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A MAGAZINE FOR THE CONSCIOUSLY DRIVEN

# CONSCIOUS CARMA




## INDIAN E-CYCLE MARKET

A candid chat with Aditya Munjal, CEO, Hero Lectro

## NORWAY

LEADING THE WORLD IN ELECTRIC VEHICLES PER CAPITA

## ELECTRIC VEHICLES REALITY

Sushobhan Mahanty

## MYTHS ABOUT SPIRITUALITY

Yogi Ashwini

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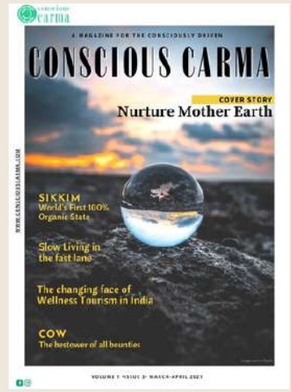
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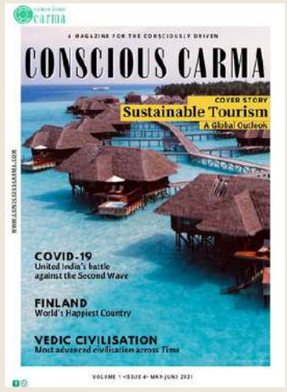
# Celebrates its 1st Anniversary
















# Thank You

for supporting us

We have served to be a platform to applaud Corporates, Individuals, Societies and Governments who are taking conscious initiatives towards a sustainable and equal world.

Although this year has not been easy, it has been truly wonderful sharing it with all our readers
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# Coming Soon

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# From the desk of Editor-in-Chief

## How much is too much?

A question each one of us need to ask before consuming any product or service. Looking at the fast depletion and degradation of natural resources, we can't afford to have too much on our plate. Rather, we need to curtail our need, desire and hunger for more, else our future generations will starve and bereft of the basic necessities to survive.

No amount of bank balance will be able to provide them with clean air, water and soil. This is the real wealth that we need to preserve for them.

There's a very popular saying, "You can satisfy the hunger of an individual, but you can never satisfy his/her greed". The world is witnessing a climate change crisis, this is the time, we all need to keep our greed aside and be content with the little in hand. Be it our clothing, food, cars and gadgets, etc, let's slow down our consumption and buy only if it is really needed.

*Let's vow to be a **CONSCIOUS CONSUMER.***



**Poonam K Malhotra**
Editor-in--Chief

# Meet our Team



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**Dr. Freeda Maria**
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**FOR ANY QUERIES, PLEASE MAIL AT**
conscious carma@gmail.com

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# Norway has more electric vehicles per capita than any other country

by **Poonam K Malhotra**

Norway, one of the World's largest petroleum exporter, is switching its own gears to electric vehicles. Electric cars made up nearly two-thirds of Norway's new sales in 2021. Norway's Electric Vehicle sales are 65 per cent of total car sales. While Norway, with a population of 5.4 million, has the world's highest proportion of electric vehicles, China with its 1.4 billion people is by far the biggest overall car market.

Oil-producing Norway has encouraged the switch to zero-emission cars by exempting battery electric vehicles (BEVs) from taxes imposed on internal combustion engines (ICE). This tax break is expected to help drive the proportion of overall electric sales as high as 80% in 2022, ahead of a deadline to end petrol and diesel-powered car sales by 2025.

Overall new sales in Norway rose by 25% in 2021 to a record 176,276 cars, of which 65% were fully electric, in addition, 22% were plug-in hybrids, only y 14% of new cars were sold without a plug. EV market share was 54% in 2020.



