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“Each time a woman stands up for herself, she stands up for all women” – Maya Angelou.

That’s exactly what happened when our cover girl, Parvathy stood her ground when she faced unimaginable wrath online for making a point. She stood unshaken refusing to be cowed down with all the trolling and she did that since she knew the issue was not about targeting her alone. It was about society’s intolerance to a woman speaking her mind; especially if it contradicts popular stereotypes!

Each time we think mindsets are slowly changing for the better and things are looking up for women, incidents like these jolt us to reality. And we realize that the handful of us who have clarity in our minds with respect to women and how she should be treated are only an exception. There are countless people out there (surprisingly a lot of women too), mostly guarding themselves behind the veil of online anonymity, who are ever ready to pass judgements on others. These are the people who think they have the right to define and prescribe how a woman should behave, speak or carry herself. These are the very people who are the undoing of a progressive world. Everyday sexism is the biggest concern of the day and the normalcy that it has attained is one of the biggest threats to society today.

As Parvathy says in the interview, “the change is slow but slow change is good too as that is what will be long lasting”. We truly hope too that the change will come about and last forever.

CHEERS!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bina'.

BINA SUJIT

CO-FOUNDER & EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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**Founder and
Managing Director**
Sujit Kumar

**Co-Founder and
Editor-in-Chief**
Bina Sujit

Guest Columnist
Anu Hasan

Senior Features Writers
Sanjana Chakraborty
Radhika Ramesh

Contributing Writers
Antara Pandit
Priya S.
Rashmi Govind

Design
Rifah Aiysha
Francis Augustine M

Marketing
P.V Padmashankar
Karthik R Nair
Santhosh SN

Marketing Co-ordination
Sathiya Baskar

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*"The Trolling Gave Me
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PIMPLE CLEAR COMBO

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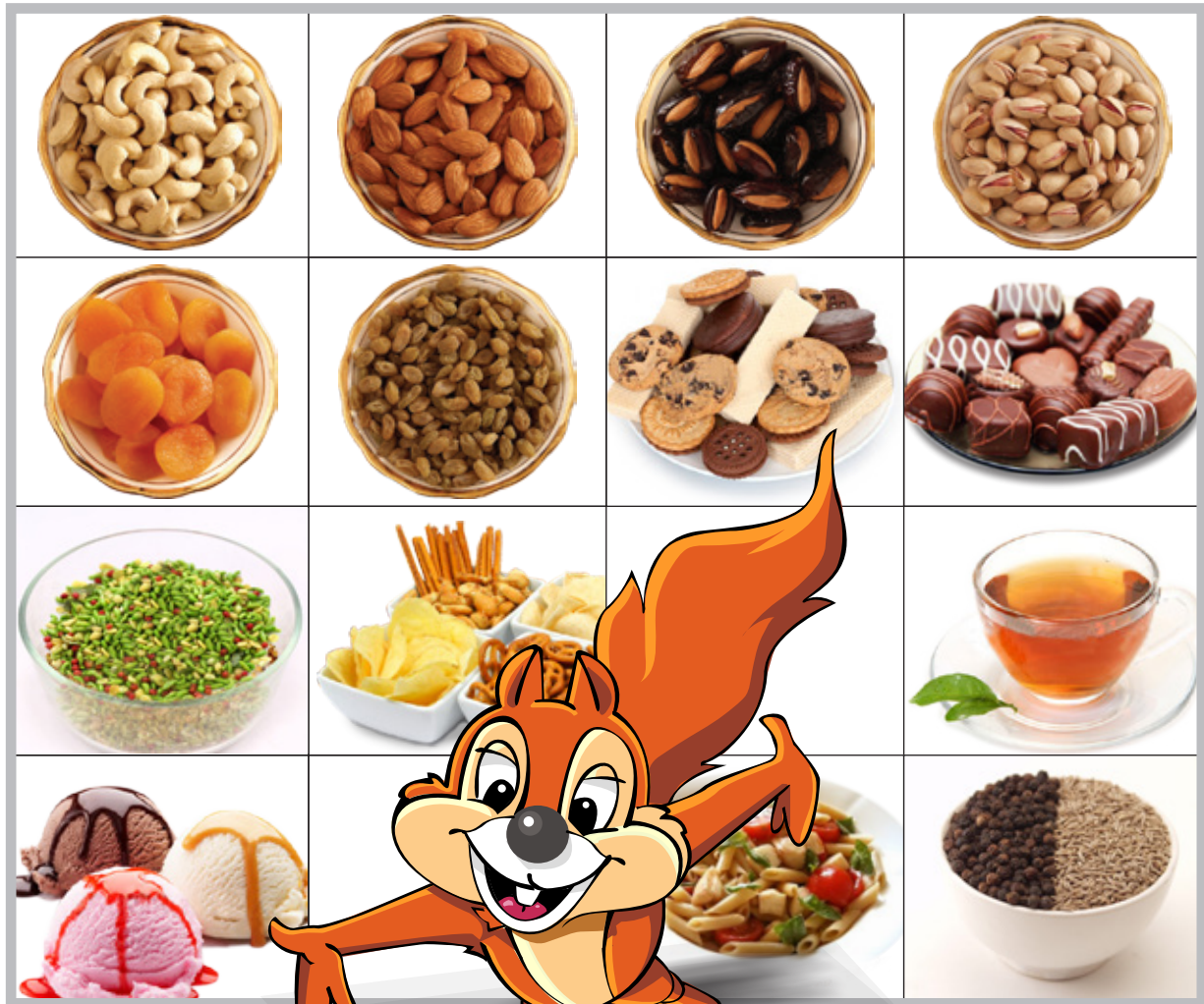
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Mailbox

WE'RE LISTENING! THIS IS WHAT YOU HAD TO SAY ABOUT OUR PAST ISSUES

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Aparna you are a beauty, inside and out. I wish you all the best for your upcoming release.

- *Shrinidhi, Chennai*

Rightly said in the editor's note, the women featured in the magazine this month are an inspiration to read and absorb their motivation and undying spirit in our lives. Mana Ma'am, you have sent me in a tizzy! More power to you!

- *Rani R., Chennai*

I really needed this! Many thanks for solving this potential life crisis (I only wish I could dramatise its importance more!) 'Menu for the day' is every mom's nightmare and this article helps a great deal in solving that. Thanks JFW.

- *Nita D., Chennai*

I am a regular reader and JFW you truly know how to touch upon topics that are invaluable to a mom with tots.

- *Hazira F., Chennai*



The beauty topics peaked my interest this time! I love anything to do with nails. Could we have a little more on nail art next time? Sulphate free shampoo options was also a good read.

- *Christy Blessy, Coimbatore*

A good read, I recommend this article to anyone planning a Turkish holiday to get a head start on things.

- *Riya M., Kochi*





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WHY SO BLUE!

It's a common colour alright but it has a charm that can be translated into the cutest of accessories and outfits; with the many shades and add-ons of glitter and glam making it stand out. It's a colour that makes you perfectly balanced during the monsoons and winters, while keeping you cool during summers!



Blue printed asymmetric tiered dress by **Prints by Radhika**



Satin clutch by **Oscar de la Renta**



Happy Sport rose gold, stainless steel diamond watch by **Chopard**

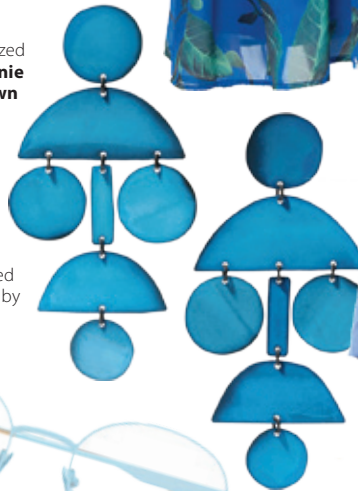


Woven leather loafers by **Bottega Veneta**

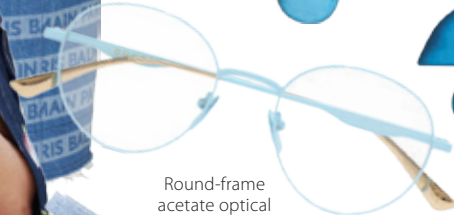
Knee length embroidered coat by **Carolina Herrera**



Pom Pom oxidized earrings by **Annie Costello Brown**



Frayed logo-printed denim skirt by **Balmain**



Round-frame acetate optical glasses by **Gucci**



Dorothy slingback by **Victoria Beckham**



Baraboum by **Christian Louboutin**



Paris De Boutique

COUTURE AT ITS FINEST

Paris De Boutique was born out of a vision to give fashion a new perspective in Kerala and caters to women who value quality and style. It is a one-of-a-kind couture shopping experience that offers an amazing collection of high-end designer wear by Anil Muhammad and Jamal Muhammed, the leading fashion designers who developed the elite Indian collections.



Royal Satin, Abuthai Satin, Georgette, Chiffon, Chanderi, Rayon, Cotton, Tissues, Cotton Slub, Banarasi Net, Dupattas, Printed Fabrics, Dyeable Fabrics, Borders and Laces are what customers can find at Paris De Boutique.

The designer duo are now focused on A&J Couture, an exclusive men's fashion store that offers custom tailoring with the world's top fabric brands in men's fashion and an expert tailoring studio. Each garment is individually constructed by using dozens of key measurements to achieve the fit that's best and style that's personal. Together they are now working towards developing Kochi into a fashion hub of India. ■

THE 'NIGOODA COLLECTION', 'OR THE MYSTERY COLLECTION', DRAWS ITS INSPIRATION FROM SEA FLOORS THAT CAPTURES THE INTERPLAY OF MOTIFS SET IN UNUSUAL PATTERNS WHERE SYMMETRY AND ASYMMETRY COMBINE TO FORM DESIGNS THAT ARE MYSTERIOUSLY BEAUTIFUL.

Driven by the philosophy to bring the best of Indian tradition and use fusion to create something unique, the boutique offers ethnic wear with a whiff of western influence. The 'Nigooda Collection', 'or the mystery collection', draws its inspiration from sea floors that captures the interplay of motifs set in unusual patterns where symmetry and asymmetry combine to form designs that are mysteriously beautiful. The Navratna Collection' is inspired by the allure of the

nine gems, has flower motifs woven in rich and intricate embroidery.

The latest Alankrita Collection features handmade flowers and which is used to create a 3D embossed effect. It is perhaps the first time Kerala has seen a collection this unique. Personalisation is a unique luxury that the boutique offers. From stitching to styling, the A&J (Anil and Jamal) Studio provides customers the highest degree of customisation

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Incorporate the Crop

It is July already and the summer's sun is still beckoning upon us. With very few surprise spills this year, we're left to deal with the heat and humidity for the day. Narrow down your shopping picks to the only essentials that'll you'll wear more than once and style from desk to dinner. Ranking at the top of the list are our beloved crop tops. By **Sruthi Ravinder**.

From all the way back in the 1940s' till today's runways, the crop top and all of its various forms has had a successful presence in fashion closets. Just a glimpse at the SS19 runways is enough to remind you about the trend that will not fade anytime soon. From beige crops in Chanel to the OTT ones in Versace, PVC in Altuzara - there are far too many ways to incorporate the crop top!

CARRYING-OFF THE CROP RIGHT

A crop top makes for a classic must-have owing to its versatility. With so many types and variations available, shopping for the right one can get a bit overwhelming. While they can be a hundred ways to style them, these midriff-baring tops can get a bit intimidating to wear if not paired right. From buttoned down, lettuce ends, crisscross to tanks, here's your guide on the types and ways to style a crop top.

Chanel Spring 2019 Runway

Chanel Spring 2019 Runway

Chloé Spring 2019 Runway



CHANEL
The beachy mood came in with beige and nude crop tops. The crops were styled with bike shorts and tweed blazers and mini-skirt coordinates. It also featured a crisp white button-down crop shirt.

LHD Le Phare open-knit cotton polo shirt

Equipment sola cropped polka-dot silk crepe de chine top

TANK CROPS

A tight-fitted tank crop makes a perfect cocktail outfit if worn with a peplum skirt. Play with textures and if it is a formal event, it's better to have the top match the skirt.

THE BUTTON-UP CROP

This calls for a perfect work outfit. Pair it with straight fitted pants or an A-line skirt for a perfect everyday formal look. You can also wear it as an overcoat without buttoning them above tank tops or bralettes to create layers.



Balmain cropped striped ribbed jersey top





Dolce and
Gabanna Spring
Runway 2019

THE CRISSCROSS CROP

The crossover detail brings all the attention up. So this type of crop top is best paired with simple bottoms. This silhouette looks best when it is tight fitted. Pair it with a looser bottom like your flared pants or culottes.



Cami NYC the mila floral-print silk-charmeuse bra top

Balmain striped stretch-knit bralette



Alexander McQueen cropped leather bustier top



THE LONG SLEEVES

Try styling this one with a white tee peeping out of the hem ends.



Cushnie off-the-shoulder white cropped stretch-crepe top

Cult Gaia clara cropped crinkled cotton-blend top

BRALETTE

A bralette is like that awkward tiny cousin of crop tops. It shows a lot of skin. Best way to wear it? It's a fun crop to try underneath an overall for a weekend look.

BUSTIER CROP TOP

This looks a little intimidating at first sight. But the runways have given us enough styling ideas to steal right away. A printed floral bustier above a plain or printed t-shirt is sure to attract awed glances. You can also layer it with a buttoned down shirt or a blazer during cooler weathers.



ALTUZARRA
The ultra romantic collection featured crop tops with a fun twist with fringes. Models walked down the runway wearing PVC crop tops with cut-out shoulders paired with midi pencil skirts.



THE SWEATER CROP

These work great on sweat pants for a casual day out, just make sure that the pants are high-waisted. It can also be paired with button-down miniskirts and super comfy vans or sneakers.

T-SHIRT CROP

Nothing like a good old classic! The most versatile of the bunch, is there anything the t-shirt crop doesn't look good on? This year's trends lean in towards tourist prints, animal prints, tie-dye, lettuce-ends and solid neons.

Les Réveries
cropped
embroidered
cotton-jersey
hoodie



Natasha Zinko
Palm tree print
cropped t-shirt

Tre cropped
printed jersey
sweatshirt



Alexander
McQueen
cropped
knit top

HERMES
The maximalist inspiration comes down from Hermes that had crops worn beneath over-sized jackets and pinafore skirts.

A CROP FOR EVERY BODY TYPE

While most of the time crop tops sound quite flattering, in reality the belly-barring attire can get flat-out intimidating. The key is to pair it right and picking the correct silhouette.

