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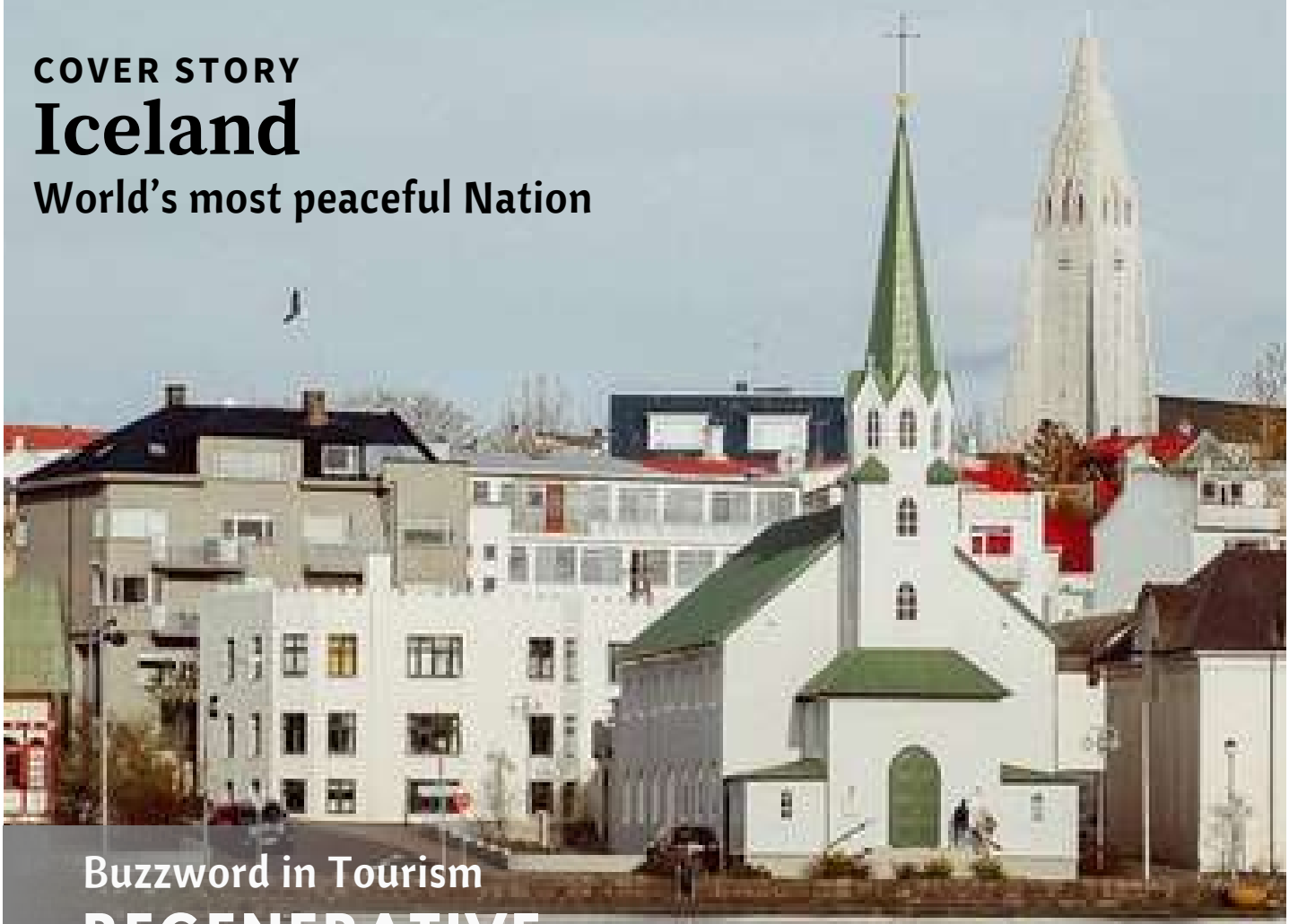
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COVER STORY

Iceland

World's most peaceful Nation



Buzzword in Tourism

REGENERATIVE TOURISM

Quirky & Stylish

CERAMIC TABLEWARE

GURU UNLOCKS THE DOOR TO EVOLUTION

Yogi Ashwini

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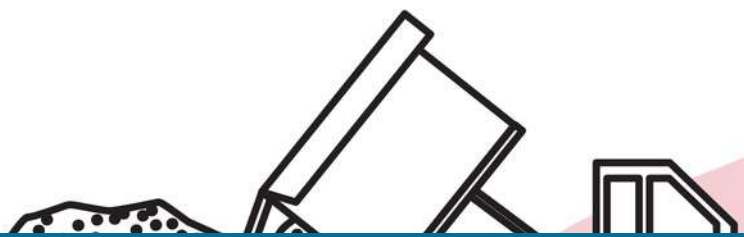
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From the desk of Editor-in-Chief

Making Sustainability Mainstream

Just came across this Instagram post yesterday :

“If every person on earth just recycled, stopped using plastic straws and drove an electric car, 100 corporations would still produce 70% of total global emissions”.

Exactly the same issue has been bothering me for the last few days. From the time, we launched our magazine in Nov 2020, almost every day we receive so many stories of sustainable startups, individuals leaving their jobs and getting into sustainability for the love of the environment, people inventing technologies to combat climate change and conscious consumers changing their lifestyles bit by bit to reduce their carbon footprint, etc.

However, when I visit the biggest departmental stores in the city, I see vegetables and fruits wrapped in plastic, beverages and water in plastic bottles, almost every commodity is packaged in plastic. Why aren’t the biggies taking steps towards protecting the environment? Though, some corporates have taken the lead and are incorporating changes in their system, be it sourcing of raw materials, product processes, packaging and supply chain, etc. However, it is minuscule as compared to the kind of pollution, large corporations are generating.

The big corporates need to embrace sustainability. A Lot has been spoken about, but the reality is still far. Time is running out, we need to act fast to tackle the climate change issue.

Sustainability has to become mainstream.



Poonam K Malhotra
Editor-in--Chief

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Iceland

World's most peaceful Country

by **Poonam K Malhotra**

Iceland, a nation of over 3.5 lakh people has been declared as the most peaceful country in the world, according to the 2021 Global Peace Index. Holding this title since the inception of this Index in 2008, Iceland is also the only Nordic country that is more peaceful now than it was in 2008.

Iceland is followed by New Zealand, Denmark, Portugal, and Slovenia. While Afghanistan is the least peaceful country in the world for the fourth consecutive year, followed by Yemen, Syria, South Sudan, and Iraq. The 2021 GPI reveals a world in which the conflicts and crises that emerged in the past decade have begun to abate, only to be replaced with a new wave of tension and uncertainty as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and rising tensions between many of the major powers.

Produced by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), the Global Peace Index (GPI) is the world's leading measure of global peacefulness. This report presents the most comprehensive data-driven analysis to date on trends in peace, its economic value, and how to develop peaceful societies.

The GPI covers 99.7 per cent of the world's population, using 23 qualitative and quantitative indicators from highly respected sources, and measures the state of peace across three domains: **the level of Societal Safety and Security, the extent of Ongoing Domestic and International Conflict, and the degree of Militarisation.**

About Iceland

One of the youngest landmasses on the planet, and consequently home to some of the world's most active volcanoes, Iceland is an island in the Atlantic Ocean, located near the Arctic Circle, between Greenland and Norway. Measuring around 103.000 km2 (40,000 square miles), it is about the same size as Hungary and Portugal, or Kentucky and Virginia. Iceland is the second-largest island in Europe, following Great Britain, and the 18th largest island in the world. It is also the least populated country in Europe with less than three inhabitants per square kilometre. Almost 80% of the country is uninhabited, and much of its terrain consists of plateaux, mountain peaks, and fertile lowlands.

Iceland enjoys a cool, temperate maritime climate, with refreshing summers and surprisingly mild temperatures in winter. Icelandic culture has been shaped by isolation and the extreme forces of nature. These conditions have created a resilient people, where family ties are close, the sense of tradition is strong, and the bond with nature is tight.

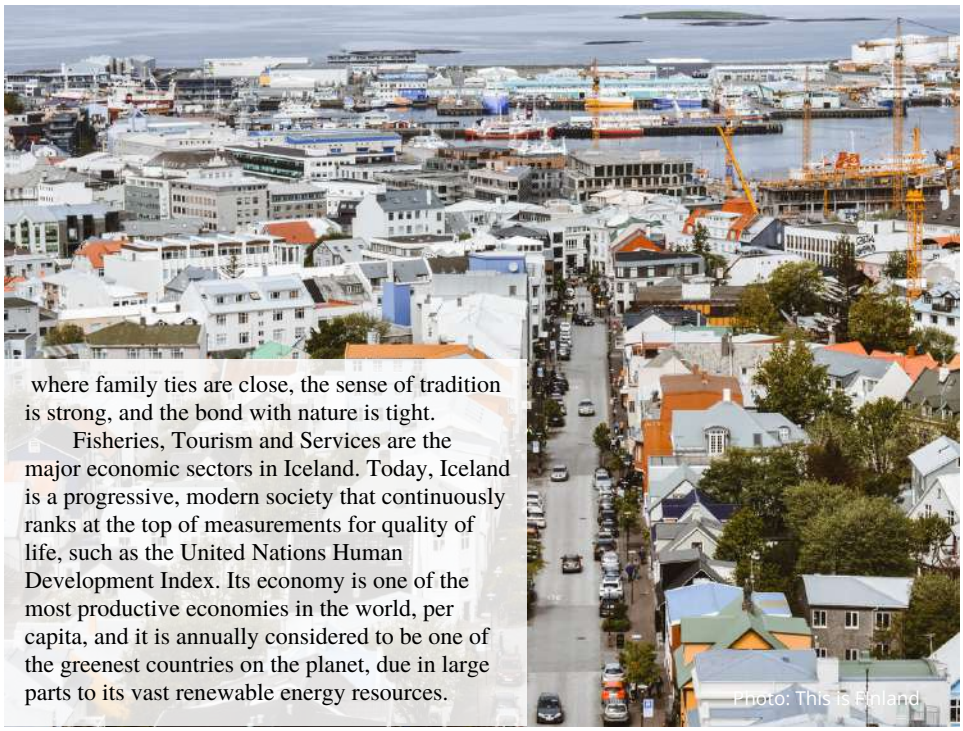


Photo: This is Finland

Fisheries, Tourism and Services are the major economic sectors in Iceland. Today, Iceland is a progressive, modern society that continuously ranks at the top of measurements for quality of life, such as the United Nations Human Development Index. Its economy is one of the most productive economies in the world, per capita, and it is annually considered to be one of the greenest countries on the planet, due in large parts to its vast renewable energy resources.