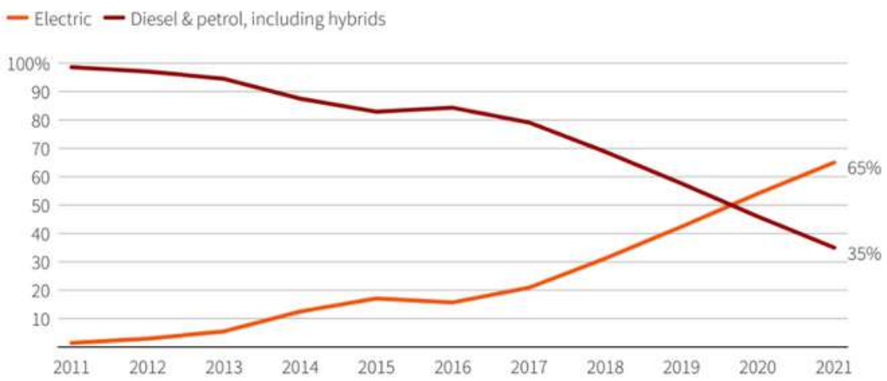



## FAST FACTS

- **OFFICIAL NAME**: Kingdom of Norway (Kongeriket Norge)
- **FORM OF GOVERNMENT**: Constitutional monarchy
- **CAPITAL**: Oslo • POPULATION: 5,372,191
- **OFFICIAL LANGUAGES**: Bokmal Norwegian and Nynorsk
- **MONEY**: Norwegian kroner
- **AREA**: 148,726 square miles (385,199 square kilometres)

## Norway new car sales

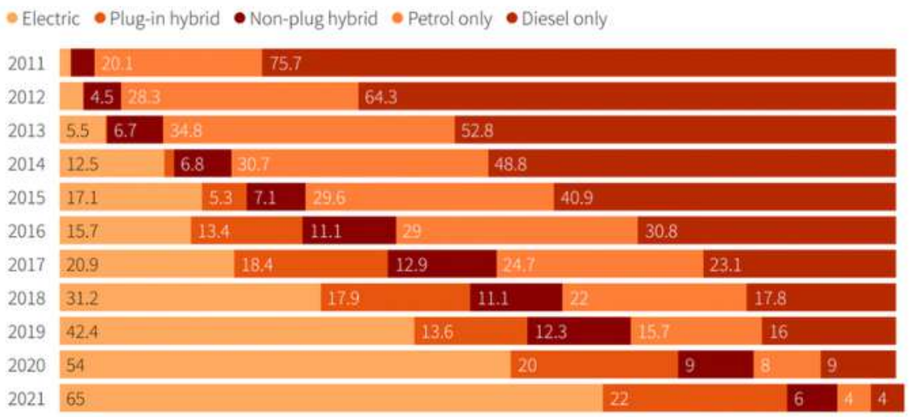
Years 2011-2021, percentage of market




Source: Norwegian Road Federation (OFV)

Reuters Graphics

Years 2011-2021 in percentage of market per car type




Source: Norwegian Road Federation (OFV)

Reuters Graphics

According to estimates from industry tracker **EV-Volumes**, plug-in electric vehicles accounted for 4.2% of global light vehicle sales last year, up from 2.5% in 2019.

As many as 13 countries managed to push electric vehicles past 10% of new light-vehicle sales in 2020.

According to **WEF analytics**, Norway's highest share of plug-in EVs is because of policies like--tax exemptions, toll exemptions, and other incentives. In Norway, an electric car owner is exempted from paying road tax or sales tax. The Nordic country imposes hefty vehicle import duties and car registration taxes, making cars significantly more expensive than the US.

China, which is by far the largest market for electric cars in terms of unit sales, fell out of the top-10 with electric cars accounting for 6.2% of passenger car sales in the country.



# HOW COULD NORWAY ACHIEVE THIS ?

- **Government policy and incentives for purchasers in form of tax exemptions, toll exemptions, free parking space, free charging and other incentives. Vehicle tax has always been high in Norway and exempting these taxes hasmade EV cheaper.**
- **Increased taxes on traditional cars for eg., pollution tax.**
- **Shorter driving distances, thus making EVs a viable option**
- **Ample supply of renewable electricity at one of the cheapest prices in the world. Hydropower provides around 98 per cent of all electricity in Norway**
- **Norway’s sovereign wealth fund is the world’s largest at approximately $1tn for a population of just over 5 million. This has provided a very clear advantage compared with the budget constraints found in other countries.**




The Kingdom of Norway is a sovereign nation on the Scandinavian peninsula in northern Europe.






# AN INTRODUCTION TO NORWAY

Norway is a constitutional monarchy and divides state power between the Parliament, the Cabinet, and the Supreme Court. The current prime minister is Erna Solberg, who has held the post since 2013. She leads a centre-right coalition government.

