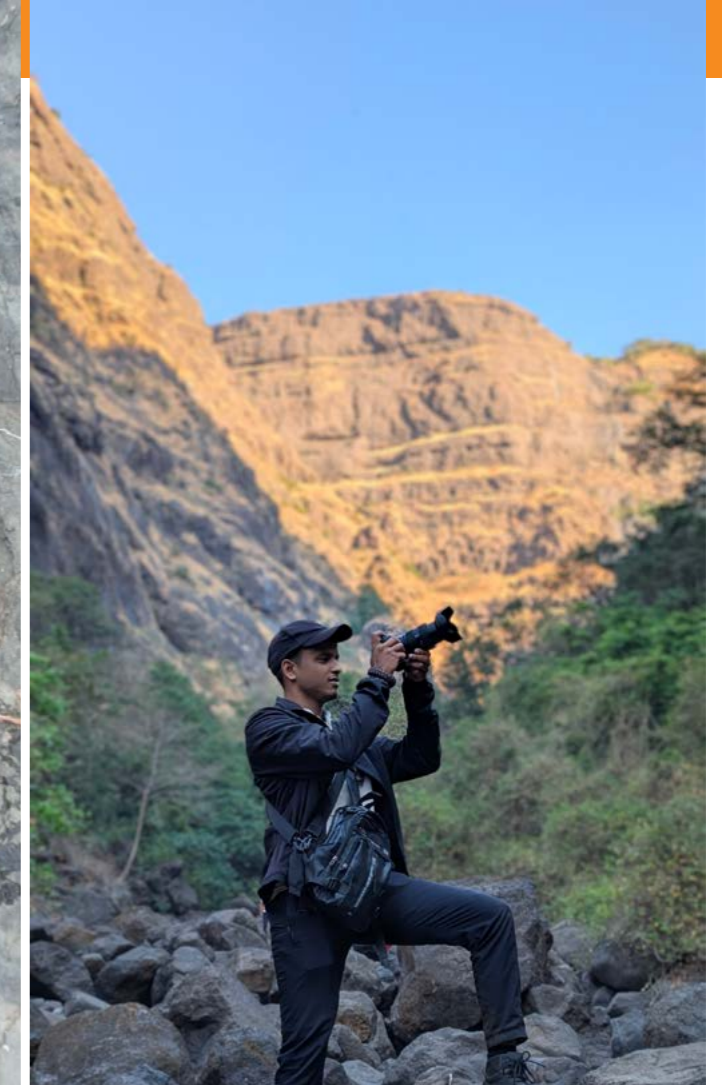
The "Secret Waterfall Gokundi" is a hidden waterfall located near Pune, India, in a place called Gokundi, known for its stunning natural beauty, lush greenery, and a unique attraction for thrill-seekers. It is just the right place to be. But there's more to enjoy than

the beauty of the place. Cliff jumping into the crystal-clear pools fed by the waterfall itself, essentially offering a secluded and adventurous experience in the Sahyadri mountain range, is just one of the many reasons the place is an adventurer's paradise. Beating this summer with this

beautiful, natural chilling pool is one of the best one-day trip options for people from Pune and Mumbai.

Cliff Jumping and Natural Pool

One of the standout features of Gokundi is its crystal-clear natural pool at



the base of the waterfall. Adventurous visitors can indulge in cliff jumping, with varying heights suitable for different comfort levels. The refreshing plunge into the cool waters provides an adrenaline rush, while the serene environment offers a perfect setting for relaxation. For safety, life jackets are typically provided by tour organisers. So, there's no reason for you to skip the fun.

Safety and Preparation

While Gokundi Waterfall is a haven for adventure lovers, it's essential to prioritise safety. Here are some recommendations:

Footwear: Wear sturdy trekking shoes to navigate the rugged terrain comfortably.

Hydration: Carry at least 2-3 liters of water to stay hydrated throughout the trek.

Clothing: Opt for full-

sleeve shirts and long trousers to protect against insects and thorny plants.

Essentials: Pack dry snacks, energy bars, personal medication, and a first-aid kit.

Safety Gear: Ensure that life jackets are used during water activities, especially cliff jumping.

Organised Tours

Several adventure groups organize trips to Gokundi Waterfall, providing a structured itinerary that includes transportation, meals, guided treks, and safety equipment. This makes this secret waterfall less of a spot to be feared and more of something to be explored. For instance, Treks and Trails India offers a comprehensive package covering travel, breakfast, lunch, and expert guidance. Similarly, United Travellers

of India provides an itinerary encompassing trekking, camping, cliff jumping, and more, ensuring a hassle-free experience for participants.

Gokundi Waterfall is more than just a hidden gem—it's an experience that blends adventure, serenity, and raw natural beauty. Whether you're an adrenaline junkie looking to take the plunge or someone who simply wants to soak in the tranquility of the Sahyadris, this spot has something for everyone. With the right preparation and safety measures in place, a trip to Gokundi promises unforgettable memories. So, if you're looking to break free from the city chaos and embrace nature at its finest, pack your bags, gather your friends, and set off on an adventure that's sure to leave you refreshed and exhilarated.

The Evolution of Women's Sports in India

A Journey of Empowerment and Recognition



Women's sports in India saw a new wave of enthusiasm, recognition, and government support. The landmark achievement came in 2000 when Karnam Malleswari won a bronze medal in weightlifting at the Sydney Olympics, becoming the first Indian woman to win an Olympic medal.

BY SHREYA DHONSALE

Over the past few decades, the landscape of women's sports in India has undergone a profound transformation. From being sidelined and marginalised to becoming a force to be reckoned with on the global stage, Indian women athletes have made remarkable strides. Their journey is not just a testament to their perseverance and skill but also reflects the broader societal changes happening in the country.

Early Struggles: Limited Recognition and Opportunities

Historically, women in India faced considerable societal restrictions, and their involvement in physical activities was often discouraged. Sports were primarily considered a male-dominated field, with women's participation viewed as unconventional or even inappropriate. The colonial era did not see much institutional



The Indian Womens cricket team.

support for women's sports, and it wasn't until the post-independence period that some form of organised participation began to take root. The first instances of female athletes gaining recognition were few and far between.

Track and field athlete Kamaljeet Sandhu, who became the first Indian woman to win a gold medal in athletics

at the Asian Games in 1970, was one of the pioneering figures. However, such achievements were still rare, and the sports infrastructure for women remained underdeveloped.

The Rise of Women's Sports: Breaking Stereotypes

The 1980s and 1990s marked a turning point.

Female athletes began to gain more visibility, and sports like badminton, athletics, and hockey became more accessible. The foundation of The National Sports Federation for Women's Hockey in 1975 was a significant step towards fostering women's participation in team sports.

India's historic participation in the 1982 Asian Games—where women's events were added—marked the beginning of a new era. Madhuri Venkatesh, who was part of the Indian women's hockey team, became one of the first female athletes to represent India on a major international platform. However, women's sports still faced significant societal barriers, and it was not until the late 1990s that the participation of women in sports started becoming mainstream.

Turning the Tide: 21st Century Breakthroughs

The 21st century witnessed a dramatic shift. Women's sports in India saw a new wave of enthusiasm, recognition, and government support. The landmark achievement came in 2000 when Karnam Malleswari won a bronze medal in weightlifting at the Sydney Olympics, becoming the first Indian woman to win an Olympic medal. This achievement set the stage for more female athletes to compete on the global stage. With increasing media coverage, governmental schemes like the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS), and better infrastructure for training, the participation of women in sports began to soar. The rise of women's cricket was particularly noteworthy, with players like Mithali Raj,



Shining bright with glory! Two champions, one nation, countless moments of pride.

The Road Ahead: A Promising Future

Despite these breakthroughs, women's sports in India still face challenges, including unequal pay, lack of media coverage, and limited resources. However, there is a growing recognition of the importance of gender equality, and the rising popularity of female athletes has led to more corporate sponsorships and media attention. India is poised for an era where the next generation of female athletes will break even more barriers. With a focus on inclusivity and equal opportunities, the future of women's sports in India looks incredibly promising. Through perseverance, resilience, and a strong desire for change, Indian women athletes are not only rewriting history but also inspiring millions of young girls to dream big and take their place in the world of sports.

Jhulan Goswami, and Smriti Mandhana, leading the Indian team to global prominence. The Women's T20 World Cup and the success of the Indian Women's Cricket Team in international tournaments like the World Cup have significantly raised the profile of women's cricket.

Success Stories: Modern-Day Icons

In recent years, women's sports in India have witnessed an inspiring surge. Saina Nehwal and PV Sindhu brought badminton into the limelight with their historic victories at the Olympics and World Championships. Hima Das, India's "Dhing Express,"

made history in 2018 when she became the first Indian woman to win a gold medal at the IAAF World U20 Championships.

Mary Kom, a six-time world boxing champion, also became a symbol of resilience and determination.

In addition to individual triumphs, women's participation in sports like wrestling, football, kabaddi, and chess has skyrocketed. Vinesh Phogat, Sakshi Malik, and Babita Kumari have brought India to the global wrestling stage, while Dipa Karmakar made history by becoming the first Indian female gymnast to compete in the Olympics.

Cancel Culture

Accountability or Silencing Dissent?



People use cancel culture as a method to ostracise or publicly degrade entities because of their statements or actions being considered off-putting or unacceptably troublesome. Through social media, people can quickly spread their anger across the web, which leads to major consequences.

BY MANASA KULKARNI

In modern times, cancel culture has become a dominant social force used primarily to conduct accountability measures, according to common understanding. However, critics argue that cancel culture has developed from being a tool for holding someone accountable into a mechanism that suppresses dissent and violates free speech while creating fearful conditions. To understand what that means, we must first understand the crux of cancel culture.

What is Cancel Culture?

People use cancel culture as a method to ostracise or publicly degrade entities because of their statements or actions being considered off-putting or unacceptably troublesome. Through social media, people can quickly spread their anger across the web, which leads to major consequences such as termination from employment positions, social exclusion, and tarnishing of reputations. The general population views cancel culture as an important



method to deal with powerful people, yet some others consider it a dangerous digital mass punishment.

The Harm to Free Speech

The main objection against cancel culture emerges through its impact on freedom of expression. Self-censorship becomes a common practice because people worry about cancellation when they express controversial thoughts, thus creating an environment where only accepted opinions

dominate. Legal scholar and free speech advocate Nadine Strossen warns, "The more we suppress controversial opinions, the more we push difficult discussions underground, where they fester rather than evolve."

The case of J. K. Rowling represents an important example. She received severe criticism from the public for her comments about gender identity. The widespread hatred directed at her divided opinion because listeners expressed



concern about self-censoring controversial matters. The hosting role of the Oscars ultimately went to Michael B. Jordan after Kevin Hart chose to step away due to his earlier tweets being resurrected. The situation raises the critical question of whether people should maintain a permanent ethical judgment following their acknowledgment of previous mistakes.

A Tool for Suppressing Opposition?