Curvy

Avoid body hugging tanks. Choose more structured pieces as they are likely to graze rather than adhere to every curve. The button-up crop might do the trick. Pair your top with a skirt that flares out from the waist to create or highlight the hourglass figure.

Athletic

If you are a little built, then find a midriff-baring top and pair it with pleated skirts or frills that carve out a waist. If you are going for a loose-fitted crop or a sweater crop pair, it with skinny jeans. The loose drape will highlight your curves in a casual way. You can also try out an ultra-short crop to show off your toned frame.

Petite

Avoid fitted or skin-hugging bottoms. Try wearing the same print all over. This will help elongate your frame. Go for well-tailored crops. The bralette with the overall can be your pick.

Plus size

A short to midi length crop top works well for this body type. Pair it with high waist skirts or straight cut pants. You can also try layering which will draw attention to your midline and have a slimming effect. ■

FUN IN FEATHERS

Rising to the surface this summer are bird prints. This breezy trend is being sported from cocktail dresses to denims, bags to shoes and even accessories. With so many variations the aesthetics are set high this time thanks to these whimsical prints. Let your style soar with flocking birds this season. Take flight in our favourite picks!



Aya sandals
by **Kat Maconie**



Bird printed wrap skirt by
Fausto Puglisi



Tropics bird earrings by
Mercedes Salazar



Knuckle bird embroidered suede clutch by
Alexander McQueen



Bird printed evening dress
by **Erdem**



Jade printed crepe midi dress by
Reformation



Nesrine facette dream bird-print midi skirt
by **Erdem**



Ted fortune deep-V swimsuit
by **Ted Baker**



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My Birthday Present to Myself

More than two years after I lost Amma and Appa, I see my old self emerging. While my usual positive self did make a rather quick comeback, the grief and loss were quite formidable opponents, and so the battle waged back and forth.

I think I did a grand job of protecting my mental well-being, despite disappointments and let-downs. And I am unabashedly proud of that. But what I am certainly not proud of is the way I let fitness slide.

Until then, every year, one of my birthday presents to myself was always a fitter me. I would indulge from August to December and then every January or February, I would start the process of kicking myself back into shape. But the past two years did not see that happen.

My logical mind tells me that mental well-being needed to be focused on but I can't help wondering if I was too lenient on myself regarding my fitness. You know, the annoying thing about being an adult is that no one is there to make you do what you don't want to do! I mean, as a kid you had your mum or dad yelling at you to wake up on time, get ready, brush your teeth, do your homework. And did you feel like doing ANY of these things? I bet you didn't. Well I certainly can recall many times when I didn't feel like doing something and I did it because Amma or Appa told me to. And later being grateful that I did do it.

But now, that you are an adult, you have to be your own parent. And getting over my inertia and the bad eating habits were the first of the "I don't want to change" things that I picked. I already eat a low carb diet, but I thought why not eliminate sugar. To be fair, apart from the 1.5 spoons of sugar in my coffee in the morning (I wrote 2 spoons and corrected it to 1.5) I thought I didn't really indulge in sugary treats. Or so I thought... until I remembered the rainbow cake, and the pecan pie and the chocolate sponge and oh, the walnut cake! All these naughty fellows had been making a bi-weekly appearance and I was dismayed at their sneaky visits! How dare they just keep coming like that! They shall be banished!

Eliminating sugar meant no sneaky cakey visitors. I was okay with that...but my coffee! The thing with my coffee is, it has been something of a ritual for the past nearly 25 years. And the last 15, I had taken to grinding my coffee beans fresh every day. (I still recall how my parents used to wait for me to wake up so they could have their second cup of coffee



“ YOU KNOW, THE ANNOYING THING ABOUT BEING AN ADULT IS THAT NO ONE IS THERE TO MAKE YOU DO WHAT YOU DON'T WANT TO DO! I MEAN, AS A KID YOU HAD YOUR MUM OR DAD YELLING AT YOU TO WAKE UP ON TIME, GET READY, BRUSH YOUR TEETH, DO YOUR HOMEWORK. AND DID YOU FEEL LIKE DOING ANY OF THESE THINGS? I BET YOU DIDN'T.”

with me. Makes me smile how they both used to enjoy the fresh aroma.) But coffee without sugar ..hmmm I don't think so.

So I did the most logical thing you do when you are being your own parent. I cut out coffee and instead started having hot water with turmeric, or with clove or tea without sugar etc. And you know what ? My body simply couldn't tell the difference. So all along, what I thought was a preference for coffee was actually a habit. The preference was for something hot to drink when I woke up.

I did have some people telling me that I would have a caffeine withdrawal but nope - didn't happen. In fact, I haven't had coffee in over a month and it isn't that hard. But then I do know myself enough to know that completely restricting myself from anything is a sure fire recipe for disaster. And so I told myself I could have cakey visitors once every two weeks. And that was actually fine. I mean what's life without a few naughty cakes, hey?

The second thing I did was to resume my workouts and walks. And boy, did that need some doing! But the good thing is, once you force yourself to do it the first few weeks, then it becomes a habit. And just like coffee, I am now wont to think that I have a preference for working out!

It has been nearly a month of sorting this aspect of my life. It isn't easy. I mean getting back to fitness when you're in your 20s is one thing, but getting back to it when you're nearly 50 is something altogether different. I recall telling Amma once, "I am thinking of getting a bit muscular, Ma. Do you think I should do it? I am worried if my face would become too gaunt and thin." Amma, in her typical way responded, "When you're nearly 50, what does it matter what your face looks like? Go ahead and get fit and muscular!" (It sounds better in Tamil, "Ammaam! 50 vayasukku apparam moonji eppidi irundha enna! Nee pannu!")

I thought of that incident when the picture that I had taken with a dog drew attention to the tone of my arms. I was thrilled when someone commented, "Biceps!" and another asked me "What's with the Michelle Obama arms?" I think Amma would be smiling at me from above.

I am nowhere close to being a female version of Arnie, not with my love handles and the not inconsiderable paunch. (After all they are the result of 2 years of hard work!!) But I think I am definitely getting fitter now.

A fitter stronger and healthier me. That is going to be my birthday present to myself this year. ■

Connect with Anu Hasan. Send in your suggestions and feedback at www.facebook.com/anuhasan.india or mail her at anufbpage@gmail.com



Shiny foot super peeling liquid by **Tonymoly**

Foot scrub by **Kama Ayurveda**

True blue spa super rich foot cream by **Bath and Bath Works**

Peppermint pedicure set by **The Body Shop**

Shea butter foot cream by **L'Occitane**

Electronic Foot File by **Scholl**

Foot spa cream by **Beauty Works**

Natural cooling foot cream by **The Moms Co.**

SWEEP ME OFF MY FEET!

Taking care of one's feet is seldom prioritised, and hence they end up calloused, dry and unkempt. Just like your hands and face, your feet are just as delicate and need twice the amount of care. Moisturise it, soak it as much as you can, and beautify it with trendy nail colours and trinkets!



Jiore

THE COMPLETE SKINCARE

(www.jioreshop.net)

Known as the Facial soap brand, Jiore promises to deliver to you a spa-like experience at the convenience of your home, with rejuvenating skincare essentials that help you achieve a clean and healthy glow. With a range of products that cater to different skin care needs, like, soaps for acne-free skin, de-tanning, skin whitening, to even products that help to stabilise hyperpigmentation.



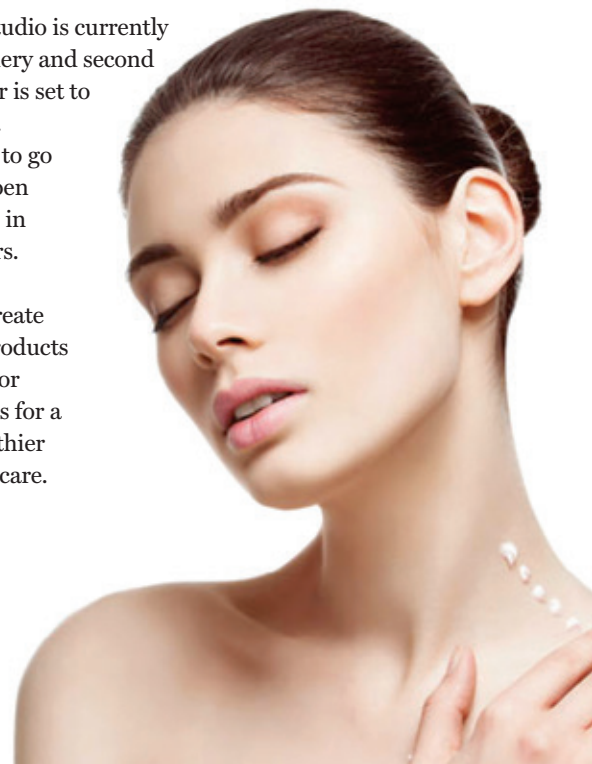
The brand, Jiore Skincare is a brainchild of the cosmetologist Ms. Jhansi Rani Vedachalam from Atlanta, U.S.A. Jiore brings to you the concept of facial soaps, first of its kind in India. The focus of the brand is to create products that actually work and are highly effective.

At Jiore, each product is aimed at a certain performance. The Litlip, for example, helps lighten your lip colour naturally by removing hyperpigmented of discoloured lips.

Jiore went online in July 2018 with just two products and with overwhelming results and response the brand has broadened its spectrum. Today it offers a range of products for holistic body care which includes Serum Face wash, Toners, skin-lighting creams, Hair oil, Eyelash, Beard oil, Dark Circles removing gels, Lips, face and body care, etc.

Jiore Skincare Studio is currently located at Velachery and second experience center is set to open in T-Nagar. The brand plans to go pan India and open a hundred stores in the next two years.

Jiore strives to create more effective products with no steroids or harmful elements for a cleaner and healthier approach to skincare.



THE ABC'S OF BB AND CC CREAMS

Most beauty junkies want that flawless base that shows off their radiant skin and complexion. For a quick fix, it's always best to resort to something that offers a little bit of coverage, the way BB and CC creams do, writes **Rashmi Govind**.



People often forget the importance of having a base before you apply your make-up. That's when BB and CC creams come in to the picture. Many often confuse the two and don't know the difference.

DURING SUMMERS IN INDIA, IT CAN BE VERY HARD TO FIND A PRODUCT THAT OFFERS A DECENT AMOUNT OF COVERAGE AND AT THE SAME TIME, DOES NOT MAKE YOU SWEAT TOO MUCH.

Foundations tend to crease and look cakey after exposure to heat. It attracts dirt and grime and can clog your pores. Therefore, it isn't the most appropriate product to use on a daily basis. BB creams, due to their moisturising properties, have a dewy and illuminated finish. Whereas CC creams provide a soft matte finish while hiding imperfections.

Both are perfect for work or college and provide a natural look. The 'no-make-up' make-up look is the go-to look amongst young professionals these days; it's easy and fuss free and nothing can help you achieve it better than BB and CC creams. You can easily build the coverage by applying more product in desired areas. The market is flooded with several brands that offer different shade ranges. If you go to the counter at any local beauty store, you will easily find the perfect shade for your skin tone. More than that finished look on your face, strive for that freshness that doesn't look overdone. Get your BB and CC's right based on the weather, your skin shade and all things beauty.

HOW TO APPLY

Both require minimal to no make-up tools for application. One can easily apply the product with their hands and blend it into the skin. You

can also use a wet beauty blender sponge to achieve that seamless finish. If you wish to increase the coverage, apply a little bit of concealer under your eyes, brow

bone and other areas where you have blemishes. The last step to achieve that flawless finish would be to powder your T-zone (i.e. across the forehead and

down the nose). These areas tend to get oily fast and powdering can help control that. You can easily build the coverage by applying more product in desired areas. ■

THE LOWDOWN

BB creams and CC creams offer solutions for different concerns and it IS always best to know what's suited for your skin type.

BB CREAM

Beauty Balm or Blemish Balm

It had initially gained popularity in Korea. It has a much lighter formulation than foundation and includes several skin care benefits. Much like a tinted moisturiser, BB creams give a sheerer coverage than most foundations. Most BB creams have a certain amount of SPF and retains moisture. The best part is, BB creams can cater to different skin types. So, whatever may be your need, whether to hydrate or mattify or illuminate, BB creams come to the rescue.

CC CREAM

Complexion Correction cream.

CC creams, unlike BB creams, offer a little more coverage and help hide dark spots, fine lines and wrinkles. It helps to even out your skin tone and reduces the look of discoloration/hyperpigmentation on the face. CC creams fight redness by using an opposite colour to neutralise imperfections.

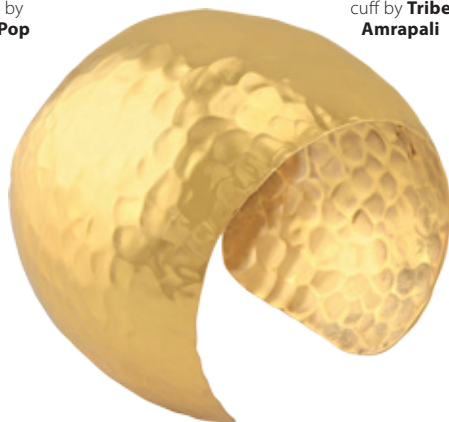




Gold finish song of the swords cuff by **Masaba X GOT**



Green gold tone meenakari and kundan inspired bangles by **Paisley Pop**



Gold plated hammered hand cuff by **Tribe Amrapali**

Gold finish handcrafted pearl resin cuff bracelet by **Bansri**



Gold plated transparent cuff by **The Bohemian**

Jane rattan cuff by **Cult Gaia**



Gunmetal finish flower cuff by **Firdaus by Akshita**

Lace gold-plated cuff by **Aurélie Bidermann**



Large multiband wrist cuff by **Panacea**



Gold-tone cuff by **Chloé**

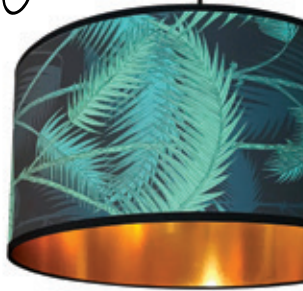
O.H. V Wrist cuff by **Outhouse**

OH-CUFFS, I LOVE YOU!

Looking regal often includes a good amount of glam especially with its accessories. While you might nail it with earrings and the neckpiece, most don't realise the power of an embellished wrist cuff and how it can elevate your look, giving it a royal touch. From thin ones to thick, loud ones, varieties are aplenty!