Factors that make Iceland the most peaceful nation

Low crime rate

Iceland has a very low level of crime. The murder rate in Iceland is zero to 1.5 a year, virtually no violent crimes, very small amount of petty crimes. Police officers in Iceland don't carry guns and the nation has no army. Also, Iceland has no border nations, so no cross border conflicts and tensions.

Relatively high standard of living

Crime is often linked to poverty. Iceland is not without its economical problems, but it does not have real poverty. The nation has a low poverty rate and low unemployment rate. Employment regulations are relatively flexible and the labour market is one of the freest in the world. They also have one of the highest literacy rates in the world.

Rich Nation with low income inequality

Iceland's GDP per capita is amongst the highest in the World. In 2018, the GDP per capita in Iceland amounted to more than 75,000 U.S. dollars. Also, its income inequality is among the lowest. A fairly rich nation with equal distribution of income, Iceland has no social clashes.



Photo: This is FInland



Robust Social welfare system

Iceland has an insurance-based unemployment benefit wherein financial assistance is available for those without other resources. It also has housing benefit for those with low income and family benefit which includes double the benefit for single parents, supplementary allowance to low income families. Iceland also has universal health care and has been ranked as one of the best performings in the world, ranked 15th by the World Health Organization. According to an OECD report, Iceland devotes far more resources to healthcare than most industrialised nations. The education is fairly reasonable. For eg., The **University of Iceland** has an annual tuition fee of approximately 600 EUR, which is well below Europe's average of 4,500 EUR per year.

Progressive human rights and values

There is no class system in Iceland and freedom of religion is guaranteed. There are laws strictly forbidding discrimination based on race, gender, disability or other factors, Iceland is by many standards and measurements considered a world leader when it comes to the human rights enjoyed by its people. The nation ranks amongst the most evolved in the world when it comes to **gender equality**, equal pay for Men and Women, freedom of expression, **gay rights**, and levels of democracy. **Iceland is also number 1 in gender equality**. Iceland was also the first country in the world to have a political party formed and led entirely by women in the year 1983.



Small town feeling

Iceland has a very small and relatively homogenous population and is a very close-knit family-oriented community. Almost everyone knows everyone, and are directly or remotely connected. People feel safe and secure in such surroundings.

No one has a bodyguard, not even the President

This statement stresses how safe the country is: simply put, there is no reason for anyone to have a bodyguard or an entourage for safekeeping. Icelanders feel safe in their country, even if they are in a position of power.



Photo: This is FInland

Infants and toddlers take nap outside in their strollers

Having babies sleep in their strollers outside is quite an old tradition and Icelanders swear by it. No one would ever worry about their baby carriage being snatched or their baby being taken simply because it has never happened. Just proves how safe is the nation.

Strict Driving Rules

The strict driving regulations in Iceland contributes to the overall safety of its citizens and visitors alike. There are no highways in Iceland–the fastest you can possibly drive is 90 kmph (55.9 mph) and if you can travel at that speed, it means you are outside of town. Breaking Iceland's strict speeding laws results in shockingly high fines–for strict adherence to the law.

Less tax burden

Iceland has relatively low taxes. Unlike most Western European countries, Iceland has a flat tax system: the main personal income tax rate is a flat 22.75% and combined with municipal taxes, the total tax rate equals no more than 35.7%, not including the many deductions that are available. The corporate tax rate is a flat 18%, one of the lowest in the world.





Effective Social Security and Pension system

The Icelandic pension system is based on three main pillars: the social security system, an occupational pension system and supplementary pension savings.

Social security is a public pension system of which all Icelanders are members, with the primary objective of providing mutual insurance, income equalisation and a social safety net for pension recipients. Social security includes pensions, health insurance and disability insurance.

Everyone who has been legally resident in Iceland for six months automatically becomes a member of the Icelandic social insurance system, regardless of nationality. Social insurance in Iceland is financed by the State Treasury. Persons do not pay special premiums for their social insurance: instead, employers pay premiums to the State Treasury on all paid wages. The funds collected by these means are used among other things, to finance social insurance.

ICELAND IS #1 IN THE FOLLOWING

- Iceland ranks 1st in gender equality.
- Iceland ranks 1st in income equality.
- Iceland ranks 1st in the environmentally friendly index.
- Iceland has the most sold books in the world Per capita.
- Icelanders produce more writers and books than any other nation in the world. Per capita, that is. 10% of Icelanders will publish a book at one time in their lives.





- Iceland had the first democratically elected female.
- Iceland had the first openly gay Prime Minister.
- Icelanders have the longest workweek in Europe, at 43.5 hours.
- 100% of Icelanders have internet connections. Iceland is the only country in the world where every single home is connected.
- Iceland hosts Europes' largest glacier, Vatnajökull. It's larger than all of Europe's glaciers combined.
- Iceland has the purest water in the world.

Sources:
www.campeasy.com https://www.icelandtravel.is/blog/iceland-safest-country-in-the-world/, www.oecd.org, www.Guidetoiceland.is, www.iceland.is, www.government.is

Do Good, Feel Good!

The Pandemic of Kindness during the COVID-19 wave taught us, giving does make us feel better and live healthier. We must continue the wave of generosity to feel happier and live richer lives!

by **Nona Walia**



The darkness of the pandemic must be overcome with personal and collective well-being. When it comes to happiness and mental health, the big mantra is **ACT AS YOU WANT TO FEEL**. Doing good makes you feel good. It really works. As the glum darkness of the pandemic loomed, those that reached out to make others feel better, with random acts of kindness, slept better and felt more fulfilled. A new trend of "intersectional kindness" emerged, a phrase coined to encourage people to reach out beyond their circle of family, loved ones and acquaintances, and target kind acts toward individuals who battle difficult conditions. Helping others or “Doing unto others” could very well be one of the best things you can do for yourself to feel great daily. As we celebrate India's 75th Independence Day, every individual must promise themselves an era of ‘Collective Well-being' and 'kindness' to get through the turbulent waves of the pandemic. Personal healing follows collective healing. Freedom from Pandemic's pain and suffering is possible, by making others happier. Contentment and happiness are within everyone's reach: **Do good to feel good.**

Are you perplexed by the correlation between kindness and mental health? Here are some facts. The future of individual happiness is all about 'Collective Well-being'. Acts of kindness, generosity triggers a wave of 'collective well-being', at a time when people feel powerless to change the pandemic blues, overpowered with feelings of dark imaginings there is nothing more uplifting than channelling your thoughts towards helping others. Receiving and giving love and healing in a pandemic is the hugely therapeutic and best way to escape from the bad news. This has triggered a pandemic of kindness, which helps the giver too, making them trigger 'happy hormones'. We have also seen, in hard times such as the pandemic, backed by a body of research suggesting that helping gestures assuage worry and concern. Often during emergencies and crises, people start performing acts of kindness at random. Helping others through a crisis by performing good deeds can make you feel in control—even give you bursts of euphoria called “the helper’s high” from dopamine and endorphin squirts released in the brain. Contributing, giving, volunteering, donating and performing kind acts, connects you to other people in a deeply meaningful and more humane way. Numerous studies have linked kindness with improved life expectancy. One such study by **Doug Oman of the University of California, Berkeley**, found that elderly people who regularly volunteered were 44% less likely to die over a five-year period. As the author of **Being Bold, Richelle E Goodrich** writes, ***"Everyday grants us opportunities to do good. Take advantage of them. Do good. Be happy."***

There's Science that backs this feeling of happiness, in the late 1980s, **economist James Andreon**i coined the term “warm glow” for the biggest reward a donor gets from the satisfaction of knowing that she’s done something good. Being nice to others also triggers several happiness chemicals in the body, according to **Stephen G. Post, director of the Center for Medical Humanities at New York’s Stony Brook University**. The chemicals include dopamine, endorphins that give people a sense of euphoria, and oxytocin, which is associated with

tranquillity, serenity, or inner peace. A new recent study published in the journal Psychological Bulletin also suggests that performing acts of kindness and helping other people can be good for your health and well-being. Mental health experts during the pandemic felt how acts of benevolence during the pandemic improved mental health. We have seen amazing acts of compassion from our frontline workers putting their own wellbeing at risk to look after others; we have also seen many smaller random acts of kindness from strangers organising langars and helping people. In his book **Why Good Things Happen to Good People Stephen Post** writes, ***"The remarkable bottom line of the science of love is that giving protects overall health twice as much as aspirin protects against heart disease."***

Generosity makes you happier and richer in unexpected ways!

Those who flourished in the pandemic weren't the ones who were making great wealth. They were the ones motivating others to succeed. They were the cheerleaders of other people's success stories. Being out there makes others happier, lifting them up. This enhanced their own happiness. Your acts of kindness can be simple words, sharing skills or sharing food. But it changes the chemistry of feeling good in the body. Multiple types of research are going on around the world to enable flourishing in a pandemic not just living. The concept of human flourishing is interesting, in part because it doesn't necessarily include wealth as an indicator of achievement. IT means finding a flow that excites you, doing something for others that is key to flourishing and promoting good mental health. Flourishing, a state of optimal emotional, psychological, and social well-being has shown to have several health benefits for people. Says **Tyler VanderWeele, head of Harvard's Human Flourishing prog** ***'You can enhance your flourishing not only by changing how you think but also by changing how you act.'*** That's where Acts of Giving helps the giver feel happier.

On days when life feels heavy, try doing something small for someone. You will see the difference. **sociologists Christian Smith and Hilary Davidson in The Paradox of Generosity: Giving We Receive, Grasping We Lose discovered, those subjects who made charitable donations, triggered the same happiness as if they had won a monetary award for themselves. Psychiatrist Dr Alok Kulkarni** says, ***'I've seen people literally grow their grit with acts of kindness. They were struggling but put themselves out there. Did it help? yes, they were sleeping better and were happier. They felt in control. Sometimes, you have no option but to become stronger. COVID-19 has thrown up a bevvy of complex challenges, and one of them is the variety of mental health problems that have come to our attention. Having a strong motivation is the key. Second, have a social support system as it serves as a buttress against the challenges. It is vital to be positive during these unprecedented times with acts of kindness. It is equally vital to seek help when the problems become overwhelming."***



4 ways you can start small by acts of giving

Give a smile

The act of giving can be small. It could start with a smile. Or it could be sharing your skill, having a conversation or just smiling. Being kind is likely to make someone smile and if you see that smile for yourself, it might be catchy.