The practice of cancelling people extends far beyond accountability measures as it is now used against individuals who identify with different political or ideological viewpoints. In 2020, more than 150 intellectuals, including Noam Chomsky and J.K. Rowling, signed an open letter in Harper's Magazine warning that "the free exchange of information and ideas, the lifeblood of a liberal society, is daily becoming more constricted."



A healthy dialogue requires a clear distinction between making someone responsible and never letting go of their punishment. By supporting open dialogue, delivering learning platforms and recognising how humans behave, we can ensure beyond doubt that accountability avoids transforming into censorship.



Various political officials alongside academics and journalists faced "cancellation" due to their opposition against

dominant public opinions. The case of former New York Times editor Bari Weiss is a prime example. She resigned from her position, citing a "hostile work environment" where colleagues openly mocked and attacked her for holding centrist views. The evolution of cancel culture into a weapon used to silence diverse opinions endangers democratic principles due to its detrimental impact on healthy discussion.

The requirement for holding people accountable in the right manner gets overshadowed by extreme cancel culture practices, which silence freedom of expression and inhibit intellectual diversity. Instead of promoting growth and dialogue, it encourages fear and conformity. As philosopher John Stuart Mill once argued, "The worth of a state, in the long run, is the worth of the individuals composing it." A society that silences dissenting opinions ultimately weakens itself.

From Sci-Fi to Reality

How AR & VR Are Changing the Game



Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) are distinct technologies that offer unique experiences. The growing integration of these technologies is reshaping various industries, from entertainment to healthcare, and revolutionising how we communicate, learn, and work.

BY MARWA MATHADIKARI

In recent years, Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) have emerged as groundbreaking technologies, transforming the way we interact with both digital and physical worlds. While both terms are often used interchangeably, AR and VR are distinct technologies that offer unique experiences. The growing integration of these technologies is reshaping various industries, from entertainment to healthcare, and revolutionising how we communicate, learn, and work.

Augmented Reality (AR)

Augmented Reality refers to the technology that overlays digital content onto the real world in real-time. Unlike Virtual Reality, which immerses users in a completely virtual environment, AR enhances the user's real-world experience by blending digital elements, such as images, sounds, and information, with the physical surroundings. Popular examples include mobile apps like Pokemon Go, where users interact with digital creatures that appear



on their smartphone screens superimposed onto real-world locations.

AR has a variety of practical applications across different sectors. In retail, AR allows customers to virtually try on clothes or preview how furniture would look in their home before making a purchase. In education, it brings abstract concepts to life, helping students understand complex subjects by visualising them in 3D. Healthcare is also benefiting from AR, with surgeons using AR to visualise 3D scans of patients' organs, improving precision during surgeries.

Virtual Reality (VR)

Virtual Reality, on the other hand, creates a completely immersive experience, replacing the user's physical surroundings with a virtual environment. By wearing a VR headset, users are transported into a simulated world, where they can interact with virtual objects and explore spaces in ways that are impossible in the real world. VR technology requires more specialised equipment than AR, such as headsets, motion controllers, and sometimes even treadmills that allow users to move around in the virtual space.



The gaming industry is perhaps the most well-known user of VR, with gaming platforms like the Oculus Rift, HTC Vive, and PlayStation VR offering fully immersive experiences. However, VR has a vast range of applications beyond gaming. In training and simulation, VR is helping industries such as aviation, military, and medicine provide realistic, risk-free environments for learning. For example, pilots can practice in a simulated cockpit, and medical professionals can conduct virtual surgeries.

Impact on Society and Future Possibilities

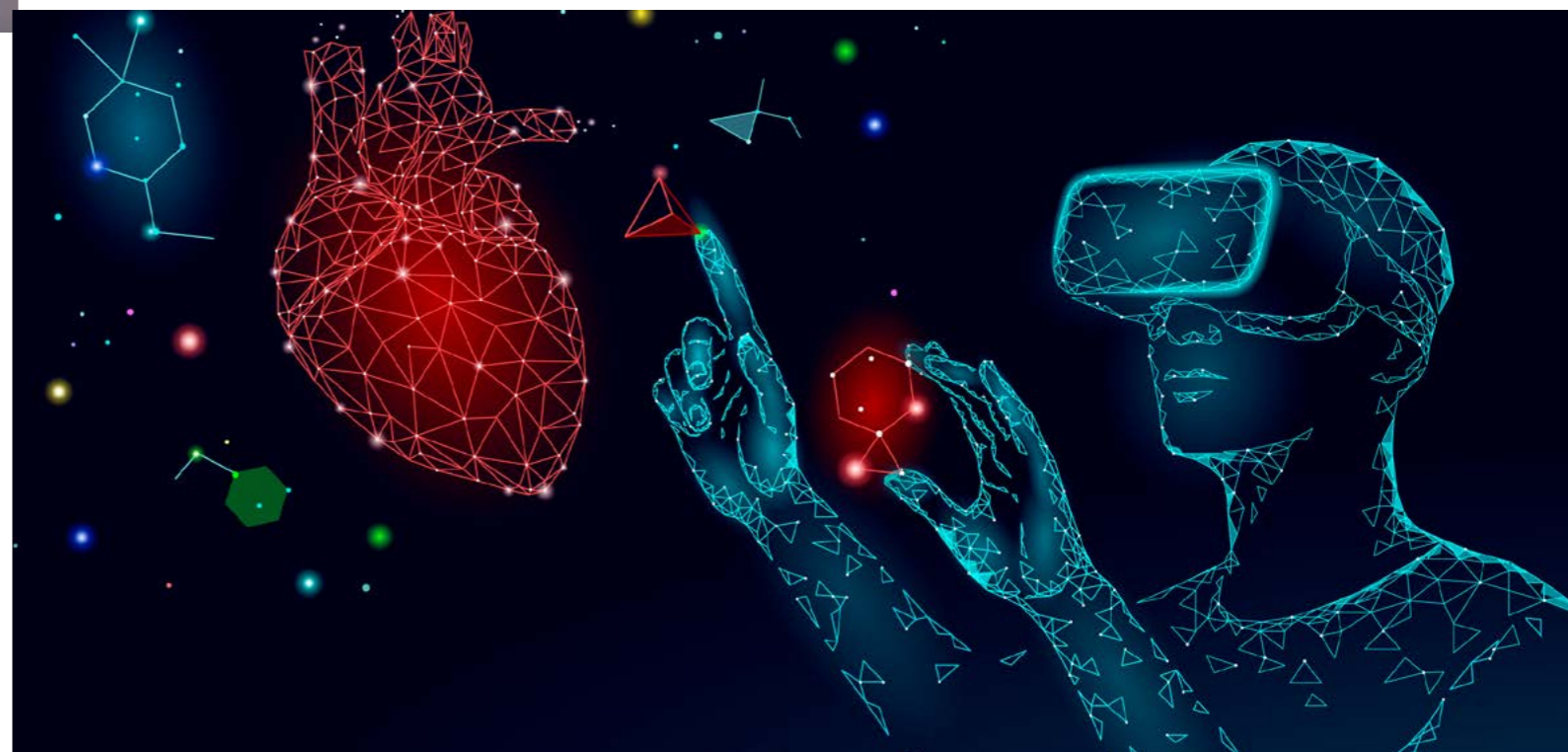
Both AR and VR are pushing the boundaries of

what's possible in terms of human experience. As these technologies continue to evolve, they promise even greater immersion and interactivity. For instance, AR could become more integrated into everyday life, with smart glasses displaying useful information as we move through the world. VR could evolve into fully interactive digital spaces, where users can socialise, work, and learn in a virtual environment without leaving home. While AR and VR offer incredible potential, challenges remain.

For AR, there are concerns about privacy, as constant real-time data collection could infringe on personal freedoms.

VR, on the other hand, faces issues such as motion sickness and the need for more realistic haptic feedback to enhance the immersion.

Despite these challenges, the future of AR and VR looks incredibly bright. With advancements in hardware, software, and connectivity, these technologies are set to become an integral part of our daily lives, offering experiences that were once confined to science fiction. As AR and VR continue to evolve, they hold the potential to change the way we perceive and interact with the world around us, opening up endless possibilities for innovation and creativity.



The Future of Fashion in the Digital Age



Shrutika Gavane launching her own brand, S-A N E, a label that celebrates bold and expressive western fashion. Through S-A N E, she blends creativity with craftsmanship, offering pieces that embody confidence and individuality. She continues to explore new dimensions of creativity, embracing the future of fashion in both tangible and virtual spaces.

BY RIYA BAHIRAT

Shrutika Gavane, 25, a passionate fashion designer and digital creator, has been redefining style through both traditional and virtual fashion. With a 4-year fashion design degree from MIT Art, Design and Technology University in Loni Kalbhori, she has honed her expertise in creating contemporary, trend-forward designs that resonate with modern aesthetics.

Two years ago, she took her vision a step further by launching her own brand, S-A N E, a label that celebrates bold and expressive western fashion. Through S-A N E, she blends creativity with craftsmanship, offering pieces that embody confidence and individuality.

Beyond designing, Shrutika is also a fashion influencer on Instagram, with over 41,000 followers, where she shares her insights, inspirations, and styling ideas, bridging the gap between physical and digital fashion. As the industry evolves, she continues to explore new dimensions of creativity, embracing the future of fashion in both tangible and virtual spaces.

We had the pleasure of speaking with Shrutika Gavane, a pioneer in the world of virtual fashion. As digital clothing, NFTs, and metaverse fashion experiences gain traction, Shrutika has been at the forefront of this exciting transformation.

Virtual fashion is a relatively new concept. How would you define it, and why do you think it's gaining popularity?

Virtual fashion is the creation and wearing of digital garments that exist only in virtual spaces, such as social media, video games, and the metaverse. Unlike physical clothing, these pieces are designed using 3D modeling, augmented reality (AR), or blockchain technology. The reason it's becoming so popular is that people are spending more time in digital environments. From gaming avatars to Instagram posts, virtual fashion allows for unlimited creativity without the constraints of traditional fabrics and production costs. Plus, with the push for sustainability, digital clothing offers an eco-friendly

alternative to fast fashion.

What inspired you to explore virtual fashion, and how has it changed your approach to design?

I've always been fascinated by the intersection of technology and fashion. Traditional fashion has limits—fabrics, production timelines, and physical constraints. But in the virtual space, I can create garments that glow, change colors in real time, or even defy gravity. My inspiration came from seeing how people express themselves in gaming and digital worlds. It made me realize that fashion isn't just about what we wear in real life but also about how we present ourselves online.

How do digital clothing and NFTs (Non-Fungible Tokens) change the way people buy and own fashion?

NFTs allow digital garments to be authenticated and owned uniquely, much like limited-edition designer pieces in the real world. Instead of buying a physical dress, you can own a digital version that can be worn

on avatars, showcased in AR filters, or resold as a collectible. This shifts fashion from being purely functional to becoming an asset—much like art. People are already investing in digital sneakers, exclusive metaverse outfits, and blockchain-verified fashion pieces.