MATCH OR CONTRAST
your wallpaper lampshade with existing wallpaper or wall colours, adding a coordinated accessory to your living room, bedroom or den.



Wallpaper Wow!

After the walls have been lined and the paste has dried, don't toss the remains of that roll. Instead, try one of these smart ways to use removable wallpaper in your decor and transform a room from blah to 'Aha!'

BRIGHTEN A LAMP SHADE: Give an old lampshade a quick refresh by measuring a piece of wallpaper to its circumference and height, and hot-glue it onto the old shade. It is sure to look as if it came from an upscale store with a hefty price tag!

REVAMP YOUR STAIRS: If the stairs in your home have seen better days, revamping them with wallpaper strips is an economical and quirky solution!

SPRUCE YOUR SHELVES: Add a pop of pattern behind the shelves of an old medicine cabinet or bookcase. It might be just the thing to take your boring apartment living room or drab bathroom to the next level.

DRAWER GLAM: Though this decoration idea is not visible on the outside, it could be a sight for sore eyes through all the mess. Find a print you like and then cut out pieces for each drawer. This is a perfect option for kitchen cabinets.

PRINT POWER: How many times can you makeover one really cheap chest of drawers? The answer is infinitely. This will also help cover up any drawer fronts that have damaged over time. ■

LINE THE RISERS
with a bold pattern. Make sure to use coated or vinyl paper so that you can easily wipe away dirt.



PICK A SMALL PATTERN so you can see the full design on drawer fronts. Avoid pieces with lots of mouldings - or paint them in a complimenting shade.



ON A ROLLER COASTER RIDE

She brings her own sunshine, she walks away with her own thunder; when **Parvathy Thiruvothu** enters a room, there's a luminous aura around her accompanied with her wholesome smile. With confidence in her stride and strength in her words, Parvathy is well aware of the consequences of speaking up in an industry that chooses to let sleeping dogs lie. In the face of adversity, she is the woman who gives it a wink and strives on, defining the old adage: 'As the going gets tough, the tough get going.'

By **Bina Sujit & Sanjana Chakraborty**.

PHOTOGRAPHY **SUNDER RAMU**

STYLIST **AMRITHA RAM** | OUTFIT & ACCESSORIES **MASABA & AMRAPALI JEWELS**
HAIR AND MAKE-UP **RACHEL, STYLESMITH** | LOCATION **INTERCONTINENTAL CHENNAI
MAHABALIPURAM RESORT**



WE ARE HALF WAY THROUGH 2019 AND PARVATHY IS ALREADY REELING IN SUCCESS. WITH TWO BACK-TO-BACK RELEASES BY JUNE, HER PERFORMANCES LAUDED MORE THAN EVER, PARVATHY HAS MUCH TO REJOICE OVER WITH THE FUTURE LOOKING JUST AS HOPEFUL AS THE PRESENT.

She knows there's nothing but good times ahead of her with her future aspirations branching out to newer territories. Whether it's Tessa of Charlie, Sarah of Bangalore days, Sameera of Take Off, Pallavi of 'Uyare' or Dr Annu of 'Virus', there's a bit of her in every character she essays, living through each of them to the fullest and bidding them goodbye when the time has come. A child who asked a lot of 'whys' and 'hows' to an adult who is just as curious, Parvathy TK talks about her childhood, her debut and why feminism matters.

'As a child, I asked a lot of questions.'


Parvathy, much like what she is now, was an inquisitive young girl who always needed answers. Growing up with parents who are lawyers, and a brother who is four years older, little Parvathy had a childhood that involved activities that had her veering towards Arts. "I'm from Calicut but I wasn't really brought up in Calicut; we were always travelling different cities from Delhi to Trivandrum. As a child, I was not great at studies but I was good at asking questions. I wasn't good at exams, I understood concepts but I just couldn't mug up and write. Science always excited me, Biology especially. So my parents had the slightest of hope that

I would get into medicine but three months into the entrance coaching classes, I realised that it was not my cup of tea," she reveals. But this realisation led her to gravitate towards Arts, prompting her to cut classes to go for choreography or some event. With languages and Biology being her favourites, she started to pursue them in the form of essay competitions and storytelling.

'Films happened after Television for me.'

Before cinema, Parvathy was a known face on Kiran TV, a music-based channel where she would host a show that involved her answering calls, taking requests and dedicating songs. She was 16-17 back then, juggling school work and this gig. It came to her quite unexpectedly. "There was a show called 'Sensations' which functioned as an in-house ramp walk. My mum sent my pictures, and it just so happened that I won. A lady who was on the sets asked me if I would be interested in auditioning for a new TV channel and that's how it all started at Kiran TV," she narrates. A memorable experience from those days had her being corrected by singer KS Chithra in the most adorable way.

"I used to go to school in the morning, come back and then go to the studio for the half-an-hour


I'M FROM CALICUT BUT I WASN'T REALLY BROUGHT UP IN CALICUT; WE WERE ALWAYS TRAVELLING DIFFERENT CITIES FROM DELHI TO TRIVANDRUM. AS A CHILD, I WAS NOT GREAT AT STUDIES BUT I WAS GOOD AT ASKING QUESTIONS.

show. Hindi and English was something I could manage very well but Malayalam took time. The language in itself involves the swirling of your tongue and is very 'mouthy' or Sanskrit-ish. I remember on my very first day, I was interviewing KS Chithra ji and was given the word 'sangeetha samvidhayakan' which means music director. I kept fumbling until she just held me, made me say it properly, and then just hugged me!"

'I wanted to be like Sushmita Sen!'

A little later, Parvathy got to know that veteran Malayalam director Ranjith is a relative of hers. But that never really affected her or made an impact. When she was in the 9th grade, she idolised Sushmita Sen. "Even then acting never really hit me, I just wanted to be as amazing as her." Contrary to her upbringing, her parents never got the opportunity to pursue the arts the way she and her brother got. "We struggled and we eventually upgraded from lower middle class to above. When my mother was young, she really wanted to learn Bharatnatyam but she had to make a choice after her father asked her if she could see herself make a career out of it before investing in. My father used to play the violin and used to sing beautifully. But none of that really mattered because they had to focus on putting food on the table. So my mum sent me for Bharatnatyam classes, singing classes," she narrates.

'Notebook' laid the foundation for me.'

Parvathy's big screen debut was the 2006 film 'Out of Syllabus'. But it was her second release - 'Notebook' - that left an indelible impact on her and her career. "Out of Syllabus'







was my first film, and when you watch it, brace yourself because I did terrible acting in it. I didn't understand the nuances of good acting or good cinema or the importance of each aspect until 'Notebook' happened. I had auditioned for it among 2000 girls and four of us were zeroed in. I played the bad girl, the one who did not decide to be the bad girl. I started looking at cinema as a very anthropological space then. If my foundation hadn't been laid right during 'Notebook', then I wouldn't have been here," she avers.

Tamil cinema, too, happened to her early on. She made her debut with 'Poo' in 2008 in a film that had her play a complicated



IT WAS SUCH A DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE, GOING FROM A SURVIVAL DRAMA TO A MEDICAL THRILLER WHICH IS ALSO ON A WHOLE OTHER GENRE.

character named Maari, a role that no one could have emulated the way she did. "For 'Poo' I had auditioned for it and I am so glad it was my first Tamil film!" she adds.

'I loved working in 'Uyare' and 'Virus'!

When one thinks of Parvathy the actress, one can only think of the fact that she's been a part of films where women representation mattered and made quite a difference in the way cinema ought to be. Much like her previous outings, 'Uyare' had Parvathy play Pallavi, a headstrong woman who endures an acid attack but soldiers on. Her role, etched out to reveal the

perspective of a woman robbed off of her security but far from giving up. With a scar on her face, she is not one to cower in fear and goes on to pursue her dreams. The film brought many to tears and moved most through her portrayal. Talking about the experience Parvathy says, "It was extremely tiring for all of us. I mean there is this perception that it would have been extremely tough on the main actor wearing prosthetics. But it was just as tough on the technicians, the cameraman, the writers...as they had to perform amazingly for my character to come out as strong, her narrative as strong and such work cannot be overlooked. A whole different experience, I have a whole new respect for actors who work with prosthetics. The film was also extremely educational for me. Playing Pallavi, I get where her strength comes. She will not cower and not give up, but that doesn't mean she is not in pain," she reveals.

As for Dr Annu in 'Virus', the role was based on Dr Seethu Ponnu Thampi, the doctor who presented her findings and observations regarding the Nipah Virus outbreak in Kerala. Being a part of this film meant something to Parvathy. "It was such a different experience, going from a survival drama to a medical thriller which is also on a whole other genre. One of the easiest sets I've worked in, everyone was tripping in their own craft, right from the direction to the writers, to the cameraman and actors. And the film is quite a game changer, and being a part of one of the narratives in it was extremely fulfilling for me. I realised multiple actor films and such cinema is such an indulgent experience!"

'I cannot play a role again.'

It's impossible for Parvathy

to name a favourite role she's played. To her, all of them have been her favourites and inspired her in their own ways. She is, in fact, the happiest when someone calls her by her character's name. However, she believes in the finality of an experience. "The best time for me, in general, are the times when I am done with the film. When the last shot is over and I am on the way back home. There is such heartbreak and yet a sense of satisfaction," she states.

On a similar note, she doesn't have a favourite artist or filmmaker; but has loved working with Bobby-Sanjay, Anjali Menon, Ashiq Abu et al as they have been really good experiences. Nothing's ever stopped her from working with an artist and she owes Naseeruddin Shah to that. "I remember coming across Naseeruddin Shah's interview when I was just 17 or 18. It saved my life, it saved my craft. He said: 'If you have a great co-actor - good for you! But if you do not, if you get a very selfish co-actor, you still do your job well. That is no excuse for you to do a bad job.' For some reason, this really stuck with me," she recalls.

'We have a long way to go!'

It's the 21st century and misogyny is still rampant in the cinema industry. Whether it's the blatant objectification of a woman's body or the curbing of a woman having any agency over her body or thoughts or even writing subservient female characters that feed the male ego - misogyny is still kicking and thriving. All hope needn't be lost as there are changes being implemented in some pockets of the industry, in little forms of gestures. "Change is happening, but it is very slow. But again it's like what they say about

workouts. Slow changes is what lasts. Immediate ones that makes a lot of noise goes away because it has a lot of show," she says.

Parvathy believes there'll never be a dearth of women who speak up against inequality. "Back in the day, there were women like Smita Patil, Shabana Azmi, who spoke about all this in their interviews. Except that mainstream media never really covered their interviews and thoughts as much. And very slowly and surely, the press made sure that the questions asked towards male actors and the questions asked towards female actors were very different. And that became the norm. This double standards is all around us," she says. "So, to undo centuries worth of this, it is going to take quite a while. I'm just doing what I want to do for now. It's just about living and going to sleep with a clean conscience."

'I wouldn't change a thing about 2017.'

Parvathy is a proud feminichi, a localised version of the word Feminist which was christened to her by trolls who just couldn't take the fact that she spoke her mind. The year 2017 was a tough one for her, where she faced the wrath of thousands of trolls on social media, periodically shaming and threatening her for calling out a misogynistic scene from Mamooty's movie Kasaba. While calling a spade a spade, she didn't realise that so many would come after her. But it led to her developing this titanium skin that guards her so well even now. "I would not change a thing about the year, because I actually discovered a beautiful set of friends from various fields. We started a group called OMKV (alluded to a hashtag she had started) on WhatsApp. These are all women Facebook warriors

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who were supporting me and in turn getting trolled for that. So we started this thing where if someone was getting trolled, we would go troll them. Now, any political theme or anything that happens in India, there are debates and discussions happening there in the group," she says, beaming with pride.

With utmost confidence, she states that she would, two years later, still repeat everything that she said back then 15 more times. "However, I do wish it were easier on my parents because they saw me physically get affected. Emotionally I never got affected. My body took the toll because I was the only one waking up every morning, taking screenshots and sending it to the lawyers, getting people arrested and doing it all by myself. All for the good though!"

'A lot of the trolls were young boys!'

When the trolling began, actress Rima Kallingal forewarned Parvathy about reading the comments on social media. Being a veteran in dealing with trolls because she started speaking up long before social media made an impact on one's life, Rima knew what it would be like to deal with so much hate online. "At that point, I started reading comments from a legal perspective because I started getting rape and death threats. Most of them were by boys who were 16-17 years old!" Soon, Parvathy realised that it wasn't just about her anymore. "This could happen to any woman and should be talked about, and I have a platform to do that. My first two months, I was still in the wrong for most people. It took a long time before I got the support from people," she says.

Many thought she was just being disrespectful to the actor. The truth was, she had a point





that went beyond him and his stardom. “My comment had nothing to do with the actor, it had to do with the craft of filmmaking where they glorified misogyny through the visual grammar,” she repeats.

‘Sense of entitlement needs to change.’

When you ask her if there’s something that she would like to change in the industry, she’s quick enough to point out what and why it’s discounted to women. “I think a sense of entitlement is good in terms of you and yourself. When somebody compliments me about my work, I’m expected to be coy and brush off the compliments. Right now, if you give me a compliment, I will say, ‘Thank you. I know, I really did work hard.’ And I am damn proud of that. Yes of course I had a great team, but why do I shudder to take the compliment first? Do we ever see a man doing that? I feel women have constantly stayed away from owning their success. And that’s another sense of entitlement we need to fix!”

‘WCC feels like home.’

The Women in Cinema Collective began after a Malayalam actress was abducted and molested in a move that was orchestrated by a male colleague of hers. This case gained traction for the way the man got attention while the woman endured shame and character assassinations. It also led to a question - how safe is the industry for women? “We came together because we are after equal spaces, equal opportunities and dignity. And that’s what WCC gives me. I don’t know how I faced anything before WCC,” she avers. The collective is still so nascent and constantly following up with the survivor and her case. “We call out associations and unions. We have



I THINK A SENSE OF ENTITLEMENT IS GOOD IN TERMS OF YOU AND YOURSELF. WHEN SOMEBODY COMPLIMENTS ME ABOUT MY WORK, I'M EXPECTED TO BE COY AND BRUSH OFF THE COMPLIMENTS.



a website that just got launched and we constantly invite more women to come join filmmaking.”

‘There’s a lot in store!’

Projects wise, she has ‘Varthamanam’, a political genre film in the pipeline, and also director Vasanth’s ‘Sivaranjiniyum Innum Sila Pengalum’ to release. “Sivaranjiniyum... has been in the making since 2015. It’s such a beautiful perspective of a woman standing up for herself. This anthology film has been doing the rounds in festivals and I also got to see how amazing the other women Lakshmi Priyaa Chandramouli and Kalieswari Sreenivasan who are part of this have performed.”