Righting a wrong

Empathy can never go wrong. The biggest path to healing others is trying to right any wrong. Doing a kind act to make someone who is sad feel better can also make us feel good – partly because we feel the same relief they do. The act of setting things right can be liberating. You can set things right with a family member or friend, or associate yourself with a cause, it makes you feel good as you are active about bringing about a change.

Become a kinder version of yourself

Doing good makes you feel happier. But keep increasing your kindness dose. Upgrade your kindness software especially in a challenging world, where there is toxicity. Don't take pictures of your kindness activities and post them on social media. Greater happiness comes from doing acts of kindness anonymously. This will lead to more powerful feelings of happiness. Don't give to flaunt.

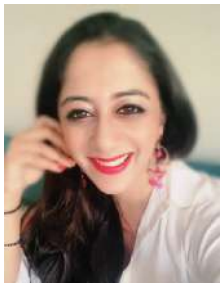
Indulge in Science of Good Deeds

What makes us perform good deeds? What inspires you to move out of your comfort zone and help out. When we act on behalf of other people, research shows that they feel greater comfort, less stress. When we engage in good deeds, we reduce our own stress. During this stress response, hormones like cortisol are released, and our heart and breathing rates increase -- the "fight or flight" response. If this stress response remains "turned on" for an extended period, the immune and cardiovascular systems are adversely affected. Altruistic emotions -- the "helper's high" -- seem to gain dominance over the stress response. The "compassion-altruism axis" gives you happiness high. This is the care-and-connection part of the brain that increases the bonding 'oxytocin levels. When you provide social support everyone benefits, even you.

A Kinder Heart will give you a Happier Mind!

Nona Walia, Journalist & Writer

Nona Walia is a successful journalist and writer. She's the author of The Art of Mental Toughness: Survival Lessons from the Pandemic. A motivational expert, she is passionate about helping people live their lives in the best possible way. A wellness warrior and a wellness blogger, Walia has done a certified online course on Science of Well-Being from Yale University. She runs a Wellness Channel on YouTube. She has worked with The Times of India for 24 years as a Senior Assistant Editor and is also the acclaimed writer of many articles for Thrive Global.



Regenerative Tourism

The new buzzword in the world of tourism

by **Poonam K Malhotra**

With the Earth Overshoot Day coming early every year, it just shows how fast we are depleting our resources. Earth Overshoot Day is the date when humanity's demand for ecological resources and services in a given year exceeds what the Earth can renew in that year. Last year it fell on Aug 22, 2020 while this year it was in July 29, 2021. Going by this, soon we would need 2 planets to satisfy our demands. However the reality is we just have ONE EARTH, and there is no other alternative to this. There are already evidences of irreversible climate damage, and the increasing temperatures, wildfires, melting glaciers, floods and droughts are all just pointing to one single aspect – the over consumerism is killing the climate and in turn killing us.

The Earth Overshoot Day is a wake up call for the humanity to consume less, preserve what we have and regenerate more. The pandemic is a proof that nature rebounded itself when there was minimal indulgence. This has led people to take the climate change issue more seriously. Everyone is now talking about leaving a better world for the future generations. Regenerative tourism means the same for the travel industry. "Regenerative" describes processes that restore, renew or revitalize their own sources of energy and materials, through the principles of living systems and nature.

How is Regenerative tourism different from Sustainable tourism ?

While sustainable tourism works on the concept of not harming the place, regenerative tourism is a step further, of improving the destination. Sustainable tourism is about preserving what we have and maintaining the ecological and social balance, while regenerative tourism is about restoring and then regenerating, making a place better for future generations. It's the next step after sustainable tourism.

*"At **Center for Responsible Travel (CREST**), we believe that regenerative travel refers to tourism that not only 'does no harm,' but protects and enhances the conditions and systems at the destination while benefiting both residents and travellers. That said, we do not believe this term is a replacement for sustainable tourism",* says **Dr Gregory Miller, Executive Director, CREST.**

CREST uses the UN definition of sustainable tourism: *"Tourism that leads to the management of all resources in a manner that economic, social and aesthetic needs are fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biodiversity, and life support systems."*



*"**True sustainability** is not about maintaining the status quo (especially if the status quo means maintaining degraded systems or failing systems) but rather is about protecting and stewarding functional and working natural, cultural, and economic systems that promote the triple bottom line: people, planet, and prosperity. We believe regenerative travel can help restore nature and culture in a destination, building on the foundation of sustainable tourism, putting us on a path to achieving true sustainability"*, **Miller adds**.

Countries at the helm of Regenerative Tourism

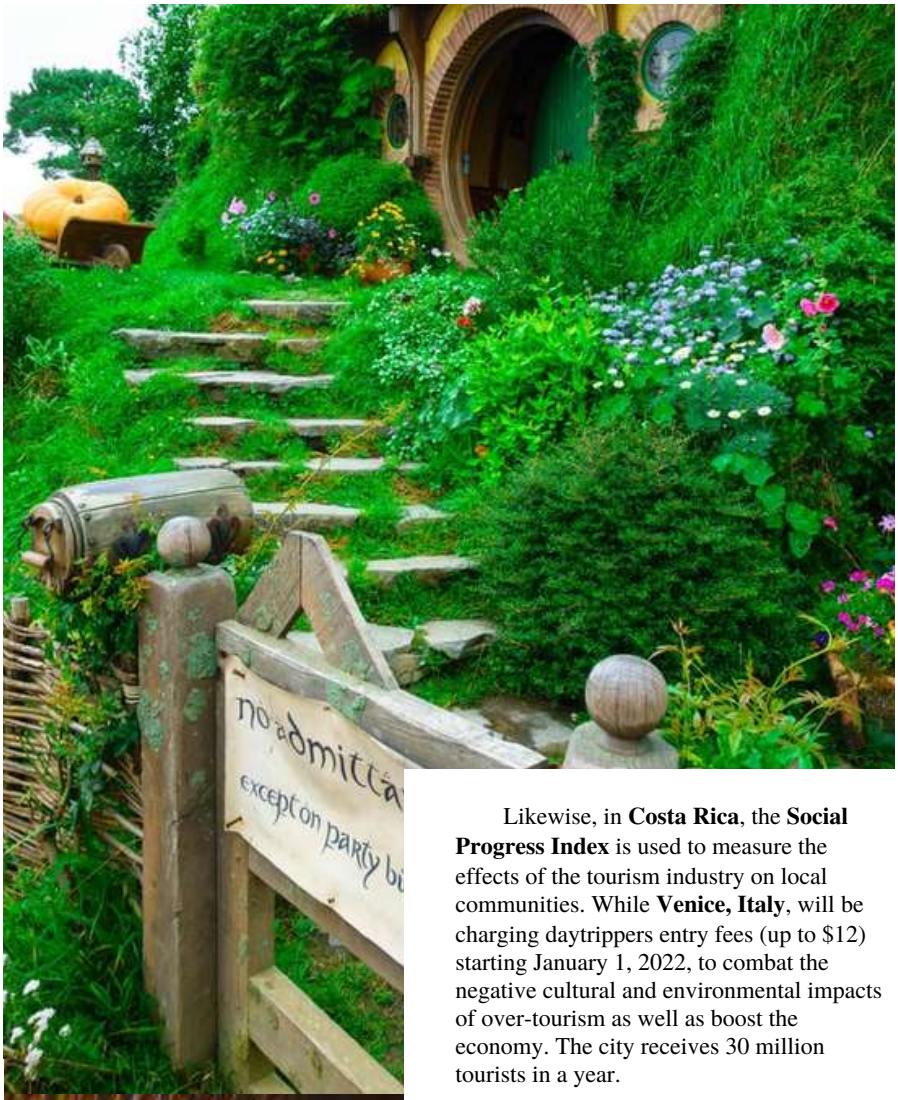
While tourism's success has largely been measured in economic terms to date, the world is now moving into a new era of thinking. How to create more value for people, place, and collective prosperity. With regenerative tourism gaining ground, countries across the world are looking beyond GDP to measure its wellbeing.

Over tourism is no more a buzzword, wellbeing of its people is. Leading the way to a regenerative future are countries like Bhutan, New Zealand and Hawaii, where governments measure success in the tourism sector not just by number of tourists but also by the welfare and wellbeing of its people and place.

Bhutan is the first country to have done this. **The Country developed its signature Gross National Happiness index based on four pillars: sustainable development, environmental protection, cultural preservation, and good governance.** Bhutan limits the number of visitors entering the country with a daily fee of $250 per person to ensure the environment is not spoiled by mass tourism.

While **New Zealand** has developed the **Living Standards Framework**, representing the Treasury's perspective on what matters for New Zealanders' wellbeing, now and into the future. The country's tourism organization is talking about measuring its success not solely in economic terms, but against the well-being of the country, considering nature, human health and community identities.

Similarly, travel leaders in **Hawaii** are discussing repositioning the state as a cultural destination to re-engage islanders, many of whom are fed up with over-tourism. On the other hand, the Hawaii Tourism Authority takes the responsibility for protecting the iconic brand of the Hawaiian Islands, including perpetuating its culture, preserving its natural environment and strengthening communities by managing tourism in a way that helps improve the quality of life for residents, families and communities on all islands. The authority formulates its tourism goals around the resident sentiment, measured by the Resident Sentiment Survey it's been conducting since 1999.