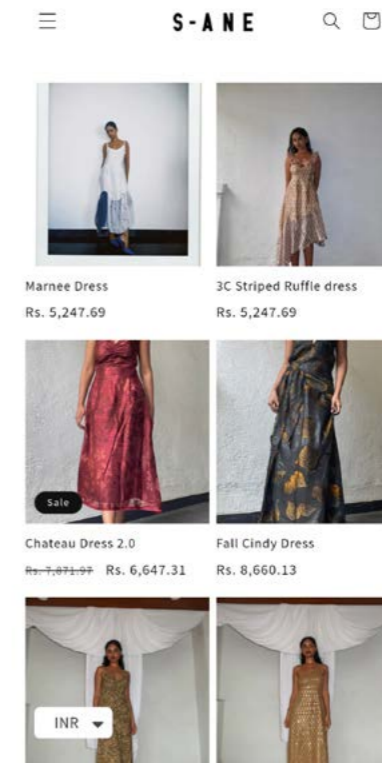
Do you think virtual fashion will replace physical fashion in the future?

Not completely, but it will definitely become a major part of the industry. Physical clothing will always be essential, but virtual fashion will complement it. We're already seeing hybrid experiences—where a real dress has a digital counterpart or where AR allows people to "try on" virtual outfits. In the future, we might attend events in simple outfits but appear in extravagant digital garments through AR glasses. It's about expanding possibilities, not replacing reality.

Social media has played a big role in the rise of digital fashion. How do you see influencers shaping this movement?

Influencers are driving awareness by showcasing how digital fashion works. Whether it's through Instagram filters, Snapchat AR clothing, or dressing up in virtual skins for gaming, influencers help normalise the idea that fashion isn't just physical. They're also making it aspirational—if a top influencer wears a stunning virtual dress in a post, their followers become curious and want to try it too. It's a new way of engaging with fashion without worrying about price tags or fast fashion waste.

What challenges do you



see in the adoption of virtual fashion?

One of the biggest challenges is perception. Many people still struggle to understand the value of digital clothing because it doesn't exist physically. There's also the issue of accessibility—some high-end digital fashion pieces are expensive because they are sold as NFTs, making them exclusive. Additionally, technology is still evolving, and not everyone has access to AR filters or metaverse platforms yet. But as digital experiences become more mainstream, these challenges will gradually disappear.

How can emerging designers or fashion students get started in virtual fashion?

Start by learning 3D design tools like CLO3D, Blender, or Marvelous Designer. Many universities are introducing digital fashion courses, but self-learning through online tutorials is also a great option. Experiment with designing digital garments and try integrating them with AR tools

or virtual platforms like Roblox or Decentraland. Collaborating with tech experts or game developers can also open doors to new opportunities in this field.

Your brand focuses on Western clothing. How do you see virtual fashion influencing traditional Western wear, and do you plan to integrate digital fashion into your brand?

S-A N E, has always been about bold, modern, and expressive western wear, and I believe virtual fashion is an exciting extension of that vision. Digital fashion allows us to push boundaries—imagine a classic leather jacket that glows in the dark or a denim dress that changes textures with a tap. While our current focus is on physical garments, we are exploring digital fashion in the form of AR try-ons and exclusive NFT fashion pieces that our customers can own alongside their real-world wardrobe. The goal is to merge the best of both worlds—keeping the tactile beauty of Western fashion while embracing the limitless possibilities of digital design.

Any final thoughts on the future of fashion in the digital age?

According to me, fashion is about expression, and the digital age is giving us more ways to explore our identity beyond physical clothing. Virtual fashion isn't just a trend—it's a shift in how we think about clothing, sustainability, and creativity. As technology advances, we'll see fashion becoming more interactive, customizable, and accessible to everyone, no matter where they are in the world. The future of fashion is borderless, and that's incredibly exciting!

Beyond Grades : The Importance of Student Mental Well-Being



Mental health is a need of today's generation as the world is moving very fast. Students face intense pressure while studying. Poor mental health can affect its consistency. Making mental stamina essential for sustained focus. Mental health is very important for students.

BY VAIDEHI SHINDE

Mental health is about how we think, feel, and handle life's ups and downs. It includes our emotions, thoughts, and ability to cope with stress, relationships, and daily challenges, which is why having good mental health is very important for students' mental well-being. Speaking to different students and mental health professionals for the same, we found out what they all think.

SAGAR GADE : UPSC STUDENT

Mental health is a need of today's generation as the world is moving very fast. We are ignoring the importance of mental health today as we see youth working on physical health, but giving importance to mental health is equally important. And then, talking about mental health, mental health is very crucial for UPSC students because the UPSC exam is one of the toughest exams in India. As the exam is highly competitive, with lots of candidates and limited seats, students face intense



pressure while studying. As this exam requires consistent effort, poor mental health can affect its consistency. UPSC preparations require long study hours, which can lead

to the physical and mental exhaustion of students. As we see, the youth mainly move towards cities for higher education and jobs so they are far away from home,

because of which sometimes students do feel lonely. Having a good environment around them is very important for good well-being and also for concentration during studies. Common struggles that students face during the UPSC exam are anxiety while giving exams and during the declaration of results, as the competition is very high, and every student sacrifices everything, including hobbies, social life, etc., only to prepare for this exam. The students are also very tense as UPSC is a competitive exam, and there is tough competition between students. The students do feel stressed while preparing for the UPSC exam as the syllabus is vast. That is why mental health is very crucial for students.

NIKITA KUMBHAR: MBBS STUDENT

Nikita Santosh Kumbhar is a 23-year-old working as an MBBS Intern. She studied at Krishna Vishwa Vidyapeeth and as any student, has faced issues. She opens up about those issues and how it can be a big problem for MBBS students.

Mental health is very important for MBBS students, but it is often ignored. Medical students go through a lot of stress, which can affect their mental well-being. The MBBS course takes 5-6 years, followed by an internship and specialisation, making mental stamina essential for sustained focus. Often, exposure to illness, suffering, and death can be emotionally overwhelming, requiring strong mental health to cope. The constant pressure of exams, long hours of studying, and the

NUTAN DEOKAR: COUNSELLOR

Nutan Deokar is a 38-year-old counsellor who works at KCT's Krishna School, Karad. She has over 11 years of experience in the field and works with students in the school regularly. With an M.A. in Clinical Psychology, she understands how important mental well-being is for students. Deokar highlights how parents' behaviour might play a part in the child's mental health as well as talking about how deeply it may affect the students.

"Mental health is very crucial for students for their overall well-being and academic success. Students often face academic pressure, social pressure and concerns about their future which can negatively impact their mental health. Common challenges students face which result in poor mental health are:- Academic pressure, social pressure, concerns about their future, self doubt, parental expectations, depression and anxiety, etc. So, that is why mental health awareness is very important between students because it helps students understand the importance of their mental well-being. When students are aware of their mental health, they can take steps to maintain it. So here colleges/schools can take a step and help students cope up with their mental stress by arranging counseling programs on the importance of mental health, providing mental health services for students, encouraging students to discuss about their mental health concerns, creating safe and supportive environment for students, arranging programs to help students manage stress. Mental health is a critical issue for students. By promoting mental health awareness and providing support, schools and colleges can help students maintain good mental health. It's essential for educational institutions to provide mental health services and encourage students to discuss their concerns openly."



huge amount of information to remember can be hectic. On top of that, medical students have to deal with real-life situations, like seeing patients who are sick or even at the deathbed, which can take an emotional toll. Many students also struggle to find a balance between their studies and

personal life, which can lead to feelings of loneliness and isolation. The pressure to always perform well and meet high expectations can make students feel like they're never good enough, which only adds to their mental stress. This is the reason why mental health is important for students.

**MEGHANA SHINDE:
SCHOOL TEACHER**

Meghana Shinde is a 49-year-old teacher with over 23 years of experience in the field. Working at KCT's Krishna School, Karad, after completing her B.Sc. in Chemistry and Physics and B.Ed., she has had time to forge relationships with students and speaks about the issues these students may face.

"Mental health can be described as a child's ability to cope and overcome everyday issues and stress as well as to bring out the best in themselves. Mental health is important for students so that they can have an overall development of themselves. Students with good mental health can concentrate on academics as well as actively participate in the extracurricular activities taken in school. There are many reasons for a child to face mental health issues. Some of their parents can be comparing them with their peers, adding academic pressure, and the inevitable pressure to excel in every field, which generates some kind of trauma or inferiority



complex. Students with mental health issues should get an opportunity to speak about their difficulties and discuss them with their teachers, who can hopefully guide them. There can be counselling sessions arranged for them in the school itself, which will prove to be beneficial for them. For example, if a child is suffering from mental health issues in terms of academics,

they may not be able to concentrate and understand the subjects. They may also feel left out when the students answer the questions given by the teachers related to the subject. In turn, they may lose interest in the subject, thereby neglecting it throughout. This may also lower his confidence. So, students should always have good mental health."

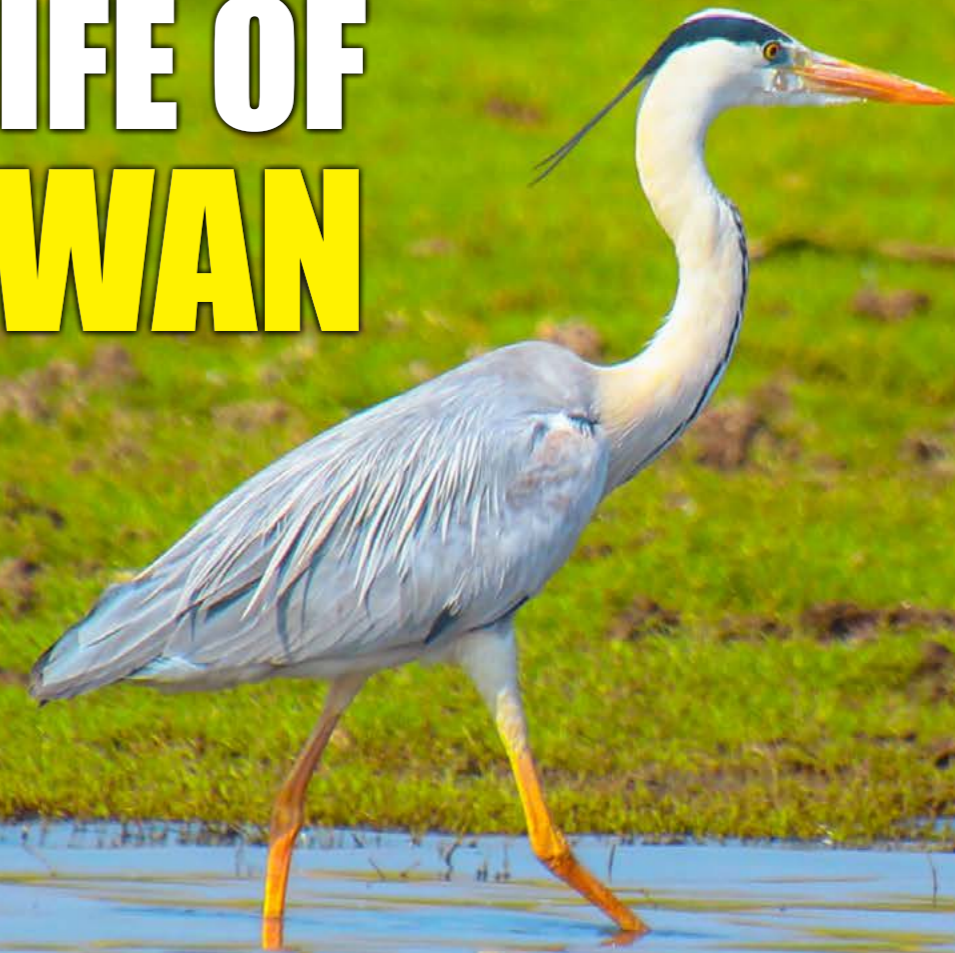
CONCLUSION

Mental health is very important for students and paying attention to it can help students not only stay healthy during their studies but also to achieve their goals in future. Overall, mental health is a person's ability to cope up with stress, learn and work well, make proper decisions and contribute positively to the community. Good mental health can allow students to cope up with pressure and achieve their academic goals.