Norway maintains a combination of a market economy and a Nordic welfare model with universal healthcare and a comprehensive social security system. According to both the World Bank and IMF, Norway has the fourth-highest per capita income in the world

**The oil and gas industry remains of critical importance to the nation's economy. Outside of the Middle East, Norway is the world's largest producer of oil and natural gas. The industry accounts for around 25% of Norway's GDP.**

**However, Norway's economy is in a state of transition. The oil and gas will not last forever, and the government is making substantial investment in other technologies. Norway's domestic power needs are met almost exclusively by renewable energy. Seafood, shipping and tourism are among the other important industries**

With inputs from Reuters, lifeinnorway.net

# THE INDIAN E-CYCLE MARKET TRENDING ITS WAY TO 2022

## Q&A with ADITYA MUNJAL

*CEO, Hero Lectro*



The climate change coupled with the pandemic has led to an unprecedented increase in the number of cyclists all around the globe. Be it to cover short distances or to stay healthy, people are getting on to cycles. And e-cycle is going to be the most trending mobility vehicle in the year 2022.

***"The pressing need to curb carbon emissions together with significant improvement in technology has put a global focus on e-mobility in recent years. As India aims to tread the model of smart and sustainable cities, e-mobility is poised to play an important role in achieving this goal" Aditya Munjal, CEO, Hero Lectro***

**Conscious Carma in a candid chat with the country's leading e-cycle manufacturer, Hero Lectro on the growing share of e-cycles in the e-mobility market of India and the way ahead.**

### Q. What does 2021 reflect on India's e-cycle scenario?

The Indian e-cycle market is growing steadily at a CAGR of 55% as per the forecast period of 2021-2026, and the pandemic has acted as a major trigger in the adoption of e-cycles, with consumers seeking healthier, sustainable and affordable mobility solutions. Today, about 300 million people in the country commute for various needs and about 70 % of that number commutes within 20 km daily. According to our consumer audit reports, a huge segment of our customers (30%+) have adopted e-cycles for their daily commute and we have recorded over 100% growth in sales from May to October 2021 over 2020. Increasingly, people are beginning to understand the value proposition of e-cycles and are willing to switch from their regular modes of commute, which is a very positive sign for the sector.



### Q. Can you please list down some of the initiatives and policies are taken by the government to promote the e-mobility sector?



The Indian government has introduced various e-mobility initiatives in order to provide an eco-friendly alternative for both commercial and private transportation. While various state governments have rolled out policies that actively encourage the use of EVs, consideration for e-cycle inclusive initiatives are at a nascent stage. There are certain efforts by the state governments to improve cycling infrastructure, for example, as part of a recent project, the Delhi government is redesigning 540km of the city roads and adding more cycling tracks to it. The Delhi Development Authority in Dwarka is also developing a 16 km cycling corridor while the South Delhi Municipal Corporation is looking to set up 82 e-cycle stations connecting residential areas, metro stations and landmark spots in the city.

Though e-cycles are known to be the highest selling products across all forms of e-mobility, we still have a long way to go as far as incentives for this segment. While India is only beginning to take a step towards democratizing e-cycles usage, countries such as the UK and Europe have extensively invested in this space.

We, at Hero Lectro, are working with central and state governments to include e-cycles under various government schemes so that e-cycles can be more affordable and accessible to a larger segment of the society. Our vision is to grow the category of e-cycles In India and make it mainstream. In the long term, we want to democratize e-cycles across all segments and all strata of society and make it an integral element of personal mobility in the country.



## Q. How has been the consumer behaviour towards e mobilty?

- We have seen a growing level of awareness around e-mobility in the country, with higher interest and acceptance for EVs among consumers. Since the pandemic, the emergence of short-distance commute has grown and people are willing to make a shift towards an affordable, sustainable and efficient mobility solution.




We see users taking a use-case approach, on both the personal and commercial fronts. While some are using it for micro mobility needs such as running errands, many others are using it for reasons such as fitness, commute to work etc.

We see the youth, in the age group of 18-35 as the biggest adopters of e-cycles, given their inherent nature to experiment as well as seek newer and more connected experiences. And because of that we believe that e-cycles today are not just a means of commuting but also a smart connected device for their lifestyle needs.



## Q. What is Hero Electro's action plan for the year 2022?

We see several factors that will accelerate the growth and adoption of e-cycles in India. With rising fuel costs, increased congestion, pollution, parking hassles, and time to travel, e-cycles are best poised to address these challenges owing to their cost effectiveness, ease of use, low maintenance safety and added benefits such as fitness and sustainability.