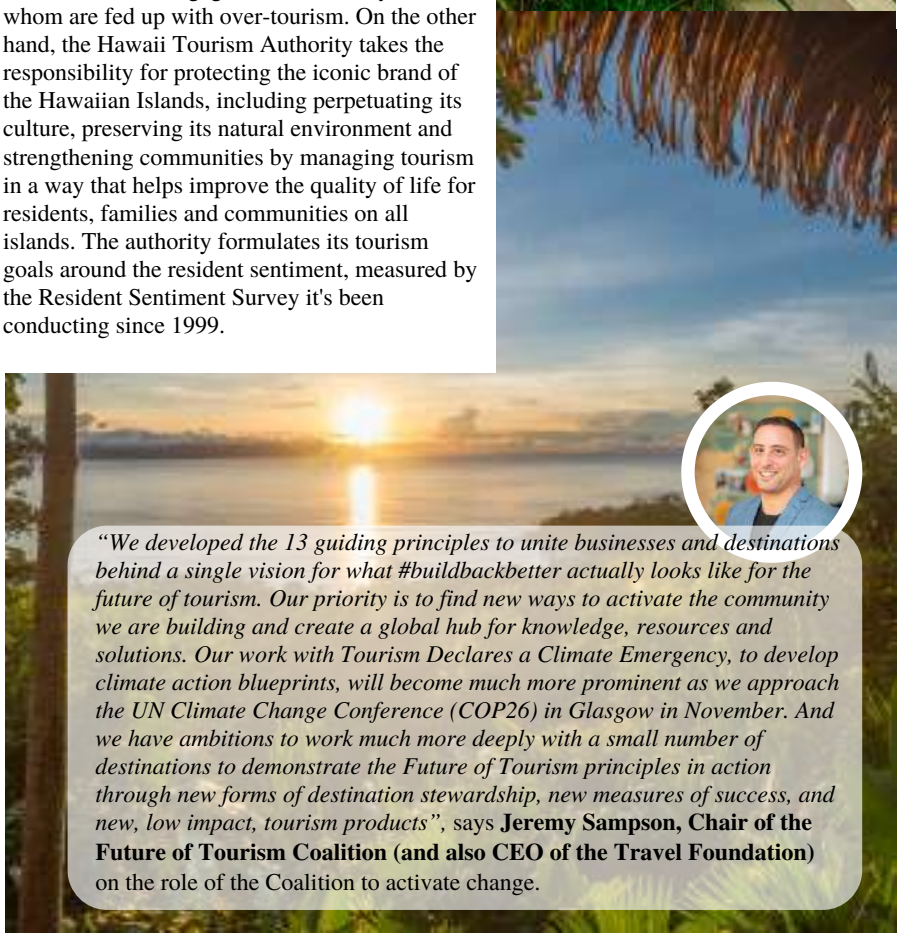
Likewise, in **Costa Rica**, the **Social Progress Index** is used to measure the effects of the tourism industry on local communities. While **Venice, Italy**, will be charging daytrippers entry fees (up to $12) starting January 1, 2022, to combat the negative cultural and environmental impacts of over-tourism as well as boost the economy. The city receives 30 million tourists in a year.

Travellers too are getting responsible

The travellers too have become conscious about their carbon footprint while visiting a destination. They are happily shifting from being eco-travellers to eco-builders. They are opting for value-driven experiences, eco-luxury stays, community engagement activities, environmental initiatives and more.

Future of Tourism Coalition: Guiding Tourism industry into a more regenerative future

Last year, six nongovernmental organizations came together to form the Future of Tourism Coalition in 2020. The coalition, under the advisory of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council, published a list of 13 principles that seek to guide the global tourism industry into a more regenerative future and to place destination needs at the centre of tourism's new future. So far, about 600 organizations—governmental, nongovernmental, businesses, academic institutions, media, and investors—have signed up.



"We developed the 13 guiding principles to unite businesses and destinations behind a single vision for what #buildbackbetter actually looks like for the future of tourism. Our priority is to find new ways to activate the community we are building and create a global hub for knowledge, resources and solutions. Our work with Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency, to develop climate action blueprints, will become much more prominent as we approach the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow in November. And we have ambitions to work much more deeply with a small number of destinations to demonstrate the Future of Tourism principles in action through new forms of destination stewardship, new measures of success, and new, low impact, tourism products", says **Jeremy Sampson, Chair of the Future of Tourism Coalition (and also CEO of the Travel Foundation)** on the role of the Coalition to activate change.

13 Principles to guide the Global Tourism industry into a more Regenerative Future

1 See the whole picture

Recognize that most tourism by its nature involves the destination as a whole, not only industry businesses, but also its ecosystems, natural resources, cultural assets and traditions, communities, aesthetics, and built infrastructure.



2 Use sustainability standards

Respect the publicly available, internationally approved minimum criteria for sustainable tourism practices maintained by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) for both industry and destinations.

3 Collaborate in destination management

Seek to develop all tourism through a collaborative management structure with equal participation by government, the private sector, and civil society organizations that represent diversity in communities.



4 Choose quality over quantity

Manage tourism development based on the quality of visitation, not the quantity of visitors, so as to enhance the travel experience while sustaining the character of the destination and benefiting local communities.

5 Demand fair income distribution

Set policies that counter unequal tourism benefits within destination communities that maximize retention of tourism revenues within those communities.

6 Reduce tourism's burden

Account for all tourism costs in terms of local tax burdens, environmental and social impacts, and objectively verifiable disruption. Ensure investments are linked to optimizing net-positive impacts for communities and the environment.

7 Redefine economic success

Rather than a raw contribution to growth in GDP, favour metrics that specify destination benefits such as small business development, distribution of incomes, and enhancement of sustainable local supply chains.

8 Mitigate climate impacts

Strive to follow accepted scientific consensus on needed reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Invest in green infrastructure and a fast reduction in transport emissions involved in tourism - air, sea, and ground.

9 Close the loop on resources

When post-pandemic safety allows, turn away from the use of disposable plastics by tourism businesses, and transition to circular resource use.







10 Contain tourism's land use

Limit high-occupancy resort tourism to concentrated areas. Discourage resort sprawl from taking over coasts, islands, and mountain areas, so as to retain geographical character, a diverse economy, local access, and critical ecosystems.

11 Diversify source markets

In addition to international visitation, encourage robust domestic tourism, which may be more resilient in the face of crises and raise citizens' perceived value of their own natural and cultural heritage.

12 Protect sense of place

Encourage tourism policies and business practices that protect and benefit natural, scenic, and cultural assets. Retain and enhance destination identity and distinctiveness. Diversity of place is the reason for travel.



13 Operate business responsibly

Incentivize and reward tourism businesses and associated enterprises that support these principles through their actions and develop strong local supply chains that allow for higher quality products and experiences.

Travellers too are getting responsible

The travellers too have become conscious about their carbon footprint while visiting a destination. They are happily shifting from being eco-travellers to eco-builders. They are opting for value-driven experiences, eco-luxury stays, community engagement activities, environmental initiatives and more.

Indian Scenario

In the latest research done by a digital travel company **Booking.com**, it has been found that a majority of Indians have become more aware of the wider impact of their trips, with 70 per cent of travellers wanting to travel more sustainably in the future, the **Future of Travel research** findings reveal. The survey also reveals that 78 per cent of travellers expect the travel industry to offer more sustainable travel options to meet their goals of sustainable travel in the future.

Willingness to support local communities

The pandemic has amplified people's awareness about their impact on the environment and local communities. As such, travellers are now considering more sustainable and regenerative travel. The research finds 75 per cent have indicated they want their travel choices to also support the destination's recovery efforts, and 73 per cent want to see how their spending supports the local community.

Recycle and upcycle

The impact of the pandemic has inspired 55 per cent of Indian travellers to consider reducing waste and recycle plastic when travelling, once travel restrictions are lifted. This shows that people are not just committed to protecting themselves, but also the places they visit. Regenerative travel ensures that the benefits contributed by visitors outweigh the resources they consume.

Conclusion

"The travel industry needs to move beyond 'do no harm' and think more holistically about the natural, cultural, and spiritual elements of a place – not just how to preserve and protect these elements but how to actively enhance them. The travel industry travellers, need to get smarter when it comes to understanding the difference between current conditions in a destination, which may be degraded or damaged, to what functioning natural and cultural systems should look like. Contributions towards natural and cultural regeneration are critical steps on the path to true destination sustainability.

First and foremost, individuals can contribute to a regenerative system by doing their research. They can consult guidebooks and other online resources to learn more about the destination's environmental, social, and political issues. Travellers



can also support locally-owned accommodations, tour operators, and restaurants, especially those actively working to enhance the community, environment, and spirit of the place.

Individuals can also consider visiting a destination with an Impact Tourism program. Impact tourism is tourism that makes strategic contributions of time, talent, and treasure to social and environmental projects in destinations. These community-driven projects are partnerships between communities and businesses, travellers, and organizations, meaning they meet the genuine needs of the community, as expressed by the community. With impact tourism programs, travellers can be sure their support truly has a positive impact on the communities they are visiting", adds Miller.

Regenerative tourism aims at contributing towards the wellbeing and welfare of society, culture, communities, and the environment, ensuring that the balance is not just restored, but replenished and regenerated.

Quirky & Eco-friendly Ceramic Tableware



Ceramics is one of the most ancient industries going back thousands of years. Ceramics, also known as “Fire Clay is an inorganic, non-metallic solid article, which is produced by the art or technique of heat and subsequent cooling. Ceramics have a hard surface that does not absorb chemicals and prevents chemicals from leaching into food, therefore, considered safe for food.

Ceramic tableware is usually made from clay such as bone china, porcelain, melamine and stoneware. They are leakproof, stain-resistant and have a smooth texture which makes it easy to clean. Both natural and food-safe, ceramic dinnerware is significantly more sustainable than plastics which can actually leach toxins into the food we eat.

For conscious consumers, we bring here some quirky and eco-friendly ceramic tableware. Check out these stylish and sturdy designs to add a touch of class and colour to your eco-friendly home.