BY VEDANT KOTHARI

**WILDLIFE OF
BHIGWAN**



The Electric Revolution

How EVs Are Reshaping Our World



EVs are catalysing a fundamental restructuring of industries, urban landscapes, and even our daily routines. Traditional automotive manufacturers are undergoing a dramatic metamorphosis, investing heavily in research and development to transition their product portfolios towards electrification.

BY SAKSHI DALAL

Expanding upon the transformative impact of electric vehicles, it's crucial to delve deeper into the nuanced ways they are reshaping our world. Beyond the immediate benefits of reduced emissions and enhanced energy efficiency, EVs are catalysing a fundamental restructuring of industries, urban landscapes, and even our daily routines.

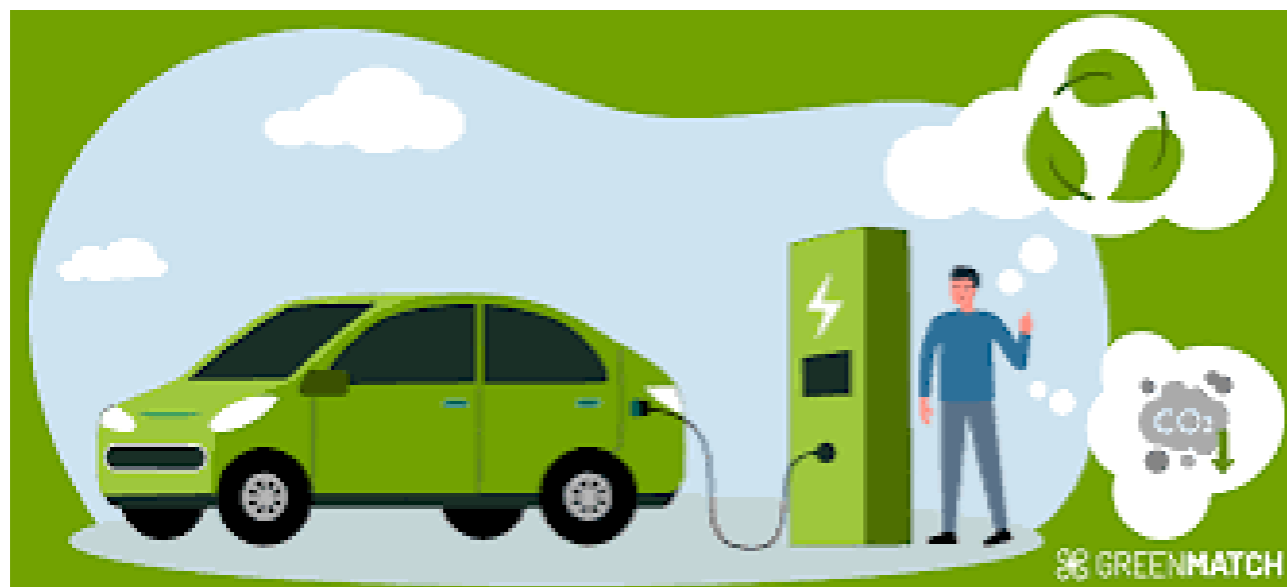
The Evolving Ecosystem of Mobility

The advent of EVs has

triggered a ripple effect across the entire mobility ecosystem. Traditional automotive manufacturers are undergoing a dramatic metamorphosis, investing heavily in research and development to transition their product portfolios towards electrification. This shift is not merely about replacing internal combustion engines with electric motors; it involves reimagining the entire vehicle architecture, from lightweight materials and aerodynamic design to advanced software integration and over-the-air updates.

Furthermore, the rise of EVs has fostered the emergence of new players in the automotive sector. Startups and technology companies are leveraging their expertise in software, battery technology, and artificial intelligence to develop innovative electric vehicle platforms and solutions. This influx of new entrants is injecting fresh perspectives and accelerating the pace of innovation, leading to a more diverse and competitive market.

The concept of vehicle



ownership is also being redefined. Ride-sharing services and car-sharing platforms are increasingly incorporating EVs into their fleets, offering consumers convenient and sustainable transportation options. This shift towards shared mobility is not only reducing traffic congestion and parking demand but also democratising access to electric vehicles, making them more accessible to a wider segment of the population.

The Smart City Nexus

The integration of EVs into smart city initiatives is unlocking a plethora of opportunities for urban planning and development. Smart charging infrastructure, coupled with intelligent grid management systems, can optimise energy consumption and minimise peak demand. Vehicle-to-grid (V2G) technology, which allows EVs to feed energy back into the grid, can further enhance grid stability and resilience, creating a more dynamic and responsive energy ecosystem.

Moreover, EVs are playing a crucial role in the development of autonomous transportation systems. Self-driving electric vehicles, powered by advanced sensors and artificial intelligence, have the potential to revolutionise urban mobility, making it safer, more efficient, and more accessible. These vehicles can be seamlessly integrated into smart city infrastructure, optimising traffic flow, reducing congestion, and minimising environmental impact.

The data generated by connected EVs can also be used to enhance urban planning and infrastructure



development. Real-time traffic data, energy consumption patterns, and charging station utilisation can provide valuable insights for policymakers and urban planners, enabling them to make informed decisions about transportation infrastructure, energy management, and urban development.

The Social and Behavioural Dimensions

The transition to EVs is not just a technological or economic shift; it is also a social and behavioural change. As EVs become more prevalent, they are influencing consumer preferences and driving changes in lifestyle choices. The growing awareness of environmental issues and the increasing availability of charging infrastructure are encouraging more people to consider electric vehicles as a viable alternative to traditional cars. Furthermore, the experience of driving an EV is fundamentally different from driving a gasoline-



powered vehicle. The smooth acceleration, quiet operation, and regenerative braking of EVs are creating a new driving experience that is both enjoyable and sustainable. This positive experience is contributing to the growing popularity of EVs and fostering a sense of community among EV owners.

The shift towards EVs is also prompting a reevaluation of our relationship with energy. The ability to charge vehicles at home or at public charging stations is empowering consumers to take control of their energy consumption and reduce their reliance on fossil fuels. This shift towards decentralised energy generation and consumption is contributing to a more sustainable and resilient energy future.

In essence, the impact of EVs extends far beyond the realm of transportation. They are acting as catalysts for innovation, driving economic growth, transforming urban landscapes, and shaping our social and behavioural patterns. As the electric vehicle revolution continues to unfold, we can expect to see even more profound and transformative changes in the years to come.



Without necklace, neck is less.



Only for special occasions



Colourful bags, every women's need

PRODUCT PHOTOGRAPHY

on a mission!
To make
Products more
visualising



My handy partner



Bangles, blessings
and a beginning



BY RAHUL
WADHWANI



Ears asking for
Earrings



Traditional wear,
represents our culture



Show some love
to your lip



On time!



Surprise them by
gifting this shade

CAPTURES OF THE DIVINE MOMENTS



These are some of my captures of different forms and emotions of Devi, portrayed through Bharatnatyam Dance style.

- 1) Goddess Durga, the slayer of Demon Mahishasura
- 2) Lord Vishnu and Goddess Lakshmi
- 3) Goddess Saraswati in her different incarnations
- 4) Goddess Durga, the slayer of Demon Mahishasura
- 5) Shiva – Shakti, Parvati representing Shiva's powerful other half
- 6) Goddesses of Wealth and Motherly Love in one frame
- 7) Sometimes she takes the fierce form of Mata Kali...
- 8) ...Whereas sometimes she is the mother of the universe in the form of Parvati



BY AARYA GODBOLE

Where Art Meets the Streets

A Photographic Journey of Pune's New Sculpture



The Traditional Well Sculpture in Pune is an excellent depiction of India's historic water conservation techniques and cultural heritage. This elaborately crafted sculpture reflects the architectural ingenuity of traditional wells, the lifeline of rural and urban societies in the past.

BY VINEET SAIBI

Pune Zero KM is a landmark denoting the city's central point of reference for distances. Situated close to the General Post Office, it represents Pune's geographical and historical significance. This place, where travellers used to calculate their travel, is now an artistic structure depicting Pune's city identity. The building has high metal pillars with detailed carvings symbolising the cultural and historical growth of the city. It is a point of convergence for tourists, cyclists, and history buffs. Pune Zero KM is not merely a signpost but a reminder of the city's glorious past, development, and contribution to India's progress.



The Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw Statue in Pune is dedicated to one of India's most iconic military commanders. Sam Manekshaw, the first Field Marshal of the Indian Army, was instrumental in India's win in the 1971 Indo-Pak War, which resulted in the establishment of Bangladesh. The statue, standing at Pune

Cantonment, celebrates his outstanding leadership, strategic geniality, and patriotism towards the country. A man renowned for his incisive mind and courageous decision-making, Manekshaw is a source of inspiration to the soldiers and the general public alike. This landmark commemorates his immeasurable contribution

to the defence of India and his permanent legacy in the annals of military history. The Traditional Well Sculpture in Pune is an excellent depiction of India's historic water conservation techniques and cultural heritage. This elaborately crafted sculpture reflects the architectural ingenuity of traditional wells, the lifeline of

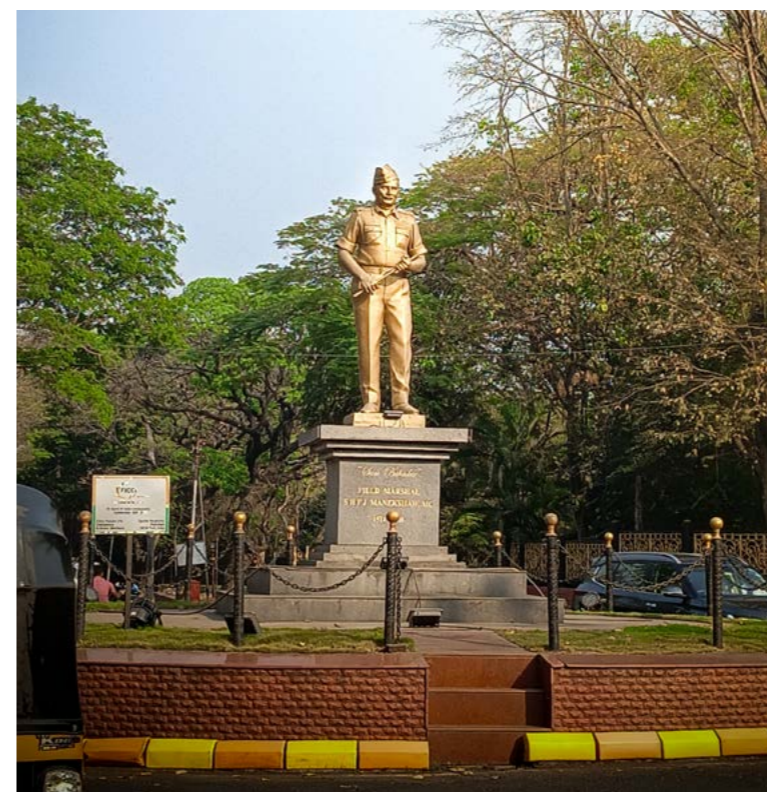


rural and urban societies in the past. These wells not only supplied water but were also community centres for people to interact with each other. The sculpture commemorates the craftsmanship and engineering capabilities of previous generations, reminding everyone of the effective water management methods in place prior to modern means. Situated in a major location in Pune, this sculpture is a memorial

to India's glorious past, reiterating the need for holding on to traditional knowledge and adopting it in terms of today's needs for water conservation and resource management.

This art is a moving tribute to the Indian Navy and the courageous fishermen guarding the country's long coastline. The central anchor depicts maritime power and protection, symbolising the unshakeable dedication of

those who guard India's oceans. The golden round structures signify the indomitable link between the Navy and the coastal communities. Fishermen are responsible for guarding and securing the seas while maintaining India's maritime prosperity. This monument is a testament to their sacrifices, courage, and commitment to keeping our country safe from harm.



Zodok.in: A Fresh Approach To E-Commerce



Zodok.in is a business that has tried to solve common e-commerce issues with a different approach. Instead of making customers guess their size and wait for deliveries, Zodok offers a “try before you buy” model with one-hour doorstep delivery and instant returns.

BY DEVESH NEGI

Online shopping has changed the way people buy clothes, but it still has some common problems: uncertainty about fit, long delivery times, and complicated return processes. Zodok.in is a business that has tried to solve these issues with a different approach. Instead of making customers guess their size and wait for deliveries, Zodok offers a “try before you buy” model with one-hour doorstep delivery

and instant returns.

How Zodok.in Tries to Solve Key Shopping Problems?

One of the biggest challenges of online fashion shopping is the fit and feel of the clothes. Many customers hesitate to order because they are unsure how the outfit will look on them. This brand allows customers to try on clothes before paying, just like



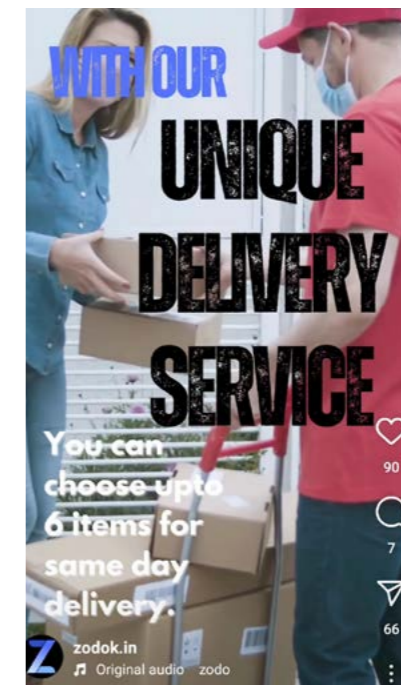
Kuldeep Rathore and Shivansh Sharma

they would in a physical store. If the outfit doesn't fit or doesn't

match expectations, they can return it immediately, avoiding the usual refund process.

Another issue in online shopping is decision fatigue—too many choices can overwhelm customers. By allowing them to compare outfits side by side at home, this startup simplifies the selection process. The fast delivery model also caters to the modern need for instant gratification. Instead of waiting days for an order, customers receive their selections in an hour, making shopping feel more like an offline experience.

However, such models come with operational challenges. Managing returns efficiently is difficult, as frequent returns increase logistics costs. Zodok.in has to find a way to balance customer convenience with profitability. Additionally, expanding to multiple cities while maintaining fast deliveries requires strong warehousing, AI-powered demand prediction, and reliable last-mile delivery partners.



Challenges In Competing With Industry Leaders

The online fashion market is dominated by major players like Myntra and Amazon, which have vast resources, large inventories, and nationwide reach. Competing with such giants is difficult, but Zodok.in's hyperlocal model and focus on customer experience give it a different approach. Unlike larger companies, which rely on centralised warehouses and standard delivery times, Zodok's strategy is based on quick fulfilment through strategically placed inventory.

Marketing and Growth Strategies

Zodok.in has built its brand by focusing heavily on social media marketing, especially Instagram. Since fashion is a highly visual industry, platforms like Instagram help showcase outfit ideas, customer reviews, and influencer collaborations. Instead of traditional advertising, Zodok.in relies on event-based campaigns during festivals and limited-time offers to attract shoppers. The company also works with influencers and fashion bloggers to increase brand awareness and gain trust among online shoppers.

Still, growth will require overcoming operational and financial challenges. Offering instant returns and one-hour delivery increases costs, making it important for this new startup to optimise logistics and ensure that its business model remains sustainable.

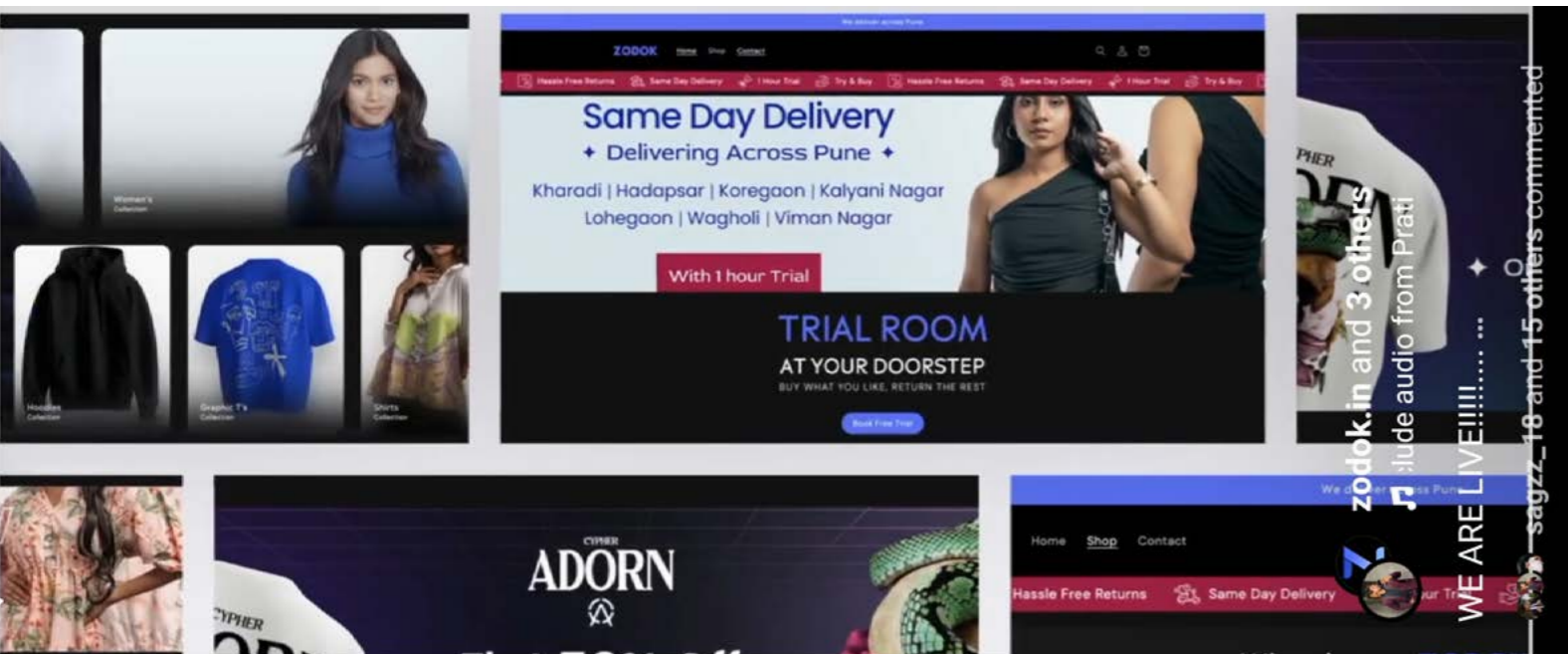
Future Possibilities

Looking ahead, Zodok.in has several opportunities to expand and innovate. One possibility is AI-powered fashion recommendations,

which could help customers choose outfits based on their preferences and shopping history. Another potential direction is subscription-based fashion boxes, where curated outfits are sent to customers monthly. Augmented reality (AR) try-ons could also enhance the online shopping experience by allowing users to see how clothes would look on them virtually before ordering.

Redefining Retail Fashion

This youth-led startup is an example of a business experimenting with a new retail model that combines the convenience of online shopping with the confidence of offline shopping. While it has successfully addressed key shopping problems, its long-term success will depend on how well it manages logistics, controls costs, and scales its operations. As the fashion retail industry evolves, businesses like Zodok offer insights into the possibilities and challenges of blending speed, convenience, and customer experience in e-commerce.



Breaking Boundaries : The Evolution of Experimental Theater in Pune



Pune's experimental theatre scene stands at an interesting juncture, balancing its rich tradition with contemporary innovations. Young theatre makers continue to emerge from the city's educational institutions and independent groups, bringing fresh perspectives to the art form.

BY SHARDUL RASAL

Pune, lovingly called the cultural capital of Maharashtra, has fostered a vibrant experimental theatre movement that has evolved significantly over the decades. The city's theatrical landscape represents a fascinating blend of traditional forms and avant-garde experimentation.

The roots of experimental theatre in Pune can be traced back to the post-independence era when the city began establishing itself as an educational and cultural hub. The presence of institutions like the University of Pune (now Savitribai Phule Pune University) created an intellectual environment conducive to artistic exploration. By the 1960s and 1970s, the influence of global theatrical movements, including Theatre of the Absurd and Brechtian techniques, began permeating Pune's theatre scene.

A watershed moment came with the establishment of Lalit Kala Kendra in 1987, which became a formal



Experimental Theatre : Raw emotions, powerful visuals and gripping narratives that challenge perceptions and ignite thought

centre for theatrical studies and experimentation. This institution provided structured training in various aspects of theatre arts, creating a new generation of practitioners ready to push boundaries.