Today, we have a robust omnichannel sales and distribution network with 600 outlets + ecommerce channels, across 150 cities in India. We have seen healthy contributions from across Metros, Tier II and Tier III cities. Because of the multiple use cases of an e-cycle and the benefits it provides from both savings on travelling cost, health and even the environment, the adoption of Hero Lectro E-Cycles has been pan India.




As we move into 2022, we see commute as the biggest use case for e-cycles, both from a personal and commercial perspective. With most companies returning back to offices over time, e-cycles are estimated to gradually replace public transport utilities, and we intend to tap into the office going community to drive adoption of e-cycles. With the ecommerce business booming in India, we see the logistics and last mile delivery segment as a huge opportunity for growth, and to that extent we are in talks with e commerce partners and rental companies to add e-cycles into their fleet.

From a regulatory perspective, we are working with central and state governments to include e-cycles under various government schemes so that e-cycles can be more affordable and accessible to a larger segment of the society. Our vision is to grow the category of e-cycles In India and make it mainstream. In the long term, we want to democratize e-cycles across all segments and all strata of society and make it an integral element of personal mobility in the country.

# Electric Vehicles

## Let's Face The Reality And Try To Solve It

Around the world, governments and automakers are promoting electric vehicles as a key technology to curb oil use and fight climate change. While experts broadly agree that electric vehicles are a more climate-friendly option than traditional vehicles, they can still have their own environmental impacts, depending on how they're charged up and manufactured.

### Are electric cars and vehicles greener?

If the source of energy to power these cars don't come from solar panels, wind turbines or even nuclear or hydroelectric, their CO2 emissions will be much higher. For instance, if the electricity used to charge cars comes from the burning of fossil fuels, it doesn't matter if the EVs are not polluting while being driven, as this pollution was already released in some distant power plant.

Like many other batteries, the lithium-ion cells that power most electric vehicles rely on raw materials, like cobalt, lithium, and rare earth elements, that have been linked to grave environmental and human rights concerns. Cobalt has been especially problematic. Mining cobalt produces hazardous tailings and slags that can leach into the environment, and studies have found high exposure in nearby communities, especially among children, to cobalt and other metals. Extracting the metals from their ores also requires a process called smelting, which can emit sulfur oxide and other harmful air pollution. The water required for producing batteries has meant that manufacturing electric vehicles is about 50% more water-intensive than traditional internal combustion engines.

### Are EV's economically viable?

Another aspect to consider is that EVs are not very economically viable and a majority of such vehicles currently plying the roads lack appeal, as far as consumer interest is concerned. The current battery technology available in the market is largely responsible for this exorbitant cost if we draw a parallel with conventional cars. It is important to note that batteries contribute to half the cost of an electricity-powered car. Even though, over the years, the cost of batteries has plummeted significantly, it is still very expensive. Battery manufacturers across the world are struggling with negative operating margins and a dearth of adequate cash flow.

Manufacturers need to work with these mines to lessen their environmental footprint and make sure miners are working in safe conditions. If companies acted responsibly, the rise of electric vehicles would be a great opportunity. Adequate progress in battery technology can lower the costs of EVs by 30% to 40%, as per a report by Goldman Sachs. Even then, increased adoption can only be witnessed if adequate subsidies and purchase incentives are extended to consumers.










**Sushobhan Mahanty** is pursuing electrical engineering. Having a keen interest in sustainability, he is currently exploring various sustainable fields like renewables and electric vehicles, etc and is running a newsletter on Linkedin, **"Sustainability Vibes".**

Nevertheless, the more batteries that are out there, since the electric cars market is growing, the more interesting it gets to try to figure out how to recycle them or recapture rare earth elements. So, the chances are that a strong recycling industry for these batteries will keep developing and allowing electric cars to become greener.

### Are electric cars zero-emissions vehicles?

No, electric cars are not zero emission vehicles. We have seen that although they do not emit CO2 while being driven, they might do it in 3 other stages: during manufacturing, energy production, and at the end of their life cycle. In the first case, the need for mining activities to extract the rare earth metals that are used in batteries is very energy-consuming and polluting.

As for energy production, if the car is being powered with energy from burning fossil fuels, it is still releasing CO2 in the atmosphere, not from the tailpipe but from some distant power plant. When it comes to batteries being recycled, it is still an expensive and ongoing process and most batteries are not being recycled yet.