1 Local Kala

A young startup focused on uplifting rural artisans pan India, Local Kala is the brainchild of Pragati & Rishabh, who love everything handmade. Their exclusive masterpieces made gently with love by the talented artisans of India are surely an eye-catcher and worth having.

www.localkala.in





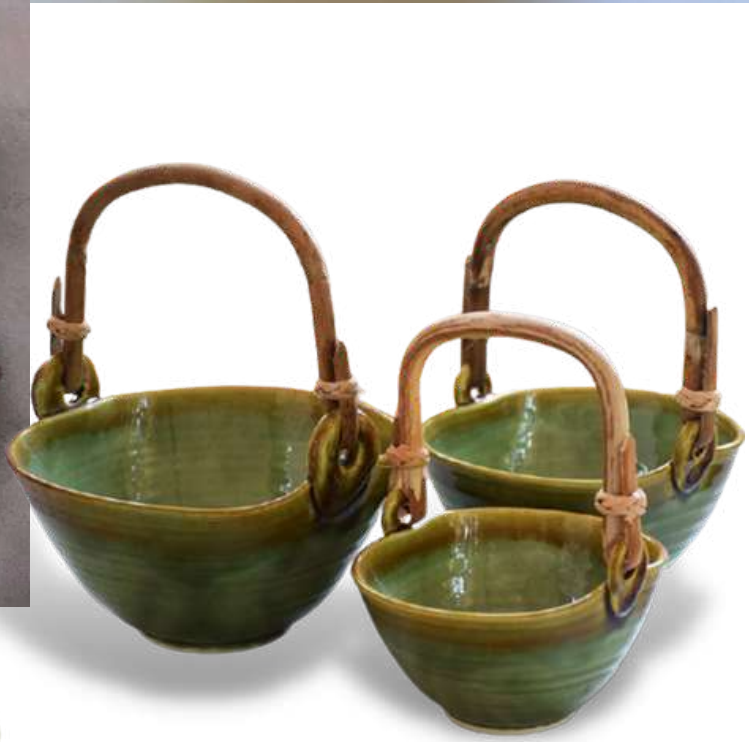
2 Mandala Pottery

Classy, elegant and handmade - that's what each piece by Mandala Pottery is all about. Based in Auroville, Mandala Pottery was set up more than two decades ago, along with the principles of social sustainability and fair trade practices. They produce a vast array of functional ceramics that are unique in character, shape, design, and colour. It is among the few studios in India, who are soda-firing using locally grown wood as the primary fuel. Soda-firing is an atmospheric firing technique where soda is sprayed into the kiln near peak temperature, usually 1200 degrees centigrade.

www.mandalapottery.com













3 White Hill Studio

Bringing to life, the forest in her ceramic tableware, that's how Founder Nandita Aron, White Hill Studio describes her collection. Based out of Shimla, each collection of hers, tells a story about nature

www.whitehillstudio.com



4 Indus People



Aesthetically inspired by the Indian Subcontinent, Indus People is a visual narrative capturing the beauty and essence of the region. Every product is inspired by a different aspect, and in turn, exhibits a unique story.

Drawing from the various colours and textures of India, geographic as well as manmade, the brand attempts to create modern and minimal products, made in India, that appeal to the modern Indian, holding him close to his roots.

www.induspeople.in

5 Curators of Clay

Based in Pune, Curators of Clay makes stunning handcrafted, high-fired ceramic tableware, influenced by Japanese and Scandinavian aesthetics.

Started in 2014 by Rohit Kulkarni and Bhairavi Naik, they craft work for some of the country's best restaurants and chefs.

www.curatorsofclay.com

6 Artisera

Launched by husband-wife duo Varun Backliwal and Lisa Jain, Artisera is a destination for artistic luxury where you can discover and buy the most exquisite pieces of fine art, collectibles, and furniture. Their handcrafted luxurious tableware in porcelain with gold and platinum speaks volumes of the intrinsic craftsmanship. The collection is vibrant and classy.





www.artisera.com

7 Clay & Glaze

A home-grown initiative by a mom-daughter duo to promote pottery as an artform and local village artisans of Pondicherry. They aim to expand product functionality to its very limits and at the same time integrate a sense of contemporary aesthetic in their designs and curations.

www.clayandglaze.in







16TH Ecotourism and Sustainable Tourism Conference held in Tokat, Turkey

Along with B2B Networking Event & TIES Awards, organized by TIES

The International Ecotourism Society (TIES), which has members from 206 countries and has Chapter Heads in 55 destinations, held its first event after the pandemic period at the Dedeman Hotel in Tokat from July 28th-30th, 2021, drawing attention to Sustainable Tourism.

The Ecotourism and Sustainable Tourism Conference was held with the participation of nearly 30 Ambassadors, 250 local and international participants from nearly 50 countries, and nearly a thousand visitors, making a great impression in the world. The Ambassadors were greeted with the Mehter March organized by the Tokat Municipality during the Tokat city tour.

Being organized by TIES in association with Travel Shop Turkey, the event was hosted by Tokat Municipality, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Tokat Governorship, TGA, OKA, THY (full form of these), Tokat Chamber of Commerce and Craftsmen with the support of Topçam Turizm and Kayzen Enclosure Systems.

The conference was a great success with over 40 national and international speakers and nearly 1200 B2B meetings took place at the event. During the talks, new opportunities for Sustainable Ecotourism were presented.

In his opening speech, **Murtaza Kalender, Vice President, TIES and CEO of Travel Shop Turkey**, said, *"I am excited and proud to organize such an event in this land where I was born and raised. Tokat is one of the most important destinations in the world, both ecologically and gastronomically. I hope the event will be sustainable and it will be a blessing for my country,"* he concluded by saying.

Jon Bruno, President, TIES, made a great presentation in his opening speech, drawing attention to Ecotourism and Sustainable Tourism in the world, emphasizing that Ecotourism is the only sector that grows by 25% every year and that Ecotourism travellers do not seek cheap or luxury destinations. The only thing they look for is nature and organic life. While the average age of travellers is 40, they spend at least $2000, he said. He stated that Ecotourism should not destroy nature, protect nature and recycle every work done.



Tokat Mayor Atty. Eyüp Eroğlu, who hosted the event, said,

"I am very happy that the " Ecotourism and Sustainable Tourism Conference " took place in our city of Tokat. I wish it to be beneficial for our city and country, and I would like to thank everyone who contributed to the organization. Tokat is a unique city with its climate, nature, history and friendly people, right in the middle of Turkey's geographical map. In the near future, we think that Tokat will gain a very important place in terms of Ecotourism. With its fruits, vegetables and different flavours, Tokat is one of the unique cities in Turkey. I believe that we can bring Tokat to a much better place in terms of Ecotourism and this conference can prove to be a stepping stone for the same."

Tokat Governor Dr Ozan Balci in his speech said,

"I am glad that such an important event is taking place in an Anatolian city like Tokat. It is a valuable city with its history, culture, nature, human structure and safety. In Tokat, nearly 84 kinds of vegetables, fruits and different kinds of agricultural products are grown in terms of plant production. At the same time, it continues to ensure sustainable development. It is a city with great potential.







At the Gala dinner of the event, **the International Ecotourism Awards** found their owners in 16 categories. All participants had fun at the magnificent Gala dinner, which was held with high participation.

International participants could not hide their admiration for Tokat. The Tokat Municipality band team welcomed the incoming participants during their Tokat tour. A yoga event was held at the Tokat Dedeman Hotel. Vineyard and garden tours were made with the ambassador's wives, and the traditional flavour Tokat Kebab was made with the fruits and vegetables collected.

It ended on a very informative and positive note for the sustainable tourism industry.

HAPPINESS LESSONS FROM LIFE COACH ISHITA KOTIYA

Your Happiness is in your hands

by **Ishita Kotiya**


Photo: Mike Swigunski

The feeling of being unheard, mistreated, love deprived and alone. Ever felt like you're giving your 100% into your relationship or marriage but still getting nothing in return? You're doing everything possible to keep the relationship alive but you always find yourself to be the only person putting in effort while doing that. While looking for happiness, you have completely forgotten how to be happy until and unless that validation is coming from your partner. All this may sound like a toxic relationship but in reality, a toxic relationship is a fruit of gaslighting done on you for years and years, with layers on layers. Gaslighting is later transformed into what is known as an "Emotionally abusive relationship". While on the bigger picture, all of this comes under the **Narcissistic personality disorder** – Gaslighting is something that doesn't necessarily have to be related to a personality disorder. A person who doesn't have any other characteristic of a personality disorder can also be playing a huge role in gaslighting in his/her relationship.

Gaslighting is an emotionally manipulative technique used on victims by their partners for the major role of CONTROL. It makes you question your own perception of reality & can most certainly make you question your own sense of sanity. For example, Meena loved going out shopping but whenever she would ask her husband Pratham to come along, he would bluntly deny telling her that it is perfectly fine if she decides to go alone as he has some office work to complete. Meena being 6 months pregnant, goes shopping alone as she knows that Pratham would not like to join but after a while she sees Pratham hanging out with his friends and drinking as he puts up photos on his social media. Meena decides to confront him the next morning because she wanted to know why did Pratham lie that he had work but decided to go with friends anyway. When confronted, Pratham started screaming and shouting. He said "Meena, do you want me to leave work? How will we earn our bread and butter?" While Meena tries to emphasise that her question did not include asking Pratham to leave work, she finds herself trapped in a ball of fear made by Pratham's shouting and the nature of not answering the question which Meena asked but replying to something extremely opposite and making her believe that it was what she actually meant, while she absolutely did not. Meena ends up crying and Pratham blames her for creating situations like these and then crying and playing the victim, while still not answering her original question or comforting



her with his words or actions. He leaves her alone and goes to the office while Meena is left thinking that she did something terribly wrong and she should have given Pratham some space. She now has a lot of guilt and has completely forgotten the reason why all of this started in the first place.

This is Gaslighting. It leaves you with a sense of failure, it makes you question your reality, you start doubting yourself, you start excusing your partner's bad behaviour, you start believing the reality provided by your partner instead of the actual reality.

Gaslighting comes in many layers and patterns, you start noticing repeated lying instead of coming out clean, your partner starts denying the evidence of every argument, you're often misdirected and subjected to change of topics while you try to clarify something which has deeply hurt you. Gaslighters often end up bringing something that triggers you emotionally when they find themselves stuck and think that their lies are going to come out. They make you feel that you need to be dependent on someone else to make each and every decision in your life because you yourself are not capable enough.

You end up constantly doubting yourself, being emotionally exhausted, and you even tend to hide the abuse from other people because you know it'll change the perspective of your partner in the eyes of those people, which you don't want because your partner has gaslighted you to believe that you are the one who is wrong and you are the one who should be guilty of it.

When my clients ask me, how should they come out of it, I always tell them that it was done to you in layers and while coming out of it you will have to take off those layers one by one too, otherwise you will feel emotionally drained and end up going back to the same abusive relationship. The very first step to come out of it is to Forgive yourself! You need to forgive yourself for allowing that person to damage you the way he/she did. You will have to allow yourself to forgive you for feeling torn and tired because of a person who could not give anything to you except pain and trauma. **Remember your Happiness is in your hands.**

Your journey of coming out of it will have a huge part of practising self-love every day, consistently. It will include self-acceptance, self-confidence and the sense of taking control of your life on your own!. Meditation, good nutrition and eating food that gives your soul happiness, going out on your own to practice self-love, all this makes a perfect to-do-list while planning to step into this journey of healing oneself from an abusive relationship and a gaslighting partner.