Veering towards a new course, Parvathy is excited about the future; as she has plans of making

her directorial debut in the forthcoming year. Calling it an ‘amazing feeling’, Parvathy is excited to collaborate with a lot of her friends in the industry, who are mainly women. Elaborating on this expansion, she emphasises on the importance of bringing in more women toward the technical aspects of making cinema. Personally, she’s looking to branch out creatively, allowing her body and mind react to this new venture. “There are so many areas in filmmaking, documentary, dancing and other forms of the arts that I want to enjoy the process of and have learnt through these wonderful characters I have played, leaving behind their lessons and qualities in me,” she signs off, with a tone of tranquility. ■



OH SO ORGANISED!

You spend countless hours at your desk, but it's probably a chaos of stacked paper, old pens, and dusty wires. Though it's easy to forget about decluttering your workspace when you're drowning in a flood of emails, being organised will not only make you look more professional but will also help getting things done faster. Here is a quick guide that will help rescue your desk from devolving into chaos.



1. Tjena Magazine file by **Ikea**; 2. Pleja desk organiser black by **Ikea**; 3. Sigfinn monitor stand fixed height bamboo veneer by **Ikea**;
4. Cactus desktop organiser/pen pot by **Just Mustard**; 5. Pinboard - majestic unicorn by **Propshop24**; 6. File holder or magazine bookshelf
by **PropShop24**; 7. Rewind desk tidy by **Elves&Co.**; 8. Wire bin by **Tidy Up!**; 9. Mini elephant phone tablet holder desk stand by **Amazon**;
10. Magnetic cable clip cable holder by **Baseus**

Once you've emptied out the junk, the next step is to maintain the order. While decluttering might be an arduous task, the brand new paper organiser does not have to be just as boring. Invest in fashionable yet functional equipment that will fix your workspace conundrums.

STEPS TO WORKSTATION SANITY

1.

Hide the wires.
Organise and label your cables into bins or holders to avoid losing them behind your desk a.k.a the land of no return.

2.

Get extra space.
Invest in monitor stands or risers that offer space underneath to neatly stow away items until you need them.

3.

Bare necessities.
Do you have 2 pencils, 3 pens, few colour gel pens? Donate or swap functional items that you no longer need.

4.

Get stuff done.
That's more likely to happen if you write it down. If you want to skip the paper trail, download apps that will do the same. ■



Paradise by the Bay

Quaint and serene, **InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram Resort** brims with peace infused with the sounds of the waves crashing, the aroma of the beachy sands and the sun shining on your face while you swallow that iced drink in hand. Whether it's a wedding, a family get-together or a special date, this experience is merely an hour away from home but takes you to a place away from home.



Enter the airy resort and you immediately notice the space. Right from the ample space reserved for the reception desk area to the lawns and way to the rooms and restaurants, there's plenty of open area to walk around and soak in the feel of this resort that reverberates the sound of the sea in every corner. Silence all around, it leaves you feeling mindful with the staff helping you with every little aspect of your

stay in this resort.

With a pond full of lilies and fish swimming about while you rest on an armchair with a drink in hand, the experience is as wholesome as it sounds. Amidst all this, you are bound to see families gathering for a quick lunch at the restaurants there, couples taking pictures of themselves for their pre-wedding album, and the occasional writer sitting by the beach and taking inspiration from nature.

One of the highlights of this resort is its feel. You can feel



👉👉 **THE MELTING POT HAS LIVE KITCHENS, WHEREIN GUESTS CAN EAT INSIDE OR ALFRESCO. WITH SLOW MUSIC IN THE BACKGROUND, ONE CAN HEAR THE SIZZLE OF HOT FOOD BEING PREPARED AND THE FLOW OF CONVERSATIONS AMONG TABLES.**

the romance in the air when you walk in, with the settings of a perfect date or destination wedding giving you ideas. Married to your spouse for 20 years? The fact that the beach is just a few metres away is reason enough to renew your vows with just your near and dear ones by your side. And if couples do plan on tying the knot but minus the revelry of a typical Indian wedding, then this resort facilitates everything that would make your dreams of a destination wedding come true minus the hassle and travel.

The rooms, be it the classic or the suite, are spacious enough to feel like home with the beach view from your window accentuating that beach vacation feel. And if

you are in the mood for a walk, the passageway from the reception to the beach makes for an ideal stroll with nature.

Food & Drinks

The decor at the restaurants in this resort vary, each as creative as the other. ‘The Melting Pot’ has live kitchens, wherein guests can eat inside or alfresco. With slow music in the background, one can hear the sizzle of hot food being prepared and the flow of conversations among tables. The food incorporates various cuisines such as European, Mediterranean, Italian, Asian and Indian.

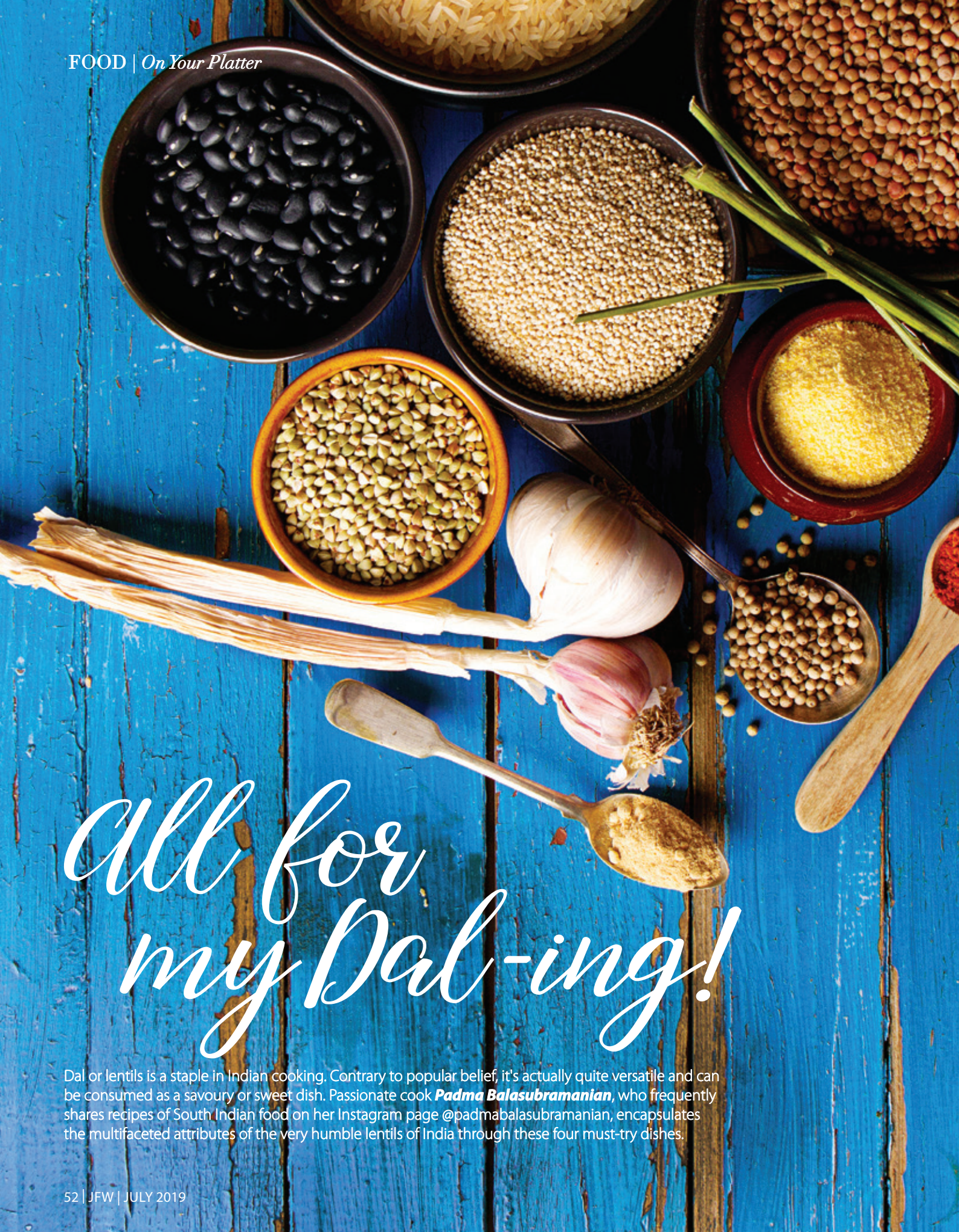
‘Tao of Peng’ serves an Asian menu, comprising of 60% non-vegetarian options and rest vegetarian fares. There’s



something for everyone here and rest assured, walking away disappointed is not an option. With a melange of dishes to choose from, the variety is endless and comprises of Pan Asian delicacies that leave a lingering taste long after you’ve devoured them all.

‘KoKoMMo’ is the real game changer here, situated by the beach with the sea breeze and sound waves making melody while you sip on a cocktail

or a pint of beer and munch on sizzling calamari and fish fries. It’s a mini version of Goa in Chennai, where the drinks flow and the music doesn’t stop. It is the ideal place to sit and ponder, hold conversations with your loved ones and if you like cheesy declarations of love, propose to your partner! If you are in the mood to party, the music is edgy and the dancing can pep you up. ■



All for my Dal-ing!

Dal or lentils is a staple in Indian cooking. Contrary to popular belief, it's actually quite versatile and can be consumed as a savoury or sweet dish. Passionate cook **Padma Balasubramanian**, who frequently shares recipes of South Indian food on her Instagram page @padmabalasubramanian, encapsulates the multifaceted attributes of the very humble lentils of India through these four must-try dishes.

CHAYOTE MOONG DAL STEW

WHAT YOU NEED

- 2** Chayote (Chow chow, medium size)
- ½ cup** Moong dal
- ¼ sp** Turmeric powder
- Salt to taste
- ½ tsp** Oil

For roast and grind

- 1 tbsp** Channa dal
- 1 tsp** Coriander
- 3** Red chillies
- 1 sp** Pepper
- ¼ cup** Grated coconut

For seasoning

- 1 sp** Coconut oil
- 1 tsp** Mustard seeds
- ½ tsp** Urad dal
- ½ tsp** Jeera
- 2** Red chillies
- Curry leaves

HOW TO MAKE

- 1.** Peel the skin and chop the chayote/chow chow to medium size pieces.
- 2.** Heat oil in a pan and add channa dal, coriander, red chillies and pepper corns until golden.
- 3.** Add the grated coconut. Remove from flame and cool. Grind it to a paste, adding little water. Keep aside.
- 4.** Pressure cook the moong dal and chow chow along with turmeric powder and salt for 3-4 whistles.
- 5.** Add the ground paste and 1/2 cup water. Bring to a boil. Simmer for 5-6 minutes. Turn off the heat.
- 6.** Heat coconut oil in a pan. Add mustard seeds, when it splutters, add urad dal, jeera, red chillies and curry leaves.
- 7.** Add the seasoning to the stew/kootu.



Image Credit: Traditionally Modern Food



Image Credit: Always Hungry

PARUPPU THOGAYAL/ THUVAYAL/ DAL CHUTNEY

WHAT YOU NEED

- ¼ cup** Tur dal
- ¼ cup** Channa dal
- 4** Red chillies
- ½ tsp** Peppercorn
- 1 pinch** Asafoetida (Hing)
- 4 tbsp** Grated coconut
- Salt to taste

HOW TO MAKE

- 1.** Heat a pan. Add oil and fry asafoetida and red chillies.
- 2.** Add tur dal, channa dal, pepper.
- 3.** Sauté in medium flame until golden. Remove and cool.
- 4.** Grind along with grated coconut and salt to a coarse paste adding little water.
- 5.** Serve with hot rice and ghee.

PANCHRATNA DAL

WHAT YOU NEED

- ¼ cup** Tur dal
- ¼ cup** Whole green moong dal
- ¼ cup** Whole black urad dal
- ¼ cup** Masoor dal
- ¼ cup** Channa dal
- Cardamom powder

For masala

- 2** Onions (medium sized, chopped)
- 2** Tomatoes (chopped)
- 2 tsp** Ginger garlic paste
- ½ tsp** Turmeric powder
- 1 tsp** Coriander powder
- 1 tsp** Jeera powder
- 1 tsp** Red chilli powder
- 2 tsp** Garam masala
- 1 tsp** Kasuri methi
- 3 tsp** Oil

HOW TO MAKE

- 1.** Combine all the dals and soak in water for 1 hour. Drain and pressure cook along with 3 cups of water for 5 whistles.
- 2.** Heat oil in a pan and add jeera. When it splutters, add the chopped onions and fry till they become translucent.
- 3.** Add turmeric powder, chilli powder, ginger garlic paste and fry until the raw smell has gone. Add the chopped tomatoes and cook till mushy. Add the coriander, jeera powder and fry.
- 4.** Remove the dal from pressure cooker and mash well. Give it a good stir.
- 5.** Add 1/2 cup water and salt. Add crushed kasuri methi and garam masala.
- 7.** Simmer and cook for 3-4 minutes. Garnish with chopped coriander leaves. Serve with hot rice or rotis.



Image Credit: My Magic Pan

MOONG DAL HALWA

WHAT YOU NEED

- ½ cup** Moong dal
- 2 cups** Water
- 2 tbsp** Wheat flour
- 1 cup** Sugar
- 4-5 tbsp** Ghee
- ½ tsp** Cardamom powder
- A pinch/drop** Red/orange food colour
- 6** Cashews (broken)

HOW TO MAKE

- 1.** Dry roast moong dal for 2 minutes. Do not brown.
- 2.** Dry roast wheat flour lightly for 2 minutes and keep aside.
- 3.** Pressure cook the dal, along with 2 cups water for 4 whistles. Open when the pressure settles down and blend until smooth in a mixer. It will be watery, but don't worry it will thicken.
- 4.** Heat a heavy bottom pan. Add the moong dal paste along with sugar. Mix well.

5. Add the wheat flour and mix. Add the food colour.

6. Cook in low flame, stirring in between. Keep adding the ghee spoon by spoon. It will slowly thicken and start to roll

and leave sides and ooze ghee. It will absorb the ghee.

7. Add cardamom powder and fried cashews. Cook until the mixture becomes glossy and rolls nicely. ■



Image Credit: My Weekend Kitchen

Avoid a Colour Catastrophe!

While "I'm going to colour my hair" is mostly a spontaneous and impulsive decision, here's a short read that'll help you right all the possible wrongs.