In spite of this, solutions to make electric cars greener and more eco-friendly, and sustainable are being developed. And although there is room for improvement, we have also seen that electric cars, as they are today, are already, in general, more eco-friendly along their lifecycle than conventional fossil fuel cars, especially if they are powered with clean electricity. Some countries are already realizing this and that's why they are fostering the growth of the electric cars market, mostly by giving fiscal benefits that make the cars economically more competitive. In fact, countries like Norway, Germany, or Costa Rica are simultaneously increasing their bet on renewable energies and setting deadlines for the end of conventional cars on their roads.

# The Better Bitter Taste

by **Nutritionist Kavita Devgan**

***Have you ever eaten an apparently healthy meal only to feel completely unsatisfied after finishing it? Or a meal that left you feeling heavy, tired and bloated?***

***Often. Right!***

***That's probably because these meals were unbalanced, no, not in terms of nutrients or calories, but in terms of flavours.***

Today there is clarity that balancing all five tastes - salty, sweet, sour, bitter and the newly discovered umami - is the key to satisfaction and good health. Science now believes that unless we eat all flavours in balance our brain does not think that we have received an adequate amount of nutrition, and so doesn't get satisfied.

The irony is that while this might be breaking news in modern science, ayurveda has been following this theory for ages! Our traditional thalis, which always had a little of all (and we wondered why), were so obviously constructed based on this balancing tenet. Things are a little different in ayurveda of course; they propagate a balanced mix of six basic tastes or rasas (sweet (madhura), sour (amla), salty (lavana), bitter (tikta), pungent or hot (katu), and astringent (kashai)) but the subtext is the same: that less or excess of any of these tends to create an imbalance in our body, priming us for - first an inefficient gastrointestinal system, and then myriad health issues in the long run.







According to ayurveda proper balancing is essential to nourish the body. For example, while the sweet taste promotes a feeling of love and well-being, which is imperative, when consumed in excess it leads to smugness and stasis; basically a lazier version of us (and well, insulin resistance and diabetes too). Similarly sour food (citrus fruits, tomatoes, yoghurt, berries) has a warming effect on the body, stimulates appetite and strengthens the heart, but too much might lead to excess heat generation, and water retention, besides fanning jealousy. Salt in moderation gives energy, promotes growth, and balances electrolytes in the body, but too much may cause acidity and also raise our blood pressure, priming us for hypertension and other heart issues. Pungent (and hot) foods (chillies, garlic, black pepper, ginger, clove, and asafoetida) help boost metabolism, ease digestion and improve the circulation, but again excess can lead to inflammation, diarrhoea, heartburn, nausea, and even fuel angering a person. Pomegranate, asparagus, green apple, grapes, cauliflower and tea are examples of the astringent taste, which improve absorption of food in the body, decongest our systems and are anti-inflammatory too. But too much pungency might lead to constipation.

Finally, there is the bitter taste that it is known to help detox the body. Of course in addition according to Western nutrition there is umami too (not mentioned in ayurdeda) which is a flavour balancer of sorts; it intensifies the taste of salt and sweet and balances bitter and sour flavours. Umami is known to amplify satisfaction and deliver a feeling of fullness. It is found in sun dried tomatoes, asparagus, wine, beer, green tea, Chinese cabbage, and fermented foods like miso and soy sauce.

# Bitter is better

I want to talk more about bitter here because I feel that while most of us manage enough of the other flavours, bitter tends to be unanimously ignored and even deliberately skipped. But the fact is that bitter foods are an important part of a broader, healthier diet we are supposed to follow, but unfortunately don't anymore.

While there is some genetic propensity for liking or not liking acerbic food, we are born 'in love' with sugary stuff either. This affair with meetha (sweets) begins when we begin heaping sugar into our milk and tea every day right from childhood - and slowly get addicted to it. The bigger problem so this overload is that this powerful flavour (sweet) dulls our palates to other tastes, and bitter becomes the biggest casualty.

But this can be undone. We can re-coach and nurture our palate to make us more open-minded and inclusive eaters.