About Life Coach & Energy Healer, Ishita Kotiya



All of 24, the young and talented Ishita Kotiya is helping increase the happiness quotient of her clients globally. A certified life coach from Symbiosis, California, Ishita started this journey witnessing the growing number of people suffering from low self-esteem.

MAKE IN INDIA

Indians making India Proud

ADITYA GUPTA

MD, Sharda Exports & The Rug Republic



In the year 1983, entrepreneurs JK Gupta & Meenakshi Gupta started a small carpet making operation in Meerut, a small town 60 km north of Delhi. Little did they knew that the unit, which they had set up in their garage with 6 weavers, will one day turn into an industry leader, directly or indirectly supporting around 5000 families and supplying rugs to more than 80 countries. Today, Sharda Exports is well-known globally as a premier manufacturer & exporter of home fashion.

Conscious Carma in a candid chat with Aditya Gupta, MD, Sharda Exports & The Rug Republic

Can you please share your journey in Sharda Exports and The Rug Republic? When did you join your parents in business and what has been your contribution to the business thereafter.

The company was started in the mid-1980s by our parents. It started out as a couple of weavers and some equipment in our home compound. My mother supervised the weavers while my father looked at the other aspects. My brother and I started to join the business towards the end of our college time. In 1992 we exhibited abroad (Germany, Domotex) and that began a wonderful journey that now extends over 90 countries. In 2013, The Rug Republic was created with the aim of enabling smaller retailers by removing MOQs per article and providing faster delivery times.

Sharda Exports won an award "Trend towards Veracity" at AIT-Trendscouting Heimtextile 2012 for innovative re-use of materials like flip-flops, jeans labels, carpet remains, old zip fasteners, etc. How did this idea come? And are you working on any more innovations?

We've always been fascinated with alternate materials. Of course in soft furnishings, it is not all that easy to introduce new materials. The jean label thing was just an idea we were playing around with, we did not expect that rug to win so many accolades, but I'm thankful it did. In fact, we were the first in the world to develop and manufacture carpets using waste leather. These days we are focusing a lot on PET yarn made from recycled plastic bottles.



Both Sharda Exports & The Rug Republic are responsible and sustainable brands. Can you please comment on it?

Sustainability & responsibility have been foundational blocks of our brands. We believe in not growing as a brand, but as an ecosystem that aims to uplift all around us. Sustainability is equally important to us, caring for the environment goes hand in hand with caring for the people who reside within it. And with the great design possibilities brought about by recycled materials, it's almost a crime not to use them!

What is the rank of Sharda Exports among the World's leading Carpet Exporters?

It is tough to give a definitive rank but I would like to think we are towards the top.

What are the USPs of Sharda Exports & The Rug Republic? How does it stand out among the competition?

The design philosophy of both Sharda and TRR has been different from the very start. We use traditional techniques combined with design inspirations from all over the world (from the Taj Mahal to Ecuadorian villages) to create a truly global and avant-garde collection that stands out among the crowd.

Future plans of Sharda Exports and The Rug republic

We are focusing on e-commerce a lot, both domestically and across the borders. We plan to keep stock in multiple locations across the globe to provide lightning fast delivery times for both our B2B and B2C clients.

How did the company take care of its employees during the pandemic

The pandemic was a tough time for all of us. We bought covid insurance for all our employees, implemented all sanitization and prevention protocols and have even reimbursed all pay cuts that took place due to office closure.





Ecological Manufacturing

Sharda Exports is proud of its' serious and ever-growing focus on sustainable growth. Some of the green initiatives taken by them are listed below:

- Environmental Management System that starts with optimum usage of resources, particularly raw materials, water and energy; and includes effective management & control of wastes generated during the production process.
- Continuous development of innovative products using recycled materials like waste leather, fabric, rubber, ties, denim, jeans labels and even used sweaters.
- Development of products using different shades of natural yarn, avoiding dyeing altogether.
- Installation of energy-efficient Air Handling/ heating units with an insulated chamber for carpet drying in foggy/ humid weather.
- Installation of APFC's (Automatic Power Factor Correction Panels) to maintain the power factor above 0.95 thus reducing power consumption.
- Automatic Level Control System for prevention of overflow from overhead water tanks at all locations
- Installation of Carpet Wash Water Recycle System.
- Septic Tanks for treatment of domestic sewage water before disposal.
- Segregation of different types of waste at source for better recycling ability.
- Proper handling, storage, preservation and timely disposal of the waste materials/ empty containers to parties that re-use them in an environment-friendly manner.

Sustainable Startup **STORIES**

SINGLE.EARTH Making nature the new gold

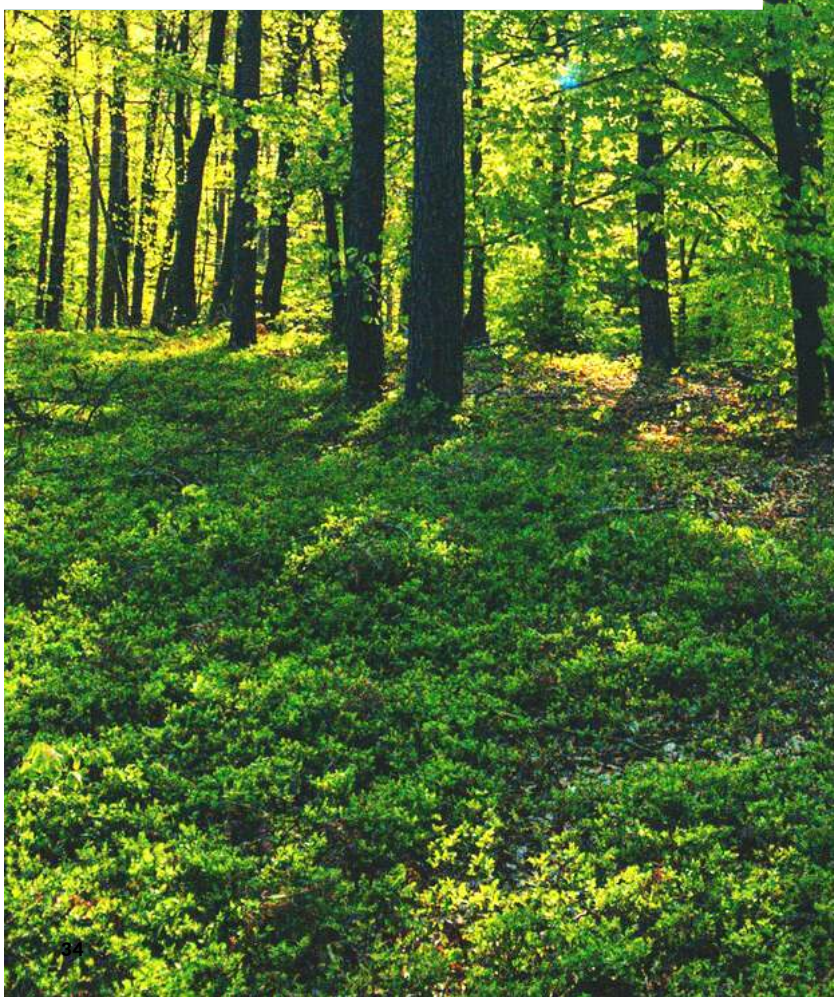




Creating a world where healthy ecosystems equal financial wealth

Merit Valdsalu & Andrus Aaslaid, founders of Single.Earth, a fintech/deep tech startup, are making nature the new gold. From an online platform democratizing carbon and biodiversity offset markets to a vision of a world where healthy ecosystems equal financial wealth, they are determined to change our relationship with nature for good.

Founded in late 2019 in Estonia, Single.Earth was started with a local problem of intensive forestry that was happening there. On investigating the underlying reasons for extensive clear-cuts, they realized that the problem lies in the economy: all financially feasible business models treat nature only as a source of raw material.







"We realized that to create a systematic change in the way we treat nature, we need to monetize the ecological value of it - like the carbon it sequesters, and biodiversity it holds. These are the most valuable aspects of natural resources because that's what keeps the ecosystem around us - and us – alive", says **Merit, the CEO and co-founder**. And once we'd figured out how to fix the forestry problem locally, we realized that we'd cracked how to heal our relationship with nature globally.

An avid environmentalist and animal rights activist, she believes that we need to integrate nature conservation and restoration into the existing, commonly known, and used financial market principles. Cutting-edge technology - combining satellite data, big data analysis, machine learning, and blockchain technologies - is the key to monetizing nature for its ecological value, not just as raw material.

The company plans to earn money from trees without cutting them

"Single.Earth enables landowners to earn money by not cutting down trees. Instead, it monetizes nature for its ecological value - like carbon sequestration and biodiversity. We are building global carbon and biodiversity models that show the ecological value of each particular place on the planet. Based on this digital twin of the world's nature - that uses satellite data, big data analysis, machine learning – the company emits one MERIT token to the landowner every time 100 kg of CO2 is sequestered in biodiverse nature", **says Andrus Aaslaid, CTO & Co-Founder**

Andrus is a lifelong engineer with decades of experience in leading and building large-scale tech solutions. Being one of the masterminds behind the Estonian e-government systems, at Single.Earth, he is implementing technologies like blockchain, AI, and satellite imagery to build a digital twin of the world's nature to turn it into a liquid asset class and save the world.

These tokens can be bought as an investment instrument and traded; or 'used up' as compensation for one's ecological footprint or contribution to climate goals. In the latter case, once the tokens are used up, they can no longer be traded. While Single.Earth earns money from marketplace fees collected when the tokens are traded.

Single.Earth is a VC-backed startup that combines the worlds of greentech/cleantech, deep tech and fintech. They are currently in the product development phase and will launch the product later in 2021.

The company has recently raised a $7.9 million seed funding round led by Swedish VC EQT Ventures to launch its marketplace for nature-backed MERIT tokens. The company says the market for carbon credits is estimated to be worth more than $50 billion by 2030.

Because of the traceability of blockchain and its link to a tradable token, payment to landowners would be immediate.

"Nature conservation is scalable, accessible, and makes sense financially; what's more, it's vital to engineer a systematic change", say the founders.