HIGHLIGHTS FOR STARTERS: They are easiest to maintain, stylish, safe and cannot go horribly wrong. It's better to go for a colour that's closer to your natural shade.

Colouring your hair for the first time can be a little intimidating. From choosing the right colour to making it last, it is not as effortless as it seems.

BEFORE

IT'S NOT A ONE-TIME SPEND:

You need touch-ups! So unless you have the money and time to get your retouch and roots done every 6-8 weeks, it's better to go for a colour that's closer to your natural shade.

REFERENCE FOR RIGHTNESS:

While you might have a million ideas and the perfect hair colour inspirations stored up in your mind, it's important that you carry at least 2-3 reference images to the saloon. This will prevent misinterpretations; your deep purple can mean magenta or pink to the hairdresser.

SHADES HARDEST TO MAINTAIN:

Purple, greens, blue and yes, the trending galaxy hair will look great on your Instagram feed. But these eye candies are quite hard to maintain.

Apart from having to bleach your hair blonde (sometimes almost white) these shades also tend to fade faster.

AFTER

SUN'S A FOE:

You need to protect your hair just as much as you protect your skin from the sun. You might want to carry a scarf or a hat to shield your precious strands from getting damaged by the sun and messing up your colour.

SWIM CAPS ON:

Copper in water can mix with chlorine in the pool and oxidise your hair and cause it to fade. Seal your hair completely before going for a dip. ■



SWITCH SHAMPOOS TO MAKE THEM LAST:

To help preserve your hair colour, go with a 'colour-safe' shampoo and conditioner. There are also shampoos for 'colour vibrancy' that really work. You can ask your hairdresser for recommendations or do your own research.

Decoding the Diet Regime

When it comes to dieting, one can see how it is directly proportional to health and fitness. There are a plethora of ways to eat and diet right. With nutritionist *Shiny Surendran* outweighing the pros and cons of each diet to **Radhika Ramesh**, here's a quick guide to all you enthusiasts looking to start something healthy.

Staying fit these days has become quite easy. With various techniques, workouts and different choices to choose from according to what the body needs, dieting has the ability to be a total game changer for an individual. But, this is feasible only if the proper diet is followed alongside the right workout. The idea is to stay fit and healthy, and then move towards losing those love handles. Here are the different types of diets with their pros and cons listed.

Easy Paleo Tuna, Green Chilli and Zucchini Casserole



The Paleo Diet

The Paleo diet is dairy free.

WHAT IS IT It's a combination of low carbohydrates, high fats (good fat – omega 3), high fibre and protein. This helps with insulin resistance, PCOS and metabolic syndrome.

PROS Paleo is a wonderful diet for autoimmune disorders as well as IBS and digestive disorders. It focuses on fresh, unprocessed, whole foods like fruits, veggies, nuts, seeds, meats and fat. It promotes organic, pasture-raised, grass-fed, antibiotic-free and wild-caught meat. High quality saturated fats are usually at the centre of the diet instead of inflammation-promoting unsaturated fats.

CONS Paleo can be restrictive and may not be sustainable in the long run. A one-size-fits-all 'best diet' approach does not work here. Strictly following a list of good/bad or allowed/not allowed foods can also prove to be problematic for some people. In addition, the more long term

it is, the more tough it becomes to be consistent on a strict regime like Paleo. Restricting carbs can slow metabolism, leading to constipation, increased dependence on the body's stress hormones and can impair detoxification. The diet focuses on muscle meats, which can be a bit inflammatory. We also need a balance of anti-inflammatory like shellfish, whole fish, bone broth, eggs and raw grass-fed dairy. It's natural to have intense cravings. Paleo demonizes sugar, but all carbohydrates (starches, fruits, grains) eventually break down into sugars in the body. Cravings for sugar that likely means more carbohydrates (which isn't allowed in the diet) are needed. Paleo often restricts dairy, but the right kind of high quality dairy can be very healing and nutritious. The healthiest diets tend to include the widest variety of foods. Paleo diets offer limited eat-out options.



Keto shrimp and artichoke



Keto Crab Meat and Egg Plate with Mayo

The Keto Diet

The Ketogenic or the Keto diet is therapeutic, there are no cheat days here.

WHAT IS IT Keto is largely fat based and is very useful in curing epilepsy, nervous disease and tumours. The Keto diet comes to use when everything else fails. Medical assessment by a physician is very important before starting this plan.

PROS It reduces insulin levels (and inflammation). It possibly leads to weight loss. You would end up eating more (hopefully healthy) fat. It is also a great way to detox from sugar.

CONS Keto diet can be quite difficult to follow. Many people end up eating fats that aren't so healthy which may not promote significant long-term weight loss. You won't be eating a lot of fibre that are heart-healthy, gut-healthy and satiating. Recent study also shows that cheat days during Keto diet may cause damage to the blood vessels.

Mushroom Cauliflower Rice Skillet

Cauliflower and Sweet Potato Cobbler



The Raw Food Diet

The aim includes weight loss and overall health improvement.

WHAT IS IT The raw food diet dates back to the 1800s. However, it has been gaining a lot of momentum lately. The followers of this kind of diet believe that eating raw food is the best for human anatomy.

PROS Studies have found that cooking foods may release carcinogens and free radicals that are harmful to health. The raw food diet eliminates this risk. It is based on unrefined, unprocessed foods and, thus essentially eliminates trans-fat and refined sugars, while offering very low levels of saturated fat and sodium. Raw foods contain high levels of healthy fats and fibre. The focus on purchasing local, organic food lends a helping hand to our long term sustainable environment.

CONS Raw food diets are often found to be low in essential nutrients. Vitamin B12, Vitamin D, calcium, iron and omega-3 fatty acid deficiencies are most notable. Studies have shown that the most dedicated raw foodists may be at the risk of low bone mass, which can result in osteoporosis and increased risk of fractures. Raw foodists should be aware that choosing to eat meat puts them at a risk of food poisoning and gastroenteritis. Cooking food kills harmful bacteria (salmonella, for example) which may occur in the food. Certain vegetables actually require cooking to release key nutrients. The carotenoids in carrots, and the lycopene in tomatoes, for example, become more bio-available once these vegetables are cooked. In addition, cooked foods can

be gentler on the stomach and digestive system. A raw food diet tends not to work so well for people with certain gut types. This diet is not for everybody, since raw fruits and vegetables can be hard to digest for some people lacking certain enzymes or digestive capabilities and because they're high on fibre. If you have a sensitive digestive system, such as inflammatory bowel diseases like ulcerative colitis, cooking your food might prove to be a better option. If unable to digest the vitamins and minerals in foods, we risk nutrient deficiencies and other illnesses. This can happen when we can't break down fibrous vegetable cell walls to unleash stored nutrients. So in some cases, cooking in low to medium heat can help predigest fibres for us and release more essential vitamins and minerals.

Dreamy Dairy-Free Broccoli Cheese Soup



The Pegan Diet

The Pegan diet is a combination of the Paleo diet and veganism as it is primarily a plant-based diet.

WHAT IS IT Those who follow this diet eat various kinds of fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, meat, fish and eggs. This diet strictly restricts sugar, legumes, dairy and processed foods.

PROS The Pegan diet recommends that most of your diet be made up of fruits and vegetables. That's a great start considering how most people don't eat enough of these nutritional powerhouses that fight-diseases, contain essential micronutrients and provide fibre for a healthy gut. It also has a focus on healthy fats like oily fish (like salmon or tuna),

nuts, seeds and avocado – and that's good news for the health of your heart and brain. You are allowed to have a mixture of plant and animal-based proteins, including small amounts of meat, fish and eggs.

CONS The Pegan diet also advocates for going gluten-free. Legumes are another super healthy food to limit - beans, lentils and chickpeas are brimming with health perks, and we would all benefit from eating more of them. Last but not the least, you're not allowed to have dairy on the Pegan diet either, which can make it hard for you to get enough calcium.



Intermittent Fasting

This is not a type of diet but it is the way you approach food.

WHAT IS IT Intermittent fasting does not restrict a person from eating what one likes unlike most of the diets listed above. Instead, it is the way one plans the intake of food accordingly. This definitely helps with weight loss but isn't suitable for everybody.

PROS Fasting can complement many meal plans and enhance your weight loss. Consistent fasting can also give your gut a break and allow your body to access fat for fuel. Fasting is free, requires no special products, and allows flexibility since you can do it nearly everywhere.

CONS Hunger becomes the biggest obstacle for many people. Overeating or binge eating can become a problem for some. Certain demographics (including people with adrenal or thyroid issues) should consult with a functional practitioner before they undergo fasting. ■

SAY IT WITH AN EMOJI!

- 17 JULY 2019 -

On the brink of World Emoji day, we spoke to a few popular celebs to find out which ones they love using the most and why. By **Yagna Saravanan**

Let it be the tears of joy, smiling with heart eyes or the not-so-amused face, we can't help but love our emojis. What was once introduced as a marketing gimmick has now become an easier form of communication and using playful expressions.

In 2017, the Empire State Building was lit up in yellow and New York's Museum of Modern Art staged an emoji exhibit, including a showing of the original 176 emojis that started it all, to celebrate the day. July 17th of this year marks the sixth year of this celebration. Read on, to find out which ones popular celebrities like using the most and why.



HARISH KALYAN

This 🤗 is one of my favourite emojis because it is very warm and positive. Its like saying hey let's not worry much, give me a hug and everything else can wait.

One of my most used ones has to be the 🙄. I often use this when the situation is absolutely hopeless or when there's no understanding.

😊 & 👍 is also something I use very often. It's rather simple and makes everything look perfect.



LAILA



Because I love to laugh and make others laugh with me. I like making others happy and spreading fun and positivity. Naturally even my Instagram handle is Laila laughs.



REGINA CASSANDRA



Because i believe in doing everything with love.

NIVETHA PETHURAJ



It touches my feminine side

When you see a beautiful flower, you just stop and admire it for a few seconds. I like to pause time once in a while to admire the beauty of life.

IN THE KNOW



Why July 17?

World Emoji Day began in 2014 when users of Apple devices noticed that Apple's calendar apps showed July 17 as the date on the calendar on its icon.



Only 7% of people use the peach emoji as a fruit. The rest mostly use it as a butt or for other non-fruit uses.

Not only have they inspired movies and merchandise, they've arguably changed the way we communicate; they help to inject tone and body language into what otherwise would be plain text.

An alternate way to convey nuances and, in some instances, also have the ability to affect an emotion or thought across language and cultural barriers.

POOJA KUMAR



I use the joining of the hands, namaste, Vannakam emoji the most because it means I bow to the divine in you.

Which is the very essence I feel when I speak to anyone. It also represents India in America and the rest of the world which I take very seriously.

GAYATHIRI IYER



My favourite emoji is 🐵

When it comes to my friends I'm quite outspoken and at times is even say the weirdest things. There are times where I've felt that oops I shouldn't have really said that and that's when I use this emoji.

I also happen to be a foodie with quite the sweet tooth so whenever I confess to cheating on my diet I use the same.

KIKI



My favourite is the 😘 emoji.

I use it the most with my hubby and especially when he is shooting out of town because I'll be missing him a little too much!

RAMYA

My favourite emoji is 🤗

I like using it because I think a hug can spread positivity and warmth. It's a feel good thing both in real life and virtually. I relate to it because I've learnt to be an expressive person and want to show my friends/family the affection and care that I feel for them.

IN THE KNOW



The word emoji comes from the Japanese word 'e' for picture, 'mo' for writing, and 'ji' which means letter or character.

In 2015, Oxford Dictionaries named the Face with Tears of Joy emoji the Word of the Year.

In December 2017 a lawyer in Delhi, India threatened to file suit against WhatsApp for allowing use of the middle finger emoji on the basis that the company is "directly abetting the use of an offensive, lewd, obscene gesture" in violation of the Indian Penal Code. ■



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Tooth Be Told!

When it comes to tooth care, these are the golden rules - brush, floss, rinse, repeat at night. Although that one rule pretty much sums up what we have to do every day, there are some conditions that could simply affect our oral health in ways unheard of. Dental surgeon *Sravya Thimmavajjala, BDS*, from Mohan's Dental Clinic, shares her inputs on the common yet unspoken conditions of oral hygiene. *By Chandini K.*



ORAL THRUSH OR CANDIDIASIS

A fungal disease that most commonly affects the oral cavity or the lining of the mouth. Symptoms include white patches or lesions on the tongue or inner cheeks.



PYOGENIC GRANULOMA OR PREGNANCY TUMOUR

Pyogenic granuloma is a tumour like growth in response to localised trauma or irritation. Other than commonly affecting the gums, it can occur on lips, tongue, palate and the like.



BRUXISM

Bruxism or the condition of grinding teeth leads to abnormal alignment of the jaw and attrition of teeth. If grinding teeth is a regular habit, it is a serious problem.



BURNING MOUTH SYNDROME

Unnatural burning sensation of the mouth that can last anywhere from few minutes to long lasting periods. Symptoms include changes in taste buds, bitter or metallic taste in the mouth or loss of taste, and difficulty to swallow.

8 TIPS TO LOOK AFTER YOUR TEETH

1. Brush twice a day.

Don't underestimate its importance. Hold the brush head at a 45° angle, partly on the gums, and gently move the brush in tiny circular motions or small horizontal strokes.

2. Floss daily. Floss can reach the crevices too small for your brush bristles.

3. Skip the sugar. Ultimately, sugar converts into acid which erodes the enamel of your teeth. These acids lead to cavities.

4. Swish with mouthwash. For an added boost to your oral hygiene routine rinse with an anti-bacterial mouthwash.

5. Use fluoride toothpaste. Fluoride helps strengthen your tooth enamel to combat tooth decay.

6. Don't neglect your tongue. Your tongue harbours bacteria too, so use your toothbrush or a tongue scraper to give it a good cleaning.

7. Drink more water. This can help wash out some of the negative effects of sticky and acidic foods in between brushes.

8. Teeth to eat. By using teeth to crack nuts, remove bottle tops or rip open packaging, you risk chipping or even breaking your teeth.

SYMPTOMS AND PREVENTION

Oral thrush or Candidiasis

Patients experience pain and difficulty in swallowing. Oral thrush is most likely to occur in babies and the elderly as a result of weaker immunity. Prevention includes proper oral hygiene, limiting sugar coated foods, and regular dental checkups. If found with the symptoms, dentists are highly likely to prescribe an anti-fungal medication.