# But why should you do this?

Personally I am a bit biased towards foods that taste a bit bitter and actually relish them. Food without some bitter element for me lacks depth and complexity; simply put it is too sickly sweet for my taste. But that's just me! I'll give you solid health reasons to convert:

**FIRST REASON** is that our palate and health can only thrive on balanced basic tastes (sweet, sour, bitter, salty and umami) - and bitter is an important part of the equation.

Bitter foods begin working their magic right from the mouth itself; they activate the taste receptors on the tongue, which stimulate enzyme production and bile flow leading to better digestion and improved nutrient assimilation of the food in the stomach. Basically how many nutrients you can squeeze out of what you are eating might just depend on whether your meal has a bitter component or not.

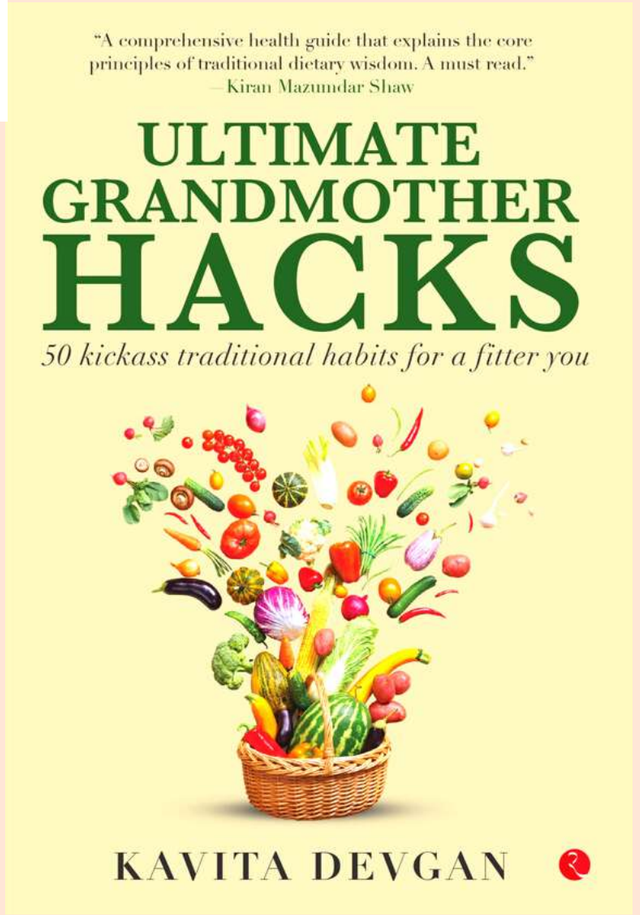
**SECOND REASON** *This one you will love*: bitter foods help cut food cravings to size (=weight loss). Sound more palatable now?

According to Ayurveda they also help tone down body heat, cut water retention and reduce inflammation in the body. Some research also shows that those who eat more bitter foods are at a reduced risk of metabolic syndrome (thus reduced risk of disorders like diabetes, cardiac problems, stroke, arthritis and more).

The compounds that make foods taste bitter - carotenoids in sweet potatoes and spinach, flavonoids in cranberries, kale and green tea, polyphenols in wine, astaxanthin in walnuts, glucosinolates in broccoli, phenols (anthocyanins) in brinjal - are all recognized health-giving compounds. Skip them at your own peril.

And it's hardly surprising that most anti-diabetic foods (bitter gourd, cinnamon) tend to be a bit bitter too... direct indication by the creator, maybe! That's because bitter foods challenge the liver, make it work harder and remain fighting fit. And when we skew the sugar-bitter ratio too much, it might just lead to fatty liver disease, obesity and Type 2 diabetes. One golden rule of keeping our liver healthy is to keep sugar consumption low, and the second is to incorporate some bitter foods into the diet. By the way, a detoxed liver means a detoxed body, which translates into good (acne-free) skin too.

Enough reasons to expand your bitter-flavour repertoire. Thought so!




# But how to do it

It just takes a little getting used to the initial shock that the bitter food delivers. The game plan should be to cultivate the taste and then begin indulging. So begin by giving the sweet paralyzed tongue taste of bitter in small doses, often disguised a little or paired cleverly - stuff like vanilla ice cream sprinkled with coffee, cakes (or cocktails) with bitters orange peel, toast with burnt garlic butter, extra ginger in the tea, chewing tulsi leaves first thing in the morning, adding methi seeds (fenugreek seeds) to dal tadka... get the drift! Then go the whole hog: add bitter greens (rugula, dandelion, radicchio) liberally to the salad, have broccoli, eggplant and bitter gourd subzi without diluting them with potato and other assorted veggies, eat unsweetened barley cereal for breakfast, sip unsweetened green tea, opt for bitter (higher % cocoa) chocolates for dessert etc.