The vision of Single.Earth

Our goal is to make nature conservation and restoration financially feasible business models so that people who take care of the ecosystem around us, would receive financial rewards for their contribution.

For more information log on to: https://www.single.earth/

Sustainable Startup STORIES





BEEJ Where Style & Sustainability co-exist

Beej, India's first premium sustainable accessories brand was launched in January 2020 by Arundhati Kumar, a corporate professional for more than 18 years. "Leading the HR consulting practice in a consulting firm, I loved my job and that's the only thing I knew how to do really. However, there was this constant nagging thought that I would like to do something more that gives me the chance to create and build value. So I decided to take a pause till I could figure what I want to do", says the dreamer Arundhati.



Foolishly Brave, that's how I like to refer to myself, and this is my story.

During my consulting and coaching days, I learnt there are two kinds of people, one who see the world as is and one who sees the world as it can be. I am the latter. My biggest strength and perhaps greatest weakness too is that I am a dreamer. Not such a bad thing, when you are in a creative business.



Ukiyo- the new collection



Mens hamper made from cork

A Conscious Consumer

For the past few years, I have been increasingly conscious as well as concerned about the ongoing climate crisis. I started to make small lifestyle shifts, we moved away from single-use plastics at home, I started using drip irrigation to water my balcony plants, became more conscious of my shopping habits and so on. Fashion has always been an area of interest, so I decided to merge the two. I started researching and reading up on sustainability as a whole as well as environmentally friendly alternatives to leather which became the genesis of Beej.

"We are proud to say that we are the first Indian start-up to design accessories where every element is sustainable, including our packaging which is zero plastic and zero-waste", adds the enthusiastic founder.

Every part of our product is sustainable in some form and we show it to our consumers through a transparent supply chain, so our consumers know exactly what's gone into their products. Our lining fabrics are made from consumer recycled yarn and the zippers used are recycled PET. We pay a lot of importance to certifications and suppliers as that helps us maintain a sustainable supply chain. Our products are made to order and that helps us minimize waste

Beej – Making sustainability a mainstream fashion

Beej was born out of a single belief, that style and sustainability can and must co-exist. As a brand, it's our vision to make sustainability a mainstream fashion choice. Most of our materials are plant-based leather alternatives sourced from various parts of the globe. Currently, we are working with Cork, Pinatex made from pineapple leaves and Desserto which is a leather alternative made from cactus pulp and sourced from Mexico. We chose our materials for their low environmental impact as well as their versatility to be designed into gorgeous accessories.

At Beej the design approach is simple – it's about keeping it true to the brand philosophy, of being conscious and mindful about everything we do. So far our designs have been trend agnostic because that's the kind of shopping habit I'd like the buyers to have. Buy what you like, because it's functional as well as aesthetic and use it for a long time, because that's the best way to be sustainable.

Our designs are low on elements that don't lend themselves to sustainability, for example, we use very little hardware, no metal charms etc. It's more about the silhouettes, the workmanship and the material, because to us that is the hero.

For us it's about assessing and reducing impact at every step - There can be no product with zero impact but what you can do is minimize impact at each stage – and that's what we try and do across all processes from sourcing, to design, and finally packaging.

The journey so far

I started Beej at a time when my personal life was also at crossroads and many friends and well-wishers advised me against it, but that's the thing, it's never a good time to start. Once I decided to start, things slowly just fell into place. Very early on in our journey, Beej got incubated by an incubation centre supported by Niti Aayog that gave us access to a whole start-up ecosystem. We also became part of a UNDP program that selects women-run start-ups to make them investor ready.

COVID has just made it so much harder. Businesses are struggling and for young independent bootstrapped brands like us, who are operating within niche segments, it's been a nightmare. Business is not easy but then starting up never is. I remember one evening when I was having a breakdown, I called up my ex-boss who is also my mentor and he said something so wise, *"Businesses are built by perseverance and resilience, never by luck or brilliance. It's a back-breaking and nerve testing endeavour. The romance of business is when someone writes the biography years later"* and that's so true.

Vision & Mission

My vision for Beej is to make it a global conscious accessories brand that merges new material research with traditional craftsmanship. As a brand, our mission is to make sustainability a mainstream fashion choice, to create products that merge style with sustainability



Briefcase made from khesh

For more information log on to: www.studiobeej.com

Don't Dump Series: A campaign by Conscious Carma Magazine to avoid landfills



Dumping waste is a major source of land, water and air pollution. According to the **World Bank report**, 33 per cent of the world practices open dumping of waste — a popular practice in South Asia. In India, it noted, "77% of waste is disposed off in open dumps, 18% is composted and just 5% is recycled".

Listed below are some startling global facts about various kinds of wastes, Municipal Waste, Chemical waste, Food waste & Plastic waste, etc.

- The Global Economy produces more than 400 million tons of hazardous chemical waste each year
- The equivalent of one garbage truck of plastic is dumped into our oceans every single minute. By 2030, it will be two truckloads per minute and by 2050, four
- According to a 2018 article in Nature Magazine, the Great Pacific Plastic Garbage Patch, a collection of marine debris in the North Pacific Ocean, stretches 1.6 million km2. That's the size of Iran or over twice the size of Texas
- Food waste is responsible for 6% of global greenhouse gas emissions which is 6% of that of the Aviation sector
- According to the World Bank report, 2.01 billion tonnes of municipal waste is generated worldwide each year. This was projected to increase by 70 per cent, to reach 3.4 billion tonnes by 2050, due to "rapid urbanisation, population growth and economic development".

The waste, if not treated, releases toxic chemicals which are hazardous to our environment as well as our health. "Don't Dump Series", is a campaign to generate awareness among consumers and to promote repair, reuse and upcycling of products and prevent unnecessary dumping and landfills.

Each series will dwell upon a distinct category and educate consumers, how to reduce the waste and how to recycle or upcycle it.

DON'T DUMP SERIES- 1 Food & Kitchen Waste

What is Food Waste and Kitchen Waste and how does it pollute the environment?

Food Waste is food appropriate for human consumption being discarded or left to spoil at the consumer level – regardless of the cause. While Kitchen waste is food scrap and other compostable materials like eggshells, tissue paper, etc. Organic waste dumped in a landfill continues to produce CO2 and methane, a potent greenhouse gas for approximately 5-7 years. The debris continues to pollute the air for at least 50 more years!



Ways to Avoid Food Waste by consumers

- Plan your meals in advance to avoid unnecessary buying
- Store your food properly to avoid getting spoilt
- Check what is left in the fridge regularly
- Feed the strays, the excess food

Compost the Kitchen Waste

Composting is a great way to recover food waste. Instead of dumping food into landfills, composting provides a way to return those nutrients to the soil and hence increasing the food yield from the soil while simultaneously decreasing the greenhouse gases arising out of decaying organic matter in landfills

The average kitchen waste per day for an Indian household is around 1kg. By composting every family in the country can prevent 360 kgs/year of organic waste from going into landfills. Considering the 194 million households in India that is a whopping 69,840 metric tonnes that can be prevented from going into landfills every year.

Benefits of composting

- Supplies organic matter to the soil.
- Increases Erosion Resistance.
- Stimulates beneficial soil microorganisms.
- Increases soil water holding capacity by up to 2.5 times.
- Increases soil nutrient retention.
- Compost reduces and in some cases eliminates the need for chemical fertilizers.
- Compost promotes higher yields of agricultural crops.
- Compost can help aid reforestation, wetlands restoration, and habitat revitalization efforts by improving contaminated, compacted, and marginal soils.

With inputs from Sujatha Krishnamurthy, Co-Founder, Ekobarn

Conscious Products

Aardra – Lending a makeover to paper waste

Aardra means new or fresh in Sanskrit. Now, it also means giving the much-loved newspaper a long-overdue makeover. It's about weaving used newspaper into products to carry around, take home, and hold precious memories.

"At aardra, the aim is to upcycle newspaper. So it's not turned into papier-mâché or pulp. Instead we make sure the newspaper can no longer absorb moisture, then roll and manoeuvre tubes of the paper into clever patterns of warps and wefts, before priming and finishing. What you get is a product that not only looks good and strong but can be immediately used", says its founder Vidya Nag who started the venture in 2014.

The Ardra ecosystem

Aardra's product line includes totes, market bags, sling bags, clutches, handy organiser boxes and trays, packing cases, jewellery chests, book racks, and magazine holders to name a few.

Availability: Instagram page @aardraproducts





Amrutam introduces Monsoon Skincare and Haircare Products

Amrutam, an Ayurvedic lifestyle brand and a wellness community established in 2006 to make products using authentic ayurvedic, herbal and natural ingredients. "We are a wellness brand that strongly believes and endorses the idea, **Health is Beauty**, which means if you are healthy, you are beautiful", says its founders Chandrakanta & Ashok Gupta. "It began with collecting books and texts. After decoding Sanskrit and its poetic meters, knowledge gathered through travelling and collecting anecdotes from saints and sages, we found answers for Healthy Life in nature and that is how Amrutam began", adds the duo.

Their latest products for monsoon skincare and haircare includes the Kuntal Care Hair Spa with Hemp, Kuntal Care Neem Spa and Amrutam Herbal Ubtan

Availability; https://www.amrutam.co.in/

RANG – A Festive radiance by Label Savi Abbot

Label Savi Abbot celebrates the rich craft of Rajasthan, **Gota Patti**, in her latest collection **RANG**

"The Rang collection reveals some vibrant hues & classic embroideries. The entire collection is done on pure silk chanderi fabric and carries grace in its luxurious gheras and myriad kalis stitched keenly together. These chanderi suits are a perfect blend of contemporary fashion & traditional roots. Gota Patti hand embroidered suit sets, embellished with delicate hand-embroidered gota, dori and beadwork", says **Designer Savi Abott.**

Explaining the craft, the designers adds, "**Patti** refers to most important part of motif, the paan leaf. In the gota tukdi technique, the gota is first cut into various shapes and then appliqued on the base fabric, adorned with embroideries like zari, bead etc. **Gota** creates a rich and heavy look but is light to wear. Traditionally, it was done with real silver and gold; however keeping in needs of the contemporary consumers, it is done with other non-expensive metals like copper and others.

The suit sets are paired with a chanderi handloom dupatta which adds a texture of gossamer, matching splendour with softness.