The 1990s witnessed a proliferation of experimental theatre groups in Pune. Collectives like Theatre Academy, Aasakta Kalamanch, and Swatantra Theatre began challenging conventional theatrical norms through innovative staging, non-linear narratives, and the

fusion of various performance traditions. These groups tackled contemporary social issues while experimenting with form and content, creating works that resonated with urban audiences while maintaining artistic integrity.

The new millennium brought further evolution as Pune's experimental theater scene began incorporating multimedia elements, site-specific performances, and interactive audience experiences.

(Continue on Page 37)

Marathi Film Festival Receives Overwhelming Response



Marathi Film Festival at Balgandharva Rangmandir turned out to be a massive success, with thousands of enthusiastic fans rushing to book tickets. The festival was part of an initiative to provide a platform for Marathi films, which often struggle to get space in multiplexes.

BY MRUNAL PATIL

The recently held Marathi Film Festival at Balgandharva Rangmandir turned out to be a massive success, with thousands of enthusiastic fans rushing to book tickets. The festival, which took place on February 22nd and 23rd, was part of an initiative to provide a platform for Marathi films, which often struggle to get space in multiplexes. In an effort to make movies affordable for everyone, tickets were priced at just ₹49. This move attracted a large number of cinema lovers who otherwise find multiplex tickets too expensive. As a result, all shows during the two-day festival were completely sold out, with eager fans lining up outside the theater to secure their seats.

The festival screened ten shows over two days, featuring a mix of new and classic Marathi films. Among the most successful movies were Mukkam Post Bombilwadi, Dharmarakshak Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, and Hashtag Tadev Lagnam. These films received an overwhelming response,



A huge crowd at Balgandharva Rangmandir for Marathi Film Festival

and their screenings were declared housefull within just two days.

Speaking about the event's success, Babasaheb Patil, the State President of the Marathi Film Association, stated, "The response to the Marathi Film Festival at Balgandharva Rangmandir was incredible. It proves that Pune-kars are eager to watch Marathi films but are often discouraged by the high costs of multiplex tickets." For many families and movie lovers, going to a multiplex means spending

anywhere between ₹700 to ₹1,000, including ticket prices and food expenses. This festival provided a much more affordable option, allowing them to enjoy Marathi cinema at a fraction of the cost.

A resident who attended the festival shared their experience, saying, "Watching a movie in a multiplex is very expensive. But here, we could watch quality Marathi films for just ₹49. We hope such festivals continue in the future."

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The Pop Culture Race

Keeping Up or Losing Ourselves?



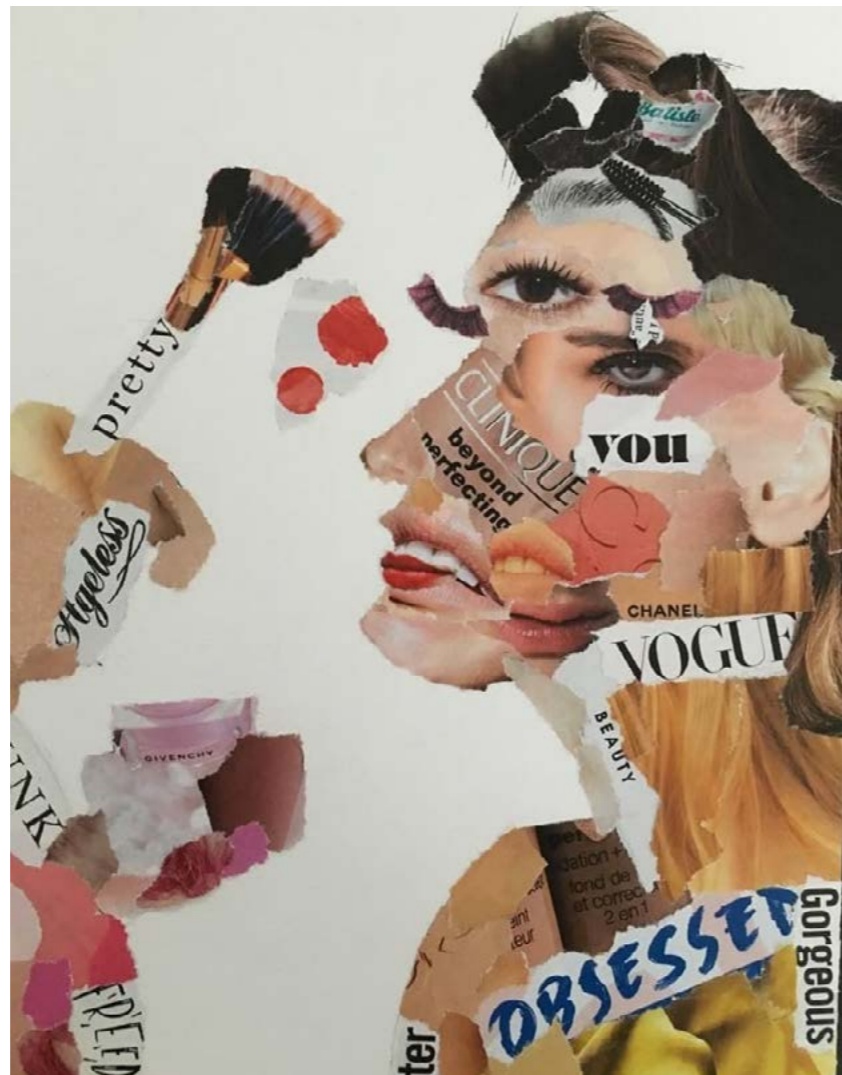
Trends will always be a part of pop culture, but the power to decide which ones truly matter to us is still in our hands. By embracing what truly makes us happy instead of what is temporarily "in," whether it be in fashion, music, or entertainment, we may develop a better relationship with pop culture.

BY SIYA MARANE

In today's hyper-digital world, trends come and go at breakneck speed. What was "in" last week might be outdated by the time your package arrives. From Instagram challenges to viral fashion aesthetics, pop culture is evolving faster than ever, leaving us to wonder: are we even enjoying trends anymore, or are we just chasing them for mere moments of validation by strangers on the internet?

The Blink-And-Miss It Lifespan

There once was a time when trends lasted longer than you finished a cup of coffee. They had a lifecycle—an introduction, peak popularity, and eventual decline. Now, props to social media, trends explode overnight and vanish just as quickly. Think about the "clean girl aesthetic," that has taken over fast-paced content, the rise of "indie sleaze," or the obsession with catering to a certain fashion "core." One day these trends are dominating our algorithm, and the next, they're labeled



"cheugy"—even that term feels outdated now. The rapid pace makes it harder to form genuine connections with these trends before the next wave takes over.

The Algorithm Effect : Are We Really Choosing?

Social media platforms push what's popular, feeding us curated content that aligns with trending topics. But are we adopting these trends because we truly like them or because the algorithm tells us to? The rise of micro-trends—"strawberry girl makeup" or "tomato girl summer"—creates a cycle where we constantly feel the need to keep up, often at the expense of our individuality.

From Hype to Overload: The Downside of Fast Trends

With trends moving at warp speed, fatigue is inevitable. The pressure to stay relevant,

especially for influencers and content creators, leads to a cycle of mass production and overconsumption. Fast fashion brands churn out micro-trend-inspired pieces that quickly end up in landfills. One of the biggest brands that have been called out for the same is Shein. Similarly, music and entertainment trends push artists to create viral moments rather than timeless content. This ends up forcing artist to create songs with a catchy hook but no substance.

Finding Your Own Pop Culture Lane

So, how do we break free from the constant cycle of fleeting trends? Here's a radical thought: slow down! Instead of jumping on every

new wave, take a step back and ask yourself—do I genuinely like this, or do I feel pressured to? Personal style, music taste, and entertainment preferences should be about self-expression, not just about staying trendy.

Trends will always be a part of pop culture, but the power to decide which ones truly matter to us is still in our hands. Instead of mindlessly following every viral moment, it's important to pause and reflect on what truly resonates with us. By embracing what truly makes us happy instead of what is temporarily "in," whether it be in fashion, music, or entertainment, we may develop a better relationship with pop culture.

Marathi Film Festival Receives Overwhelming Response

(Continue from Page 29)

The idea of screening Marathi films in traditional theaters when no plays are scheduled was first tested in Pune last month. Seeing its success, the Pune Municipal Corporation provided space at Balgandharva Theatre for this two-day festival. The overwhelming response confirmed that there is a strong audience for Marathi films.

In total, nearly 8,000 people attended the festival. Long queues were seen outside the theater as eager fans rushed to book their tickets in advance. For many, it was an opportunity to enjoy a film without worrying about high costs. Organisers ensured that the National Anthem was played before each movie screening, adding a patriotic touch to the event.

The success of this experiment has sparked



discussions about making such festivals a regular occurrence. Many fans have requested that more Marathi films be screened in theaters at affordable prices. The Marathi Film Festival at

Balgandharva Rangmandir proves that there is a strong demand for regional cinema; it remains to be seen whether similar initiatives will be taken in other parts of Maharashtra.

A Sanctuary for Seniors :

Olava Old Age Home's Legacy of Compassion



Olava Old Age Home stands as a testament to compassionate eldercare, a sanctuary where dignity, respect, and community converge. Founded in 2000 by the visionary, Sushama Shastri, this private organization, has been a beacon of hope for senior citizens seeking a nurturing and supportive environment.

BY SUMEDH ALKUTKAR

Nestled amidst the verdant landscapes of Pune, Olava Old Age Home stands as a testament to compassionate eldercare, a sanctuary where dignity, respect, and community converge. Founded in 2000 by the visionary, Sushama Shastri, this private organization, has been a beacon of hope for senior citizens seeking a nurturing and supportive environment. Shastri, a social worker with years of experience in senior care, recognized the growing



need for a space where older adults, often neglected or left without adequate support, could find solace, security, and a sense of belonging.

The home's location is nothing short of idyllic.

Surrounded by lush green trees, Olava offers its residents a serene escape from the cacophony of urban life. The abundant greenery not only provides a picturesque backdrop but also serves a crucial health purpose—filtering out city pollution and offering residents a breath of fresh air. Research has shown that access to nature has profound effects on mental health, reducing stress, anxiety, and depression—common issues among the elderly. This thoughtful

positioning reflects Shastri's holistic approach to eldercare, understanding that well-being extends beyond mere medical attention.

What sets Olava apart is its commitment to creating more than just a residential facility. It is a vibrant community where seniors find companionship, purpose, and continued engagement with life. The facility is thoughtfully designed to encourage social interaction while respecting individual privacy.

Common areas such as a spacious dining hall, recreational lounges, and activity centers foster connections among residents, ensuring that no one feels isolated or lonely. At the same time, private rooms and personalized spaces provide comfort and solitude for those who seek it. The aim is to strike a perfect balance between community living and personal space, enabling residents to feel both independent and connected.