Pyogenic granuloma or pregnancy tumour

It appears as an elevated mass and is generally soft, painless and deep red to reddish purple in colour. Gum irritation in patients with poor oral hygiene and chronic irritations (like overfilled cements, debris) are common. The treatment of choice is conservative surgical removal. Recurrence rate is higher for the granulomas treated during pregnancy. The occurrence of this lesion can be avoided by maintaining good oral hygiene and not allowing plaque accumulation on teeth. Routine dental checkups and home care helps in preventing this lesion.

Bruxism

Grinding can be caused by anxiety, psychological disorders, and sometimes occur during REM sleep. Symptoms include tight jaw muscles, flattened teeth, tooth sensitivity or pain. Patients have also reported

to experience earache and headache. Treatments include understanding and reduction of bruxism. If problem is severe, dentists might suggest a mouth guard or a splint.

Burning mouth syndrome

The exact cause of Burning Mouth Syndrome is not yet identified but experts link it to problems in taste and sensory nerves of the nervous system. Other medical issues such as thyroid problem, vitamin deficiency, oral thrush, allergy, acid reflux can also trigger this condition. Treatment depends on any underlying issues that may be causing discomfort. Treatment of the syndrome solitarily can include oral rinses, saliva replacement products such as rinses, gels, sprays and gum.

Xerostomia

Symptoms include sticky, dry feeling in the mouth, while some people also report experiencing sores and burning or tingling sensation. They may also have difficulty in speaking, swallowing or tasting. Treatment options include oral rinse to restore moisture. Dentists may also suggest artificial saliva substitute and chewing sugar free gum. If the condition is caused by an allergic reaction to medication, the concerned doctor may adjust the dose or switch to a different drug which doesn't cause dry mouth. ■



XEROSTOMIA

Xerostomia or dry mouth is a side effect of certain medications or an underlying illness. It can also be a side effect of certain medical treatments like chemotherapy; though most common causes are dehydration and smoking.



Young and Determined

Mental health should not be looked at as a taboo subject that warrants stigmatisation. There are people today walking into a psychologist's office for help, with their heads down and defeat writ large on their faces. But Thenndral Senthil Kumar wants this world to be a better place. In conversation with **Radhika Ramesh**, the founder and CEO of her own psychology service talks about her experience so far with connecting with peoples' minds.

She is enthusiastic about what she does and is one of the youngest owners of a psychology service. She believes that she could be that person who could turn the way people around her look at mental health. She believes in maintaining confidentiality of her clients' stories, making sure they go back home with trust upheld and a happy mind and heart.

"Psychology was a trial and error for me."

Thenndral was never a fan of engineering; she always knew she wanted to do something out of the ordinary. "My neighbour introduced me to psychology. I read a lot about the subject, it felt different and it felt new. That is when I decided that I wanted to do it." She then pursued Bachelor of Science in Psychology at the Madras School of Social Work (MSSW). "There were only 33 of us and it was very interactive. That provided me with a better learning experience," she says. She would always end up doing multiple research papers to get a firm grasp on the subject.

"It was all a gradual process."

"In these five years of my Bachelors and Masters I realised that it's okay to have issues and it's okay to get help. I also realised that the other 32 in my class are also different and they all had issues as well. We would discuss about this during our classes," she narrates. She had realised the sheer significance of mental health from a very young age. She also believes that her understanding of mental health should be put to good use. "When I began my Masters, I understood that people could be dealing with some extremely serious issues and yet sit in a class looking impervious," she adds.

It was during the second year that Thenndral began treating

real-time clients as it was a part of the curriculum. “I would go to various schools, colleges and junior colleges. A student who would usually be quiet would suddenly decide to open up because you are a good listener.”

But being a good listener isn't as easy as it sounds. As a professional counselor, one needs to know boundaries. Thenndral says, “Over the years, I have learned to set boundaries for myself. I would always tell myself one thing - “Hey, it's your client and your client is not your life.” Initially, she recalls, it was very difficult to draw the line. “During our practicum session, we would all be heading out to counsel people with real-time issues and when we would return from our sessions, we would burst out crying,” she adds. Thenndral recollects a terrifying incident wherein one of her friend's client committed suicide and how it affected her so much that she never got out of her room for a week. “We have burnouts as well and there have been days where I would prefer not talking to anybody; but that's just how it was initially coping with reality.”

“I have my own therapist.”

It took three years for Thenndral to compose herself as a counselor. “It was only recently that I got to that mode where I could pull myself together. I still go to a therapist and I still have a supervisor who looks into all my cases,” she adds. Bearing this in mind, a job as a psychology counsellor is still not a ‘thing’. Quite often people get it confused with education counselors but few understand the importance of psychology counselors. That is when young Thenndral came up with the concept of Eros Psycoun Services, a firm concentrating on the mental health of people as individuals or as a group. “Initially I was picked up by various firms

“ IN THESE FIVE YEARS OF MY BACHELORS AND MASTERS I REALISED THAT IT'S OKAY TO HAVE ISSUES AND ITS OKAY TO GET HELP. I ALSO REALISED THAT THE OTHER 32 IN MY CLASS ARE ALSO DIFFERENT AND THEY ALL HAD ISSUES AS WELL.

as an educational counselor but they would ask me not to do the “counselling part”. Obviously that did not fit in right for me,” says Thenndral. It was her close friend and her father who persuaded her to start her private practice. “They asked me to let people know that I would be a private counselor. I started as a private practitioner and named it Eros (named after the Greek God of Love) Psycoun.” Inspired by her private practice, many joined her as interns and that eventually turned out to be research guidance work.

“From 8 people we became 15, and by then we had began taking



up several training programmes. We began dealing with multiple subjects and ultimately it turned out to be a company,” says Thenndral.

“I have done a lot of programmes for free in the initial few months.”

When it’s a start-up, it is easier for huge firms to exploit them in return for promotional purposes. “Huge companies have asked me to do free two-hour training programmes and I have done that too. But, at that point in time, we had just laid the foundation of the company and it obviously required some good reputation,” she recalls. Her friend later joined the start-up to streamline strategies. It was then divided into separate branches, where one takes care of schools and colleges while another concentrates on the corporate aspect apart from individual counselling sessions as well.

“You never feel like you’re the CEO of a company if you own a start-up.”

The fascinating part about Thenndral is the fact that she’s all of 24, considered rather young in her field, but she looks at it differently. “When you are the CEO of a start-up, you never feel like one. You are multi-tasking. You are the peon, you are the clerk, the manager, and everything!”

“A lot of outbursts happen during sessions.”

It’s natural for clients to have an outburst during a session. “There was a particular client who had been coming to me for five sessions and did not say much at all. All of a sudden, there was an outburst. The client further added that all that he had confessed to me earlier was a lie and now, he said that he is ready to open up to me,” she recalls.

To Thenndral, while it can be difficult to get through to people, she believes that there are



“WHEN YOU ARE THE CEO OF A START-UP, YOU NEVER FEEL LIKE ONE. YOU ARE MULTI-TASKING. YOU ARE THE PEON, YOU ARE THE CLERK, THE MANAGER, AND EVERYTHING!”

broadminded people everywhere including rural areas. “I know a friend’s mother who visits a nearby village twice a week because she has clients there taking counselling.”

“There is a need to create more awareness about mental health.”

At this point, when one looks at the state of mental health awareness in the country, it’s not as abysmal as it used to be 10 years ago, but we are still miles away from identifying it as something just as important as a physical illness. “Fortunately, we are going towards understanding the importance of mental health. Group based meetings are actually helpful today. They talk about experiences, everyday problems – people are talking!” she smiles, beaming with positivity. ■





Red Flags Alert!

Love can be blind, but you need to be watchful of signs. It can be so confusing and you must remember, always think of your well-being before you take the plunge!

He sweeps you off your feet when you first met, something straight out of a fairytale. He cried in front of you, the first person he's ever opened up to and left you moved. But with everything being so dreamy, did you notice some of the red flags that your friends may have warned you about? Toxic relationships always show signs, but it gets stronger the deeper you go in it. Others around you might notice the signs, but it's not always too conspicuous. Here are some red flags to watch out for.

HE PUTS HIMSELF BEFORE YOU: Sometimes it's perfectly okay to put yourself first, but doing it all the time just shows how selfish and self-centered the person can be.

AS A MANIPULATIVE TRAIT: He manipulates you into doing things you don't want to, whether it's emotional, physical or sexual. Anytime they coerce or connive you into doing something you evidently do not like is a huge red flag.

BELITTLES YOU ALL THE TIME: It's heartbreaking when your own partner puts you down all the time. An unsupportive partner is a big letdown and demotivates you towards doing your best. If he keeps making fun of you, even in front of others, then you have a big problem and should address it immediately. If he doesn't change, dump him!

HE'S CLINGY TO THE POINT IT'S STIFLING: Do you find that he is always with you,

would never do things by himself and always needs you to reassure him even though he doesn't offer the same support to you. It is a big deal if he cannot stop calling, messaging or does not understand the fact that you need space. He should respect that and if he can't, that's a big sign.

SIGNS OF VIOLENCE: Just because he doesn't hit you doesn't mean he's better. Many women from the older generations believe that if their husbands or lovers don't hit them, they are keepers because some of the men out there are truly bad. But remember, if he's raised his hand on you once, chances are he will do it again even if he has profusely apologised for his behaviour. No one should ever hurt, especially your partner. ■



Say you dress up like a hot teacher. Ask your partner to complement the role play by playing the student who should be 'punished'. Try a bit of nibbling and biting as 'punishments', or the best out of the lot - spanking.

PLUNGE INTO THE WILD

Set your bedroom as the stage as you're ready to give a performance. Of that of pleasure, dollops of drama and fantasy included. Role Play in sex is not given enough credit and it sure doesn't hurt to try it out to spice up those not-so-raunchy nights, writes **Sanjana Chakraborty**.



COSTUMES & TOYS ARE NOT JUST FOR KIDS



Saw that sexy one-piece chambermaid dress at the lingerie store? Sneakily bill it and bring it home, surprising your partner in that get up. Why not bring in a pair of furry cuffs and pretend to arrest the "felon".



Sex toys can be brought in, too, such as penis-shaped toys or naughty soft toys. For putting on any costume, whether it's a character that your partner likes from 'Game of Thrones' or 'Lord of The Rings', go extra. Put on that make-up that'll enhance your costume. If needed, put on a wig too, or change your hairstyle to suit the same. Get creative and showcase a more raunchier version of an otherwise regular person/role.



THE HUMAN BODY HAS VARIOUS EROGENOUS ZONES INCLUDING THE INNER THIGHS, ARMPITS, PUBIC MOUND, STOMACH, NIPPLES ETC. IF YOUR PARTNER LIKES IT ROUGH, EXPLORE A BIT THAT STRAYS AWAY FROM GENTLE UNTIL THEY ASK YOU FOR MORE.

It's human to have fantasies, with particular emphasis on sexual fantasies. Given how we are conditioned from a young age to look at sex from a strictly procreation perspective, the pleasure part of it is ignored and suppressed. With every sexual fantasy buried in the recess of our minds, it's only fair to bring it all out and test it when you find the right partner.

Role Play in sex can include one partner or more, where you either literally or metaphorically put on a mask that enhances your experience, going beyond the regular sexual moments that you might be used to. In other words, the emphasis is put on foreplay with, sometimes, a narrative running so as to go through some sort of liberation in the usual spectrum of sex that you are used to. Popular role plays include teacher-pupil, boss-employee, housewife-handyman, doctor-nurse, etc. Sometimes, it even gets friskier than usual and maybe even violent. If it's all done with consent, then there is no issue, for sexual fantasies are meant to be something completely out of the ordinary. *Think 50 Shades of Grey.* Here are some ways you can give role play a try with your partner(s).

COMFORT LEVEL MATTERS

It goes without saying that you would try role play sex with a partner you are absolutely comfortable with. However, you need to be aware of whether your partner is comfortable with the same. If it makes him/her uncomfortable, try to find some middle ground or alternatives. For instance, it

can get a bit overwhelming for somebody who is used to a standard type of foreplay. Explore and see where your comfort lies.

SET UP GROUND RULES

Now you'll have to understand that you are embarking on a sexual experience like never before, putting on a mask whether it's literal or figurative. On the event of things getting too frisky than what you had signed up for, you should voice out your opinion and immediately stop. Rules such as a safe word and what are the no-go zones must be established before you begin. Remember, while it might be fine with you, it might be completely different for your partner and it's important to stress on consent and respect.

FORGET FLIRTING, GET DIRTY

This is something many shy away from - dirty talk. While flirting is cute and casual before you do the deed, while you are doing the deed - dirty talk is just as fun. Say what you would do to your partner, how you would do those things, make the moans louder and sound urgent, play with your body and tease them before you get busy. The power of words is something that not many realise and boy, it can arouse your partner when the right words are said! In bed, you leave your inhibitions behind. Whisper the sexiest words into your partner's ears while you pretend to be someone else (as part of your role play). It's the little moments that contribute to a much louder, longer, hotter sexperience really! Who knows? It might just leave you wanting more. ■



Are the 'Terrible Twos' really terrible?

Judith Clabes once said, "A woman who can cope with the 'Terrible Twos' can cope with anything!" This quote stands testament to the fact that parenting can be tough but everything is manageable when done right, writes **Antara Pandit**.

MELTDOWNS? TANTRUMS? WHAT ARE THEY?



When children touch the age of 2, any unwarranted or 'bad' behaviour from them is attributed to the 'Terrible Twos'.

It is most often defined as characterised by defiant behavior, including saying 'no', hitting, kicking, biting or ignoring rules – this can start as early as just after a first birthday or may not set in until the child is 3 years old. While this maybe the definition of the 'Terrible Twos', the reasons behind the cause of this phase is often over-looked with parents bang in the center of the defiance sphere.

When in-depth digging is done, are the terrible twos really terrible?

sleeping, parents manage and overcome various phases in very distinct ways.

Extreme intensity and frequent tantrums dictate the 'Terrible Twos', but not for the reasons most people think. Common symptoms stated by parents labelling the phase includes crankiness due to teething, stubbornness, lack of sleep and so on. Sometimes extended crying sessions in a restaurant or the supermarket leaves parents bewildered. In reality, these describe any child in general! The truth is that the tantrums do escalate when children start to understand and communicate. Hence, the screaming, yelling and sometimes hitting and kicking when their point isn't articulated well, and their need isn't met.