Availability : FILME FASHION Store, New Delhi





Eco Bébé from Eco Femme

Eco Femme, a women-led social enterprise, producing washable cloth pads, has launched **Eco Bébé**, reusable, organic cloth nappy products. Founded in 2010 in Auroville, Tamil Nadu, to create environmental and social change through revitalising menstrual practices that are healthy, environmentally sustainable, culturally responsive and empowering, Eco Femme produces and sell washable cloth pads, provide menstrual health education and open dialogues on menstruation all along the way.

"All the products are stitched by rural women's self-help groups. Our cloth nappy and cloth pad journey evolved alongside one another, motivated by a desire to tackle the growing mountain of sanitary waste in India, says the two Aurovilian founders, Jessamiin (Dutch) and Kathy (Australian). Auroville is an international township in Tamil Nadu, which is an experimental community committed to the values of human unity and diversity.

Availability: www.ecofemme.org, Amazon, Flipkart and select retailers

Arani Ecosteps introduces Berryl floor cleaner pods

Water-soluble jewels to create your own cleaning solution

Floor disinfection is a daily routine for most of us and we use roughly one bottle per month. Re-using those bottles is tricky and even though theoretically recyclable, less than 10% would actually get recycled. Unfortunately, most of them would end up in a nearby landfill, or worse, our water bodies.

Arani Ecosteps introduces Berryl, water-dissolvable pods with which you can create your own floor cleaner (1090 ml), using any old bottle or container at home! Their outer cover is made up of polyvinyl alcohol (PVA/PVOH), which dissolves in water, releasing the concentrate inside. In about an hour, a clear, fragrant solution is ready, which you can use as usual i.e. adding 15ml of it into a bucket of 4 litres of water to mop the floor.

Berryl's ingredients have been carefully chosen to provide 99.9% germ kill protection while being as gentle as possible on your hands and the environment they drain into. The pods are packaged in a fully compostable pouch that can be added to a community/home composting unit and will break down under natural conditions in about 6 months.

Availability: www.aranieco.com





Plant based nutrition from Only Earth

Changing your diet counters climate change. This is because food production accounts for 26% of global greenhouse gas emissions. While we need food and can't really stop producing it, there are a few things we can change about how we do it!.

Launched in 2021, Only Earth, is offering a vegan-plant based beverage with an objective to save our Only Planet. "With plant-based nutrition, one can get a meal with a much lower carbon footprint without compromising on nutrition", says its founder Kunal Mehta, who shifted to veganism two years ago and is an athlete in making. The message is simple: changing your diet helps to fight climate change one step at a time.

Only Earth is committed to taking animals out of the food equation and start combating climate change by reducing dependency on dairy so that it can be good for you and good for the environment too! With these beverages, they promise the goodness of a planet-friendly, plant-based drink.

Availability: Amazon, Big Basket and QTROVE



Adorn your home with exquisite Macrame products by The Artsy Barrel

The inquisitive and creative mind of HR professional Ritika Jain led her to learn the Macrame technique from her mother during the lockdown in 2020. Fascinated by the beauty of this art, she researched about it more and in few months launched **'The Artsy Barrel'**, a small homegrown brand in Delhi, India.

"We handcraft bohemian lifestyle and home aesthetics with an aim to help the underprivileged sections of the society (especially women) across the country. What makes our product more special is that it's 100 % desi, natural, eco-friendly and biodegradable and yes, it's MADE IN INDIA", says the enthusiast founder.

Check out their latest home décor and lifestyle products, a must-have for every home.

Availability: Instagram page theartsybarrel.in, LBB and propshop24

Guru unlocks the door to evolution

by **Yogi Ashwini**

The essence of Creation, that which is manifest and also that which is unmanifest, lies in stillness. Just like all lights combine to form white light, similarly, a combination of various aspects of creation - all the sounds, colours, textures, tastes and fragrances, in totality is stillness. Creation emerged from stillness and the journey back to the source, to reality, cannot be carved till the time one is still. To see a coin at the bed of a water bowl, one needs to still the water off all ripples. Similarly to see the Reality, one needs to still oneself off all the desires and thoughts.

How does one achieve stillness? The answer lies in the science of dhwani, or mantras. Vedic masters gave us three powerful mantras of Shivohum (I am Shiv), Tat Tvam Asi (That is You) and Aham Brahmasmi (I am Brahm) which hold the shakti to take one back to the source, to stillness. But then, repeating these words alone would not give you the experience of stillness, these shaktis need to be channelized inside you and this is the role of Guru.

Various cultures of the world concur that there is one Supreme Reality. But then no enterprise can be a one-man show, in a company, there is a CEO, and also managers, and technicians and labour and guards and so on. So how could the entire Creation be run by one alone? The vedic masters gave us the answer, **'Ekohum Bahusyam' (I am one, let me become many)**. Hence the various forms of gods and goddesses, where each is assigned a specific task or role. And one has to go through all these energies to reach the finality or Reality.



These may be seen as locks on various gates in the journey, the key to which is possessed by the Guru in the form of mantras or dhwanis. Ganpati, for example, is the guardian of the first gate, the entry.

Guru is someone who has walked the path and so has a complete understanding of what you are approaching. For example, surya dev was brought to prithvilok by Bhrigu rishi and so rishi Vishvamitra could not have reached the gayatri without invoking the shakti of his guru, rishi bhrigu. Hence, 'bhargo devasya dheemahi...' The Guru gave him the key to



Here it is important to understand that one cannot continue doing the same things endlessly as nothing in Creation is constant, it either moves up or down. And if one is not going up, then he/she is definitely going down...to lower dimensions. The only way to reverse the journey is to find a Guru and to earn his/her grace by forwarding the Guru Karya. Guru is always given a Karya or task which he/has to perform towards Creation, without completing which he/she cannot go further. If you become instrumental in forwarding this Karya, you earn his/her grace and unlock the first dimension. Then Guru gives you the mantra and gradually you move to the next.

Surya. Similarly, **at various stages of sadhna, Guru gives the key to a sadhak to open various locks or doorways.**

There are essentially six locks in the journey of the spirit, namely, those of food and shelter, sexual gratification, power and status, love and creativity. A layperson has awakening till only the first three levels and doesn't desire for anything beyond, he /she continues to do the same things over and over again as there is no desire or awakening of higher centres.

These days Guru is normally confused with big buildings, hospitals, dance and music. On the contrary, Vedic shastras prescribe stillness, vairagya and mantra uccharan as traits of Guru only.



Yogi Ashwini, Dhyan Ashram

For more information, 9999567895,
www.dhyanfoundation.com

Saluting the Awakened Soul

THE MAN OF THE MILLENNIUM

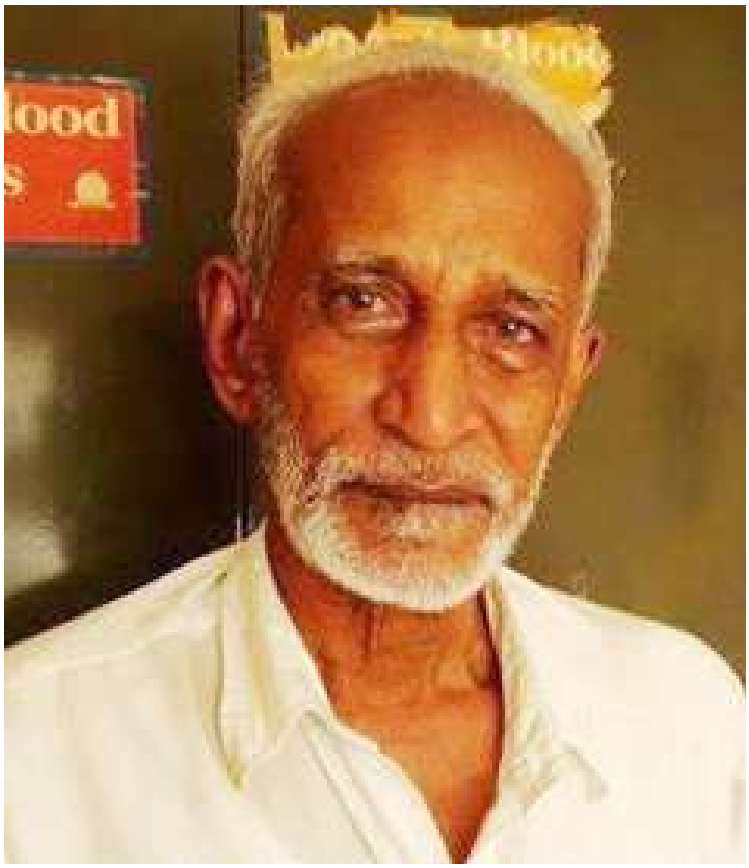
Palam Kalyanasundaram, an 80-year-old librarian who donated Rs.30 crore to the poor

The 80-year-old librarian, Palam Kalyanasundaram who has donated his entire prize money of Rs.30 crores to the poor, had been donating his entire monthly salary to the orphans and even worked as a waiter after retirement to be able to continue his charity. The man who's devoted his life to charity, who didn't get married because he wanted to help the poor with his earnings, Palam has surely taught the world, that there's nothing bigger than kindness, money the least.

Palam was born in Melakarivel-amkulam, Tamil Nadu. After losing his father at a very young age, his mother inspired him to serve the poor. He went on to do his Master's in literature and is also a gold medalist in library science, but his intent to do his bit for society remained. He soon got a job as a librarian in Tuticorin, and has since then, contributed all his salary, pension benefits and ancestral property for social welfare. He also started the Palam Foundation to help the poor and needy.

Kalyanasundaram strongly believes in words said to him by Thamizhvanan, writer of self-improvement books, **"Don't bother about how you speak. Strive to make others speak good about you."** These words were used by the great writer to bring Kalyanasundaram out of the discouragement of his feminist voice.

He is among the first persons in the world to have donated his entire salary to the needy. The list of awards does not end from the Life Time of Service Award to the Rotary Club of India.



Kalyanasundaram is among the top 10 librarians in the world. He also won the award of the best librarian in India, by the Union Government.

Kalyanasundaram is an adopted Father to the legendary actor - Rajnikanth. After 15 days of hospitable treatment, he requested them to let him go since he felt imprisoned and there were people who needed him.

At present, he is living a simple life all on his own in a small house in Saidapet, Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

A big Salute to the man who left all the comforts, luxury, and convenience for those who don't belong to him.



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