The facility offers comprehensive care that addresses the physical, emotional, and social needs of its residents. From medical support to recreational activities, from nutritious meals to personalised attention, every aspect of life at Olava is meticulously planned. The trained staff here work tirelessly to ensure that each resident feels valued, heard, and cared for.

Medical care is a top priority, with trained healthcare professionals available around the clock. Regular health check-ups, physiotherapy sessions, and access to specialized treatments ensure that residents receive the best possible care. A well-equipped infirmary and a dedicated



Sharing Joy, stories and moments that truly matter.

team of caregivers provide assistance with medication management, mobility support, and other health-related needs.

Nutrition is another crucial aspect of the care provided at Olava. The facility serves wholesome, balanced meals that are tailored to meet the dietary requirements of senior citizens. Freshly prepared food, rich in essential nutrients, ensures that residents maintain good health and vitality. Special dietary plans are available for those with specific medical

conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, or digestive issues.

Emotional and psychological well-being are given equal importance. Many elderly individuals experience feelings of loneliness or abandonment, and Olava strives to create an environment where they feel valued and loved. Counselors and social workers are available to offer emotional support, helping residents navigate their feelings and find joy in everyday life. Family visits are encouraged, and the home facilitates virtual calls for those whose loved ones are far away, ensuring that residents maintain connections with their families.

As Olava Old Age Home approaches its quarter-century milestone, it continues to redefine eldercare in Pune. It stands not just as a home but as a powerful statement about how society can and should care for its senior citizens—with not just dignity and respect but also genuine love. Sushama Shastri's vision has transformed from a dream into a living, breathing institution that touches countless lives, proving that age is not a limitation but an opportunity for continued growth, connection, and joy.



Bridging generations with smiles, laughter and unforgettable moments!

Celebrating Nature: Pune's 43rd Floral & Harvest Fest



Pune Municipal Corporation's Garden Department and Tree Authority organized 43rd Fruits, Flowers, and Vegetable Exhibition was not just a display of botanical beauty but also a significant step towards encouraging sustainable living and environmental awareness.

BY PREETY SHARMA

On the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the Pune Municipal Corporation, the Garden Department and Tree Authority organized the much-anticipated 43rd Fruits, Flowers, and Vegetable Exhibition. The grand event took place on the 15th and 16th of February, 2025 at the scenic Chhatrapati Sambhaji Raje Garden, situated on Jangli Maharaj Road, Shivajinagar, Pune.

The exhibition featured diverse and visually stunning sections, drawing an enthusiastic crowd of nature lovers, gardening enthusiasts, and photographers. Ornamental



plants, meticulously crafted flower arrangements, and artistic floral decorations adorned the venue, making the place something right out

of a dream. A special highlight was the grand showcase of roses and seasonal flowers, which captivated visitors with their vivid hues and delicate

fragrances. Additionally, dedicated sections focused on garden landscaping and tree conservation initiatives, emphasising the importance of environmental sustainability.

The event's vibrancy wasn't all of it. Competitions were organised that saw spirited participation across various categories of fruits, flowers, and vegetables. A particularly engaging attraction was the nature and environment-themed photography competition, which provided a platform for photographers to capture the essence of greenery and biodiversity and give them a platform to be expressed. Participants displayed an impressive array of talent, making it a tough call for the judges.

The exhibition also included stalls offering a wide variety of ornamental plants, fruit-bearing trees, and gardening essentials. For vendors, a nominal fee of ₹2,950 covered stall rent and maintenance charges. These stalls became a hub for plant lovers eager to take home a piece of nature and enhance their spaces, living the green life.

The event commenced with an official inauguration on Saturday, 15th February, at 11:00 AM, attended by



dignitaries and prominent figures from the gardening and environmental sectors. The highlight of the concluding day was the prize distribution ceremony on Sunday, 16th February, at 5:00 PM, where winners across various competitions were felicitated. The exhibition timings ensured ample opportunity for visitors to explore, with doors open from 11:00 AM to 8:30 PM on the first day and from 8:00 AM to 8:30 PM on the second day.

One of the most commendable aspects of the event was its accessibility—entry was free, though prior registration was mandatory for participation. Interested individuals had completed

their registration by 9th February 2025, ensuring a well-organized and engaging event. The registration allowed the event to be hassle-free and calm, letting visitors enjoy the serenity of nature.

The 43rd Fruits, Flowers, and Vegetable Exhibition was not just a display of botanical beauty but also a significant step towards encouraging sustainable living and environmental awareness. As a visitor and a student covering the event, I was left inspired by the passion and dedication of those involved. Events like these remind us of the importance of preserving and celebrating nature in our urban spaces.



Rising Road Rage in Pune

A Growing Threat to Public Safety

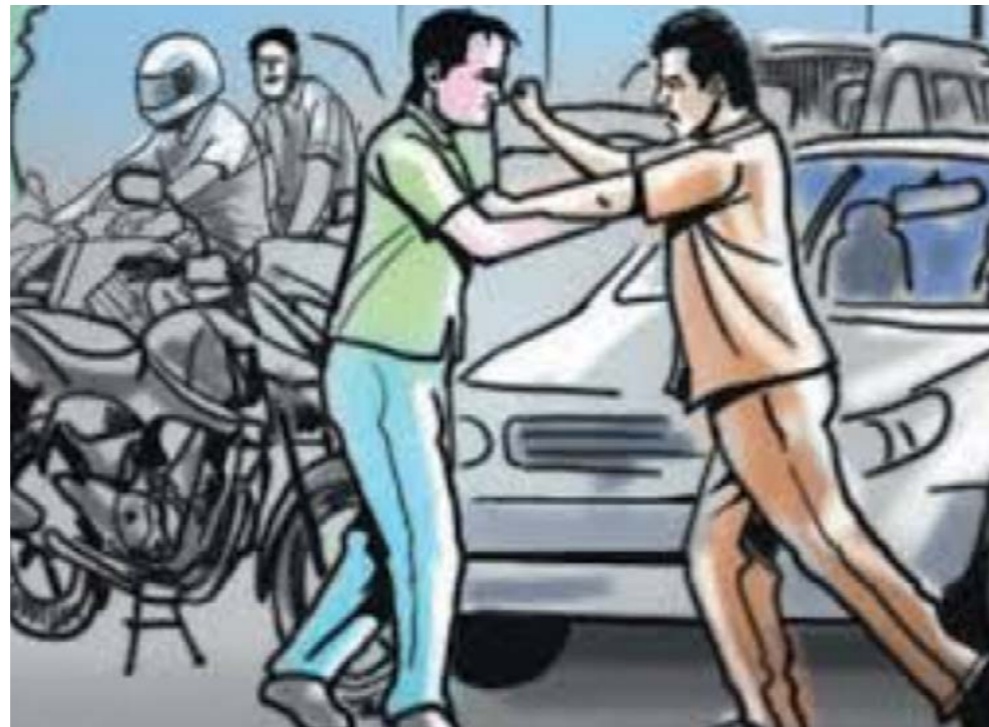


Pune residents are under constant stress and don't feel safe anymore due to an increase in road rage instances. It has been noticed that most of these crimes are committed over petty reasons. The road rage trend is a serious problem, which is more psychological.

BY RITESH DHAR

Numerous road rage incidents have cropped up in recent months. On the 25th of January, 2025, at 3 PM IST at Fergusson College Road, Pune, I witnessed a road rage incident between the local street people and a Thar owner over a four-wheeler parking outside Wadeshwar restaurant. Both parties had called upon their local contacts at the site. The atmosphere was quite tense, and the onlookers were eagerly waiting to know what would happen. This is just one of the several cases of road rage that happen in the spur of the moment in Pune city every day and end in violence.

Pune residents are under constant stress and don't feel safe anymore due to an increase in such instances. It has been noticed that most of these crimes are committed over petty reasons. The fear of an accident has taken a backseat. Now, the possibility of a person falling victim to road rage haunts his family member until he reaches their work, college, or any place the person plans to be.



Each day, a family man is instructed to be patient and not to indulge in any altercations, even if someone hits his vehicle. A local resident was told by his mother to chant a prayer all the way to the office and back, as she was concerned for his safety.

The road rage trend is a serious problem, which is more psychological. Some people are passive-aggressive. They

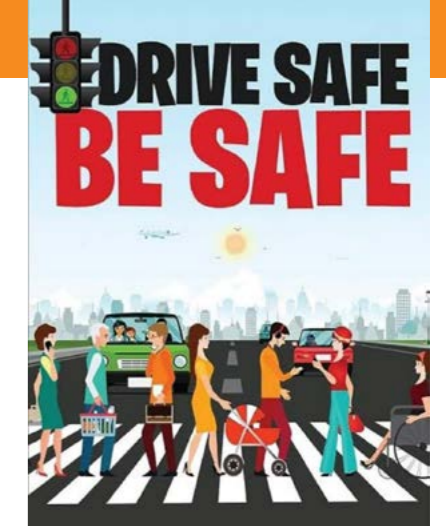
find it difficult to come to terms with a situation and accept it. They have a habit of holding anger within them and are restless until it is expressed. They react aggressively, and many times, their impulsive response makes the situation worse.

Experts say that it is due to the low tolerance that people struggle to cope with mental stress or physical discomfort,



due to which they are unable to endure or withstand difficult situations. As a result, they may react to frustrations by acting out. This could involve tantrums, hyperactivity, rash driving, or road rage.

Some people believe that this happens because of the violation of traffic regulations, while others think that there is a lack of sense of maturity to drive carefully and keep public safety a priority. Bad roads, traffic congestion, ongoing metro and road construction, inconsistent weather, etc., make it more difficult to manage.



Every person needs to put a conscious effort into being focused, careful, and aware of his surroundings. One should be patient and humble while on the road and follow the traffic rules and regulations.

Breaking Boundaries : The Evolution of Experimental Theater in Pune

(Continue from Page 28)

Venues like Sudarshan Rangmanch, Jyotsna Bhole Sabhagruha, and Bal Gandharva Rangmandir became important spaces for showcasing these experimental works.

Digital technology has recently expanded the scope of experimentation, with some productions incorporating projection mapping, sound design, and other technological elements. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated this trend, with many theatre practitioners exploring digital and hybrid performance formats.

Today, Pune's experimental theatre scene stands at an interesting juncture, balancing its rich tradition with contemporary innovations. Young theatre makers continue to emerge from the city's educational institutions and independent groups,



Immersed in the moment - an artist so deep in character, the world fades away.

bringing fresh perspectives to the art form. Cross-pollination with other artistic disciplines and international collaborations has further enriched the theatrical landscape. The strength of Pune's experimental theatre

lies in its ability to remain rooted in local contexts while embracing global influences, creating a distinctive theatrical language that continues to evolve and inspire audiences and practitioners alike.

Pune After Dark: A Foodie's Guide to Late-Night Eats



Pune known for its vibrant youth culture and educational institutions, has a thriving late-night food scene. Whether you're a student burning the midnight oil, a professional working late, or just someone craving a delicious snack at odd hours, Pune has plenty of options to satisfy your hunger.