A recent article by Lauren, a contributing parenting writer to various websites, talks about the 'Terrible Twos'

THE TRUTH IS THAT THE TANTRUMS DO ESCALATE WHEN CHILDREN START TO UNDERSTAND AND COMMUNICATE. HENCE, THE SCREAMING, YELLING AND SOMETIMES HITTING AND KICKING WHEN THEIR POINT ISN'T ARTICULATED WELL, AND THEIR NEED ISN'T MET.

the phrase 'no one is perfect' applies not only to adults, but children as well. It is often easy to forget that children have bad days too and when they do, unconditional love, support and understanding is vital, just as they are for adults. As much as discipline and harsh tones surface during tantrums; soft tones, hugs and love are the healing qualities to calm children down. It requires tremendous conditioning of the mind to be able to do so.

Branding children as 'terrible' gives rise to a bad taste in the mouth. After all, children are not manipulative, and they don't know how to be. However, they can be difficult. Experience mandates that firmness with children is one of the keys to successful parenting. Their simple, untainted and curious minds which inspire, need constant nurturing and management. This includes being firm in raising them as well as teaching them how to be firm. This does not imply that children should not show emotions and cry; modern parenting encourages children to cry and let it all out instead of imposing restrictions. When the crying has finished, first, it is vital for parents to set boundaries for their children which in turn sets an example for them and creates expectations.

Consistency is also crucial as a child's happiness is directly proportional to the amount of consistency in their life. If the foundation set for children is strong, dealing with the boundary stage will be easier to manage. This phase can never be prevented or avoided as it is all a part of the natural process and development. ■

School drop-off and pick-up times are filled with mothers catching up on mom life. Parenting challenges and humorous stories are exchanged furtively between mothers who then realise that they are not alone in their experiences.

Over the last few years,

many parents have become very vocal in their views on motherhood and their parenting styles, which of course vary from person to person; one size never fits all. No parenting style is wrong as it all boils down to what suits a family best. Be it sleep training, breast or formula feeding or co-

as the 'The Boundary Stage', where the little humans are just testing their boundaries. They try to push their parents' buttons as much as possible till they cave. The inability to communicate feelings leaves even adults scrambling for sanity which in turn brings about the not-so-attractive yet human qualities. However,



What to expect *when you are expecting?*

Actress Suja Varunee, one of the participants in the reality show Bigg Boss Tamil on its first season, got married last year. Her husband, actor Shiva Kumar who also happens to be the grandson of Sivaji Ganesan, took to social media back in November to announce to the world about their wedding. As they eagerly await the arrival of their baby, the happy couple talk to **Radhika Ramesh** on what to expect when you are expecting.

PHOTOGRAPHY MOMMY SHOTS BY AMRITA SAMANT

HAIR & MAKE-UP MANJITHA, PRAMILA PRADHAN & SHAKTHI, VURVE SALON | DECOR PINK PARROTS

Suja Varunee and Shiva Kumar have been dating for 11 years now. Suja began her career in films with 'Plus Two' back in 2002. Since then, the actress has been part of various films ranging from Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada. Shiva Kumar, on the other hand, has starred in films such as 'Singakutty', 'Pudhumugangal Thevai' and 'Idhuvum Kadandhu Pogum'. Early this year the couple announced their pregnancy with an adorable post on Instagram on the special occasion of Ugadi.

“ SHE WOULD ASK FOR A DARK CHOCOLATE DESSERT LATE AT NIGHT FROM A FARAWAY CONFECTIONERY STORE OR WOULD HAVE CRAVINGS FOR HOT KOZHAKKATAI FROM A FAMOUS RESTAURANT. THOUGH IT'S BIZARRE, I FEEL IT'S ADORABLE.





“ I FELT EXTREMELY SICK LATE ONE NIGHT AND SHIVA WAS WITH ME THE THROUGHOUT. IN FACT, HE HAD A SHOOT THE VERY NEXT DAY AND AFTER A LONG PERSUASIVE ARGUMENT I MADE HIM GO BECAUSE I KNEW THAT THIS SHOOT WOULD BE A CRUCIAL STEP IN HIS CAREER

Fitness Mantra

“Honestly speaking, I have no such thing as a fitness regime. I eat what my baby asks me to. Nevertheless, I do a lot of household work. I mop the floors, clean the washrooms and dust corners. I believe that daily chores are the best form of exercises,” says Suja.

Reminiscing moments

“I fell extremely sick late one night and Shiva was with me the throughout. In fact, he had a shoot the very next day and after a long persuasive argument I made him go because I knew that this shoot would be a crucial step in his career,” says Suja. On the other hand, Shiva says that it is crucial to understand the emotional and physical adjustments women go through during pregnancy. He says, “The least we (men) can do is be their support physically and mentally.”

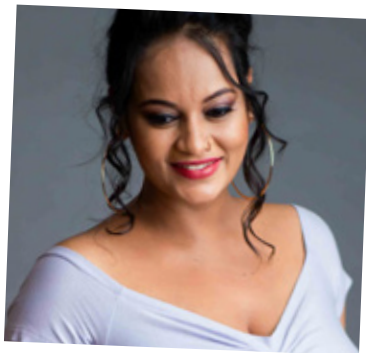
Odd hour cravings

Mommies-to-be always have the strangest cravings and that too at odd hours. “She would ask for a dark chocolate dessert late at night from a faraway confectionery store or would have cravings for hot Kozhakkatai from a famous restaurant. Though it's bizarre, I feel it's adorable,” says Shiva. Adding to this, Suja says, “I hate anything sweet. But now, its all about sweets. I like nothing else and Shiva being the best husband that he is, would always stock up everything I would ever crave for.”

First timers

Finally, when asked about how they feel becoming first time parents, Suja said, “Never go by advises. You will receive them a lot. Bring your child up in your own way, that's the best gift you could give them.” Adding to this Shiva says, “I believe that when we provide our children with the best of memories, in the future when they are faced with obstacles this positivity from childhood will push them further and help them cross it.”

Well, there is nothing better than being great parents. Team JFW wishes them all the luck in the world! ■



The decision

You know it is the right time to have a baby when the mother is ready. “I wanted a baby immediately after my wedding. Hence, I told Shiva that it is imperative that he cooperates especially when I'm ready and I have set my mind on it,” says Suja. However, Shiva had always been concerned about her. “Suja's career kickstarted on another level post Bigg Boss and I wanted her to make an informed decision,” he says. Suja knew it was the right time to have a baby no matter what.

Breaking the rules of pregnancy

Blessed with an easy pregnancy, Suja is elated that she has been enjoying eight months of her journey. “I would constantly ask my doctor if I was pregnant because I never felt like it. I had no nausea, no vertigo, nothing. I was happy and healthy with no symptoms,” says Suja.



CINEMA CHRONICLES

Your monthly dose of Hollywood, Bollywood and South Cinema

AMALA PAUL SACKED FROM HER ROLE BECAUSE OF AADAI TEASER

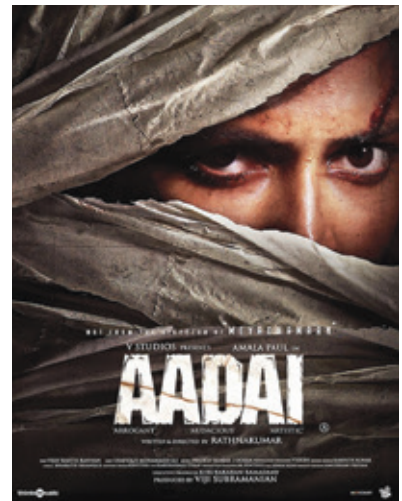
It was earlier announced that Amala Paul will be paired opposite actor Vijay Sethupathi in his next project with debut director Venkata Krishna Roganth. However, in a sudden turn of events, news flashed that actress Megha Akash has replaced actress Amala Paul in the film. In a recent press release Amala had the most shocking revelations against the production company. The producer Mr. Rathienavelu Kumar of Chandaraa Arts Production had allegedly messaged the Aadaai actress that she would not be a part of the film anymore because she had requested for an accommodation in Ooty during one of the schedules. Amala alleges that she has been purchasing the clothes and styling for VSP33, bearing the cost of her accommodation and travel and yet they kicked her out.

She later came to know that the reason behind sacking her was actually after the release of her next film Aadaai. She stated, "It's just a



patriarchal, egoistic traditional mindset of Chandaraa Arts that this is happening right after the release of Aadaai teaser and my image is being sabotaged with multiple baseless rumours that are mischievously being floated around in the industry."

In her final sentence, she said, "P.S. no harm is intended to you Vijay Sethupathi. I am a huge fan and I was excitedly looking forward to work with you. This is a statement written out of my grave disappointment and to address the rumours by the production house about my unprofessional conduct."



KEERTHY SURESH'S NEXT WITH NITHIIN

Keerthy Suresh is yet to give a blockbuster hit post her exceptional role in Mahanati. Although she was a female lead in movies like Vishal's Sandakozhi 2, Vikram's Saamy square and Vijay's Sarkar, they were not as noticeable as Mahanati. However, she has now signed an exciting film with one of Tollywood's renowned stars Nithiin. Titled Rang De, the film will be directed by Venky Atluri who debuted with the film Tholi Prema in the year 2018. The film will be produced by Naga Vamsi under the banner of Sithara Entertainments. This being the 'Lie' actor's 29th film, the cinematographer is touted to be PC Sreeram.





AMY JACKSON ENJOYS YET ANOTHER VACATION AS SHE ENTERS HER THIRD TRIMESTER

It is raining pregnancy pictures these days and we are loving how every new mommy-to-be has been experimenting her own style. They look so glowing and stunning that they literally make pregnancy an easy task to do. In a recent, Amy Jackson confirmed her pregnancy earlier this year. Well, they had a wonderful engagement party with close friends and family. Amy has ever since been on some glorious vacations with her friends and fiancé. Her latest seemed to be a nice, sunny babymoon at Cyprus. Entering into the third and final trimester, Amy said, “3rd trimester. Let’s do this little melon.”

TAMANNAAH BHATIA REPLACES MOUNI ROY IN BOLE CHUDIYAAN

Nawazuddin Siddiqui starrer Bole Chudiyaan now has a new female lead - Tamannaah Bhatia. It was announced in March that Mouni Roy would sport the role in the film. Nawazuddin had even posted a welcome tweet. However, things didn’t go well and Mouni Roy made an exit. The makers then announced that Tamannaah is the new replacement. Nawazuddin tweeted, “I’m happy that Tamannaah has joined our film. I feel that she is the right choice for this role.” Tamannaah also talked about this new project. She said, “I’m looking forward to this project The script is good, and this is the first time I will be attempting such a multi-layered character in a mainstream Bollywood film. What really caught my attention was the story, which revolves around a relevant issue.” The film is being directed by Shamas Siddiqui.



TAHIRA KASHYAP TROLLED FOR HER SHORT HAIR

It was recently that Tahira Kashyap, wife of Ayushmann Khurana revealed that she has breast cancer and is fighting to eradicate it from her body. She recently shaved her head for the very same and many from the film industry lauded her for her brave gesture and fight she’s put up. However, as her hair is growing back, she was trolled by social media for having hair as short as her husband. Some even went to the extent of calling them each other’s brothers. Tahira, however, had a wonderful response to these memes. She even added some humour to it. She said, “I’m so used to these memes and jokes now that whenever I see Ayushmann, a non brother-related song comes to my mind. Anyhow, when you get a chance to move away from all the “bhai-bhai” jokes, look at how stunning I look for the screening of Article 15.” The film Article 15 is Ayushmann Khurana’s latest release and the film is being majorly appreciated.

GAME OF THRONES CAST HEADS TO SAN DIEGO'S COMIC CON

The Game of Thrones series might have ended but the cast is yet to give us answers. Looks like that's about to come true. The cast of the series is all set to be part of panel discussions at Comic Con hosted in San Diego on July 19th. The discussion begins with the cast chatting about the series with sneak peaks from behind the scenes, followed by a question and answer session with the audience. Maisie Williams (Arya Stark), Isaac Hempstead Wright (King Bran Stark), Jacob Anderson (Grey Worm), John Bradley (Samwell Tarly), Nikolaj Coster-Waldau (Jaime Lannister), Liam Cunningham (Davos Seaworth), Nathalie Emmanuel (Missandei), Iain Glen (Ser Jorah Mormont), and Conleth Hill (Varys) will be seen attending the SDCC that day. However, Emilia Clark (Denaerys), Kit Harington (Jon Snow), Sophie Turner (Sansa Stark), Lena Headey (Cersei Lannister), and Peter Dinklage (Tyrion Lannister) seem to be missing from the guest list. Creators David Benioff, D.B. Weiss and director Miguel Sapochnik will also be on the panel.



NAOMI CAMPBELL'S PEARLS OF WISDOM GOES VIRAL

Naomi Campbell said in a recent interview that she has no problem starving for several days. When asked if it was true that she eats nothing one day a week, the 49-year-old supermodel said, laughing, "Could be more than one day." She further added, "I eat when I feel like it. I don't starve myself. If I want to do a day of just not eating, I do it and just do water or juice. Depends how I feel. In the heat, sometimes I don't [eat], I just want to do juice. It's too hot. [It's] never planned. It could be one day, it could be two days a week. It's just when I feel like it." She said, "The most I've ever done it for is 18 days. It's good just to clean out your body once in a while." ■

Generic FORECAST



FOR THE MONTH OF
JULY 2019

by **Acharye Nandita Pandey**
*Astro - Vaastu - Tarot consultant,
spiritual healer and PLR Therapist*



Cancer

22ND JUNE - 21ST JULY

Matters of the heart shall be blessed and you would enjoy being in the company of your loved one. This is a beautiful time to spend quality-relaxing time with your soul mate. Professionally, there are few stressful situations that need handling as external interference in your work can turn out to be quite regressive during this month. Travels should be made only if you are too sure about them. Any positive result of travels made now will be seen in the near future. Slow subtle happiness floats in matters related to family. Stomach related issues might crop up and also health of a child will be a cause of concern in life. Financial situation needs better handling and monitoring all through this phase of your life.

LUCKY COLOUR: TURQUOISE



ARIES

22ND MARCH - 21ST APRIL

Financially, this is an excellent time for you to manifest success and growth through your investments. Professionally there are youngsters who shall be your saving grace, helping you out manifesting success through your projects. You shall be in the higher intuitive state as far as your love life is concerned and this helps in enhancing romantic quotient in your life. Health keeps you in a fit shape all through this month. You would also want to try out new health activities keeping the past experiences in mind. Good news knocks your door in matters related to your family. Children bring in immense happiness in life. A stubborn attitude by the end of the month can act a spoilsport in your life.