Sanika Kale

Pune, known for its vibrant youth culture and educational institutions, has a thriving late-night food scene. Whether you're a student burning the midnight oil, a professional working late, or just someone craving a delicious snack at odd hours, Pune has plenty of options to satisfy your hunger. The city's nightlife isn't just about clubs and bars, it's also about delicious food that keeps people coming back for more.

Pune offers a mix of street food stalls, food trucks, and 24-hour cafes that cater to the night owls. For true late-night cravings, Goodluck Cafe on Fergusson College Road is a must-visit. This old Irani cafe serves mouthwatering keema pav, bun maska, and chai till late at night. Another fan favorite is Burger, a simple food truck on East Street, which serves juicy burgers and fries till the early hours. If you're in the mood for something spicy, JJ Garden Vada Pav in Camp is a legendary spot.

For those who prefer a more comfortable setting, Pune has



several 24/7 restaurants. Le Plaisir in Deccan stays open till late, serving delicious continental food and desserts. Shiv Sagar in JM Road is another go-to place for those craving a South Indian or North Indian meal even at midnight. Several hotels and cafes also provide round-the-clock food services. Tea Villa Cafe and Panchavati Gaurav have outlets that remain open, offering everything from sandwiches to full-fledged meals.

Pune's late-night food

culture thrives because of its large student population and IT professionals who work late shifts. Many food delivery apps also operate 24/7, making it easy to get a hot meal delivered even at 3 AM. The best part of Pune's late-night food culture is its diversity. From spicy street food to comforting Irani chai, from fancy cafes to quick food trucks, the city has something for everyone. So next time hunger strikes at midnight, step out and enjoy Pune's delicious night-time offerings!

Unmissable Spots To Check Out In Pune

Vaishali, FC Road

Though Vaishali is known for its morning and evening crowd, it's also a great place for late-night cravings. Open till midnight, this iconic



spot serves delicious South Indian food like dosas, idlis, and their famous SPDP (Sev Puri Dahi Puri). If you're looking for a light but tasty meal, this is the place to go.



Bedekar Misal, Narayan Peth

For those who love spicy food, Bedekar Misal is the go-to place. Though usually a breakfast favorite, they serve misal pav late into the night as well. Their spicy curry and crunchy farsan make for a flavorful and satisfying meal.

Goodluck Cafe, Deccan

A legendary spot in Pune, Goodluck Cafe is famous for its bun maska, keema pav, and chai. Open till late at night, it's a favorite among students and professionals looking for a quick, satisfying meal after hours.



Flavours Street Food, Baner

Flavours Street Food is another late-night favorite, serving items like tandoori sandwiches, Maggi, and frankies. This budget-friendly option offers lots of variety, perfect for those looking for quick bites.

No matter what you're craving at midnight—spicy, sweet, crispy, or cheesy—Pune has a place for you. These food joints ensure that hunger never has to wait until morning. So the next time you feel those late-night hunger pangs, grab your friends and explore Pune's best midnight food spots!

Bhau Joshi's Wadapav, JM Road

If you're a fan of street food, Bhau Joshi's Wadapav stall is a must-visit. Serving hot and spicy vada pavs until the early hours of the morning, this place is perfect for those who love desi flavors. Pair it with a cup of cutting chai for the ultimate midnight snack.

Meghalaya on a Platter: A Taste of Tradition.



Meghalaya has a unique cuisine that distinguishes it from other parts of India. Its cuisine is a true reflection of its rich cultural heritage, deeply rooted in the traditions of its indigenous communities. The food variety is influenced by its tribal heritage, with each community having its own unique recipes.

BY RIMI MISHRA

Meghalaya, a state in Northeast India, is rich in biodiversity, tribal traditions, cuisine, and scenic spots. Although it is a small state in India, its food, traditions, and environment tell a different story. The state's division into three hills—the Khasi, Jaintia, and Garo Hills—gives rise to three distinct tribes and a wealth of culinary and traditional variations. Meghalaya is a land of many identities, dialects, and traditions. Its culture is reflected in vibrant festivals and delicious cuisines.

The Khasi Cuisine-

The Khasi tribe is from the central and eastern parts of Meghalaya, inhabiting the Khasi Hills. Their cuisine is famous for its traditional dishes. Some of the famous Khasi dishes include:

Jadoh

Jadoh is a very popular dish in Meghalaya. Jadoh is preferred by the Khasi people more than other rice dishes



like pulav or biryani. Jadoh is made by combining rice and meat with flavourful spices and vegetables. It is slow-cooked; this delicacy is often paired with fish and eggs.

Pumaloi

Pumaloi is a traditional Khasi rice cake from Meghalaya, India. It's made from powdered rice, steamed in a special pot called 'Khiew Ranei' with water and raw grated coconut. Pumaloi is a simple yet delicious dish that can be enjoyed at any time.



Pukhleim

Pukhleim is also a very famous dish prepared with powdered rice and jaggery. It is a sweet yet savoury dessert enjoyed by people from all over Meghalaya.

The Garo Cuisine-

The Garo cuisine is savoured by the Garo tribe from the Garo Hills in Meghalaya, who are also famous for their traditional food and cooking practices. Some popular Garo dishes include :

Sakin

Sakin, also known as Sakin



Gata, is a traditional steamed rice cake. It's a soft and chewy snack made with pounded sticky rice, black sesame seeds, and sugar.

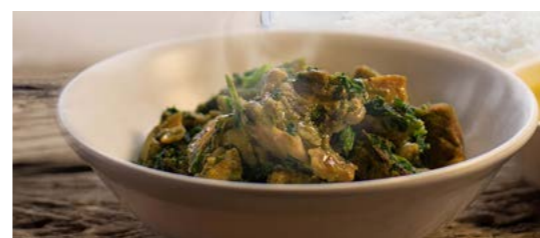


Na-kam Bitchi

Na-kam Bitchi is a dry fish gravy. A traditional delicacy made with dried fish is served with rice. It is spicy and very flavourful because chillies are a crucial ingredient in this dish.

Do-o Kapa

It is a traditional Garo chicken dish cooked with indigenous soda with no oil added to it. It is served with rice, and its flavour usually comes from the fresh herbs used, like chillies and local leaves.



The Jaintia Cuisine-

The Jaintia cuisine comes from the Jaintia tribe, also known as Syntengs and Pnars. Their cuisine is rich in flavour, featuring a variety of locally prepared vegetables and non-vegetarian meals. Some popular dishes are:

Doh Sain or Doh Sniang Nei-long

Don Sain, or Doh Snaing Nei-long, is meat cooked with sesame seeds. It is a common dish made and served in Pnarr homes. It goes well with hot steamed rice. This dish has a nutty and aromatic flavour because of the sesame used in it



Dakharang or Kharang

Dakharang, or Kharang, is a smoked fish delicacy. It's a popular dish among the Jaintia. It is prepared as a curry, salad, or chutney. It is served with hot rice. This dish has a smoky flavour.



Bamboo shoot

Bamboo shoots are very common in Meghalaya. It is often paired with vegetables and meat. It is mostly served with rice, but it can also be savoured as a snack.

Some popular and local beverages of Meghalaya-

Cha Khoo

a traditional beverage made from roasted rice. It is a rice tea, which tastes like tea and coffee.

Sha Shiahkrot

a traditional tea made from the roots of a wild plant called "Shiah Krot. It is a fermented drink. It has a strong and bitter flavour, but it has many health benefits.

Chubitchi

a fermented rice drink made from grains. It is known for its rich aroma, unique flavour, and health benefits.

Meghalaya has a unique cuisine that distinguishes it from other parts of India. Its cuisine is a true reflection of its rich cultural heritage, deeply rooted in the traditions of its indigenous communities. The state is rich in culture and cuisine. The food variety is influenced by its tribal heritage, with each community having its own unique recipes. From the smoky and flavorful Doh Nei-long to the nourishing and wholesome Jadoh, each dish tells a story of Meghalaya's culinary evolution.

Rajasthan : Where Heritage Meets Vibrance



Rajasthan is one of the oldest, most beautiful, and colourful states of India. Rajasthan is famous for its magnificent forts, palaces, temples, and wildlife sanctuary. The culture here is renowned for its vibrant colors, rich royal heritage, intricate handicrafts like blue pottery, miniature paintings, and embroidered textiles.

BY SHRUTI SURADKAR



Rajasthan is land of kings, queens, grand forts and palaces, Rajasthan is a hit tourist spot among Indians as well as international travellers. The magnificent forts and finely carved temples in Rajasthan are counted among the top architectural monuments in the country. These exotic buildings carry a legacy that speaks volumes about the prosperity and richness of the state. It is a state whose cities are nicknamed after various colours, like the well-know Jaipur being the Pink City or Jodhpur being the Blue City and so on.

Rajasthan's culture

Rajasthan is famous for its magnificent forts, palaces, temples, and wildlife sanctuary. The culture here is renowned for its vibrant colors, rich royal heritage, intricate handicrafts like blue pottery, miniature paintings, and embroidered textiles. Famous folk dances like Ghoomar and Kalbeliya, on the other hand, are all showcased in bustling markets where you can



find unique jewelry, textiles, leather goods, and traditional Rajasthani attire. If you plan to visit, you cannot miss the major attractions, including the Pushkar Camel Fair and the Desert Festival in Jaisalmer. Apart from these, you'd be

missing out if you didn't stop by these places-

Hawa Mahal: Palace of Winds

Hawa Mahal is a five-story palace built in 1799 by Maharaja Sawai Pratap

Singh. It's a popular tourist destination and one of India's most recognizable architectural marvels. The palace's honeycomb-like facade is made up of 953 small windows called jharokhas, making it one of a kind.

Amer Fort: Jaipur's Crown Jewel

The fort's architecture is a blend of Rajput and Mughal styles. The fort is a reminder of the glory of the Kachwaha Rajputs. Amer Fort, the birthplace of Jodha Bai—the



mysterious Rajput princess— can be summed up as a perfect blend of art and nature.

Chittorgarh Fort: The King's House

Chittorgarh, also known as Chittod Fort, is one of the largest forts in India. The fort was the capital of Mewar. It has been the citadel of many Rajput warriors, including Rana Kumbha, Maharana Pratap, and Jaimal Chittorgarh.

Rajasthan's Culinary Delights

Rajasthan is beyond the gorgeous palaces and aesthetic Insta-worthy monuments. If you take a

look, you'll be met with bursts of flavours from the state. The famous Dal Baati Churma, Gatte ki Sabzi, and Laal Maas offer a burst of authentic Rajasthani flavours. The state's royal past is reflected in its rich and spicy dishes, often prepared with ghee and aromatic spices.

Rajasthan is the only state to have a single hill station. Rajasthan, with its royal heritage, vibrant culture, and diverse attractions, offers an unforgettable travel experience. From the majestic forts and palaces to the bustling markets and colourful festivals, the state has something for everyone.