LUCKY COLOUR: GREEN



TAURUS

22ND APRIL - 21ST MAY

Professional confusion or insecurity might be higher in the beginning of the month but if you are courageous and take risky decisions, be rest assured that success will surely knock your door soon. Gains and growth is surely indicated at the work front. Money matters also show a northward growth and you can expect help from a woman who has good knack for finances. Health keeps you in a robust shape. Travels made during this period shall be favourable and successful. You

seem to be a little carefree as far as your family is concerned but you should be careful as sometimes this carelessness can act opposite to your expectations. Emotional anxieties are running high in Matters of the heart. Situations and circumstances will be overpowering on you especially as the month comes to its end.

LUCKY COLOUR: GREY



GEMINI

22ND MAY- 21ST JUNE

Professionally a youngster helps you in your endeavours. Projects get completed in time and you might even hear good news related to it in the beginning of the month. Health too brings in good positive changes in life and this probably is happening after a lot of struggles in the past few months. Matters of family keep you happy and blessed. Happiness from children in the family is surely indicated for this month. Matters of the heart shall be pleasant and romantically inclined and you will become more responsible for your loved one as the month progress. Finances can turn out to be more expensive than expected and needs more monitoring. Travels made in this month shall be more favourable. You will be in celebration mood as the month comes to its end.

LUCKY COLOUR: BABY PINK



LEO

22ND JULY - 21ST AUGUST

You shall be in a happy zone when it comes to your family matters. This is a good time to be with them and enjoy their company. You might also want to renovate your abode, possibilities of indulging into shopping for decorating your home is strongly reflected through the Tarot. A motherly figure might be the cause of concern in matters related to your love life. You need to learn to take few risks in your investments in order to enjoy growth and success through it. Professionally this is the time to work with a lot of patience and diplomacy else chances are that you might have to suffer due to your blunt approach in life. A balanced approach towards your travels shall be instrumental in bringing success through them.

LUCKY COLOUR: LAVENDER



VIRGO

22ND AUGUST - 21ST SEPTEMBER

Professionally This is a month when you need to be extremely patient and deal with difficult situations with ease and diplomatic approach. Learning to show your displeasure or refuse things you don't approve of only helps you to harmonize your love life in a better manner. Professionally there are setbacks and the level of success you seek might take some more time. Expenses can be on the higher side more due to emotional reasons. A lot of travelling can cause health issues. It can also worsen due to sudden displeasure about something positive that you otherwise were really looking forward to. A feeling of restlessness seeps in matters related to your family. A fatherly figure can cause stress in life especially while pursuing a journey. You shall however experience

subtle relief and happiness as the month comes to its end.

LUCKY COLOUR: PISTACHIO GREEN



LIBRA

22ND SEPTEMBER - 21ST OCTOBER

Your family will be a strong support system in your life all through this phase of your life. You might also plan to shift to a better area along with your family or might plan to buy a new property. Health will improve as the month progresses. There are however a lot of sudden changes that you might have to experience when it comes to your love life. Old patterns die and new ones emerge in matters of your heart. Professionally there are setbacks and things might not shape up as per your expectations. Financial deadlocks can also be witnessed in this phase of life. Being involved in a charitable work helps in balancing your outflow of money for unnecessary reasons. You might be worried about a fatherly figure in life while on a journey as the month comes to its end.

LUCKY COLOUR: RED



SCORPIO

22ND OCTOBER - 21ST NOVEMBER

Matters of the heart shall be romantically inclined all through this phase of your life. You will hear of a good news related to your love life. Professionally this is the

time to relax and let your hard work done in the past bring you growth and success in life. You have worked hard to reach in this stage, now is the time to relax and enjoy the fruits of your labour. Family life shall be peaceful and harmonious. Travels made during this phase shall be enjoyable and memorable. A new beginning by the end of the month shall be pleasant and harmonious.

LUCKY COLOUR: RED



SAGITTARIUS

22ND NOVEMBER - 21ST DECEMBER

This is a good month to enjoy your health and also enjoy the fruits of your hard work. Good news knocks your door in matters of your heart. Professionally, you hear of good news and a lot of positive changes can be expected as the month progresses. Expenses need better monitoring and more careful handling of your investments. You would enjoy your travels as well and will enter into in subtle celebration mood while on a journey. This is also a time when you do a lot of networking along with members of your family.

LUCKY COLOUR: LOTUS PINK



CAPRICORN

22ND DECEMBER - 21ST JANUARY

Money matters bring in a lot of boost in life. Joint investments shall be extremely favourable and growth oriented.

Professionally also the more you work hard the better the results shall be. A fatherly figure who has reached a position of strength out of his pragmatic manners and hard work is the key to your success in this month. You shall come across a number of opportunities to enjoy peace and harmony in your family life all through this phase of your life. Travels made during this month, shall be extremely favourable, successful and in your control. Health issues might crop up and can incur excessive expenses in this matter. New beginnings by the end of the month shall be favourable and enjoyable.

LUCKY COLOUR: ORANGE



AQUARIUS

22ND JANUARY- 19TH FEBRUARY

Matters of the heart shall be extremely romantic and pleasant. You will be showered with a lot of love and attention in this period. A new beginning around this time in your love life stands the test of the time. Emotional anxieties however, are high when it comes to your work matters. Insecurities and uncertainty seeps in shattering your confidence in your projects. Expenses on children shall be high and yet a woman helps you in balancing this part of your life. Dental issues might suddenly crop up. There are also possibilities of minor surgeries like a root canal or dental extraction for some of you in this phase of your life. Worries about a youngster might hamper your growth patterns while pursuing a journey. You might also feel a little left out and anxious when it comes to dealing with family life. Being patient and diplomatic

is the key to happiness in life .

LUCKY COLOUR: YELLOW



PISCES

19TH FEBRUARY - 21ST MARCH

Financial growth shall be good and you would want to make fresh investments keeping in mind the secure future for your loved ones. Health too keeps you in a rejuvenated shape all through this month. Travels made during this period shall be extremely favourable and enjoyable. Be careful about text messages that you send to your family members in this month as it can cause you anxieties in life if it is not formatted correctly. A woman who has an aggressive personality might be the reason for hurting your sentiments especially at the work zone. Subtle positive changes can be witness in life as the month comes to its end.

LUCKY COLOUR: BLUE

YEARLY FORECAST CANCER

The year begins with good news knocking your door bringing you growth and success in life. Matters of the heart will be romantically inclined and you enjoy a good phase of mutual understanding and respect. Professionally, the more you reinvent yourself the better it shall be for you. Following your intuitive streaks also helps you in achieving breakthroughs in life. Finances grow beautifully and someone will come forward to help you in this matter.

**MAY THE DIVINE BLESS US ALL
WITH INNER PEACE, PROSPERITY
AND HAPPINESS... ■**

HAUTE COUTURE WORKSHOP CONDUCTED BY INDO-CANADIAN DESIGNER

KOCHI: Renowned Indo-Canadian fashion designer Satish Sikha conducted a three - day Haute Couture evening gown workshop in collaboration with St. Teresa's College. Satish Sikha's signature bridal wears have been presented in luxury stores like Saks Fifth Avenue and Bergdorf Goodman, New York and various fashion stores in Yorkville, Canada. The event aimed at training fashion students and aspiring designers. It was conducted by lifestyle journalist Smitha Soman and celebrity photographer Suneesh Suresh.



'ADVENTURES OF FASHION' BY MR.MANISH MALHOTRA HOSTED BY FICCI LADIES ORGANISATION

CHENNAI: FICCI Ladies Organisation hosted 'Adventures of Fashion', an interactive session on 9th June with Bollywood's most sought after designer Mr.Manish Malhotra. It was moderated by Former Miss India International Ms.Shvetha Jaishankar, a successful model, author, writer and founder of a sports management company. The event took place in ITC Grand Chola. The program aimed to explore into the business of fashion with the designer sharing his ideology on what it takes to stay relevant. The core activities of FLO - the ladies wing of FICCI (Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industries), revolve around women and their overall development and empowerment at various levels.



BRINGING MALAYSIA TO NAMMA CHENNAI

CHENNAI: Courtyard by Marriott Chennai hosted the 'Flavors of Malaysia' an exclusive food festival showcasing the rustic and authentic cuisine of Malaysia to the people of Chennai in association with Tourism Malaysia, Consulate General of Malaysia and Malindo Air. Chef Zaniah from Malaysia who brings with him over 25 years of experience in the field of culinary arts headed the food festival along with Chef Sushant, the Executive Chef at Courtyard by Marriott Chennai. ■



Left to Right - Amit Kumar, Logi Dhasan Thanaraj, Saravanan Karthikeyan, Chef Zaniah, Chef Sushant, MC Kavitha, Prakash & Suresh Varun (1)



Left to Right - MC Kavitha, Suresh Varun, Logi Dhasan Thanaraj, Saravanan Karthikeyan, Amit Kumar, Chef Zaniah & Chef Sushant

what's trending @jfw

JUST FOR WOMEN

▶ STORIES OF THE WEEK jfwonline.com



Bigg Boss 3: Contestants Who Won Hearts!



The story of Kausalya Krishnamoorthy: How Aishwarya Rajesh Won hearts from Kaaka Muttai to Kanaa



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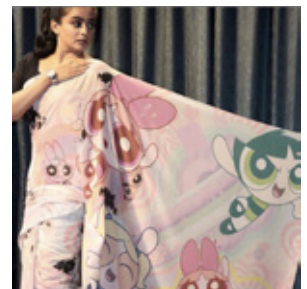


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Which has been your favourite Tollywood film this year

- A. Maharshi
- B. Jersey
- C. Majili
- D. 118

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Audience found it unfair that contestants Abirami and Sakshi were extremely rude to new entrant Meera Mithun as soon as she got in. What do you think? **#Biggboss3tamil #biggboss**

#SoundaryaRajinikanth posted this adorable picture! Check it out!
#Rajinikanth



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GAME OVER

TAAPSEE SHINES IN THIS BRILLIANTLY MADE PSYCHOLOGICAL THRILLER

DIRECTOR: Ashwin Saravanan
CAST: Taapsee Pannu, Vinodhini, Sanchana Natarajan, Anish Kuruvilla and others

A woman, all alone, is stalked by a heavy breathing, unhinged person. Stalked and then decapitated, the woman's murder

grabs headlines. There are a lot of questions raised. Why her? What did the killer get out of turning the woman into a headless body? And worse, who is his next victim?

Game Over is a psychological thriller that Tamil cinema isn't used to. Taapsee plays Swapna, a game designer who

works from home. She plays Pacman all day while working and seems to be on the edge most of the time. Darkness is something she is afraid of and ensures there's light around, always. Her help Kalamma (played by Vinodhini) is her only confidante who knows Swapna in and out. The trauma of a sexual assault that took place on New Year's Eve comes alive exactly a year later, with Swapna being riddled with panic attacks and battling her PTSD. In the midst of her getting out of her fear of the dark, there is an unnamed entity after her. As fear looms high in the air, the film takes shape in the form of a game. A game of survival. The unnamed stalker and the terror he creates exudes a wicked anticipation throughout the film. More than focusing on the film's plot, hooks and content, it's the experience of watching it that adds to its charm.

Considering it features women and is also written by a woman, it's safe to assume that Game Over is allegorical to women fighting back, be it patriarchy, sexual trauma, a physical ailment or anything that would otherwise bring her down. There's a particular scene in the film when Taapsee is talking to Kalamma while being in the kitchen, hiding from the killer. She is afraid beyond words but musters the courage to say, "Yes, death might come and it's okay. But we will not go down fighting without making a noise."

The film has its share of flaws, but the slightly slow paced first half is made up for in the second half with a racy thriller. The fact that the film has no songs is a huge plus, with the background score properly paced and placed based on the scene and emotions.

Films like these, especially in Tamil cinema, don't happen too often, hence there's a need to celebrate such an attempt. Taapsee proves that leading a film all by herself is no easy task but she does it with such sophistication, one cannot help but admire her choices. ■

VERDICT: A well-executed thriller
RATING: ★★★★★



LUCA

WHAT EXTREMES WILL A WOMAN GO FOR THE SAKE OF HER LOVE?

DIRECTOR: Arun Bose
CAST: Tovino Thomas, Ahaana Krishna, Nithin George, Vinita Koshiy, Rajesh Sharma, Pauly Vaslan

If a beautiful romance leaves you all mushy and teary eyed, then Luca is just the perfect prescription. The romance between the lead pair is not wild or madly passionate but unravels like a slow symphony that touches your soul and heart and leaves you yearning for more. Word of caution though- this is not a full

blown romantic film but has a mystery whodunit at its heart. So expect a mix of love and thrills that mesh together.

The film begins with an unexpected event that sets the tone for the rest of the story. A diary plays an important part in this film and the sweet and poignant romance of Luca (Tovino Thomas) and Niharika Banerjee (Ahaana Krishna) unravels through its yellow pages- courtesy of an investigation by police officer Akbar (Nithin George).

The film travels in a non-linear pattern

with multiple narratives. The romance between the lead pair is all light and colourful set amidst the art world and the alluring setting of the Kochi Biennale while the investigative part is all dark and somber with rains being a constant backdrop.

Luca is an extremely talented scrap artist who is an orphan but carefree, happy and sassy. Though he is ever ready to help his close circle of friends, he has a dark side to him – violent outbursts of anger that he cannot control. An argument with a naïve Niharika regarding his installation brings together Luca and Niharika. The initial confrontation changes to a friendship and Niharika, seeking to escape demons from a troubled and abusive childhood finds a home in Luca’s abode. They exchange life stories, each understanding the other and falling more in love with each other. Niharika becomes Luca’s beacon of hope in rough seas. Just when they decide to set up a life together, a dark cloud envelopes Luca and Niharika is forced to go to unimaginable lengths to protect her love.

The romantic story alternates between an investigation- swinging between the past and the present to also depict the skeletons in the police officer’s closet- a past failed relationship and a present marriage that he wants to opt out of. The diary proves to be a balm to the troubled Akbar’s soul and while he finally unravels the killer, he also makes peace with his past.

Tovino as Luca makes you fall instantly in love - he is funny, broody, pained, happy, naughty and carefree. He brings Luca to life in his inimitable way and Ahaana stands shoulder to shoulder with him slipping into the shoes of Niharika with consummate ease. Arun has done a decent job in his debut directorial vehicle but certain blanks remain unfilled with the climax not easily palatable. The cinematography by Nimish Ravi stands out for the vibrant frames and music is fair.

VERDICT: Die hard romantics can expect a visual feast and the film will not disappoint.

RATING: ★★☆☆

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