*(excerpted with permission from Rupa Publishers)*



**KAVITA DEVGAN** is a Delhi based nutritionist, weight management consultant, health columnist, speaker and author of 4 bestsellers Don't Diet, Ultimate Grandmother hacks, Fix it with food and the recently released The Don't Diet Plan

# Wrap-up 2021, Sustainable Tourism

***Dr. Freeda Maria***

A two-year tough period, of a pandemic that stooped in like an apocalypse, invoking the highest levels of uncertainty in the minds of people. 2022 looked promising as people were contemplating little respite, to travel and see some normalcy, with fingers crossed! But to . dire dismay, the news of the third wave of Omicron, the tourism industry will probably have to wait for a comeback like the pre-pandemic times. What everyone is left with is an obvious choice to undertake conscious travel; options that throw good sustainability standards.

***The World Tourism and Travel Council (WTTC)*** reported that in 2020 a total of 62 million jobs were lost, representing a drop of 18.5% and leaving just 272 million (334 million in 2019) employed across the Tourism sector globally. WTTC also confirmed that Domestic visitor spending decreased by 45%, while international visitor spending went down by 69.4%. From dismal statistics that were being strewn, there was still hope for the Travel, Tourism and Hospitality (TTH) business, for the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, (MoT, GoI), had come out with schemes that had one of the best intentions of quality tourism promotion; besides in-bound, the focus was on Domestic Tourism.

To boost domestic Travels, the Government had introduced some of the finest of programs, viz., Dekho Apna Desh, Swadesh Darshan Scheme, Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD) under the Incredible India 2.0 campaign; which not only focused on 'footfalls', but spoke of enhancing tourist experience and employment opportunities in a sustainable fashion. These programs had come into existence by 2019 and the Indian TTH eco-system was looking for a phenomenal opportunity when Covid-19 struck.

Moreover, the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) Report of 2019 had ranked India at 34th Position (out of 136 countries) (Up from 40th position in 2017). "India showed the greatest percentage improvement to its overall TTCI score, which has helped it become the only lower-middle-income country in the top 35," the report said and lauded its natural and cultural assets and price competitiveness.

From a sub-regional perspective, the nation (India) has better air infrastructure (33rd) and ground and port infrastructure (28th), international openness (51st) and natural (14th) and cultural resources (8th). This meant, that India was in a phase of a phenomenal increase in the number of visitors both domestic and international. With more visitors relying on sustainable tourism products for visitations. Referring to the findings of the research conducted by booking.com, 56% of the visitors agreed to the fact that they will seek out more rural, off the beaten-track experiences to immerse themselves into the outdoors. The nuance of sustainable tourism would be cherished and will become the need of the hour.



Many states in India are doling out sustainable tourism options viz., states like Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Odisha, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, in no order of ranking or importance; who have to be leveraged at the State Administration level.

Gujarat Tourism has gone a step forward to usher in Global certifications and accreditations that will further the cause of Global visitors by encouraging the Tour Operators to get certified under the GSTC norms through the 2021-25 Tourism Policy. This will ensure a thought process change in the way Tour Operators, Hotels and Tourists, will become Ambassadors of Sustainable Tourism promotion. The draft sustainable tourism roadmap of the ministry of tourism has clear mandates to adopt to the GSTC Criteria. The Strategy is yet to see the light of the day.

A recent survey by booking.com shows that 83% of the travellers are to make sustainable travel a priority in the future and over half the global travellers (53%) acknowledged the desire to travel more sustainably as a direct result of Coronavirus. For instance, the TUI group shows a preference for GSTC certified hotels - 9.2 million TUI customers stayed in hotels certified to a GSTC-Recognized standard (81% of TUI's Hotels) in 2018. Online Travel Agencies (OTA) are developing plans to provide consumers with indicators in search results of certified hotels.

It comes with great respite; an official working group has been launched by GSTC (Global Sustainable Tourism Council) to augment the functions of Globally agreed on principles of sustainability in the Indian subcontinent. Global Sustainable Tourism Council was initiated by the Rainforest Alliance, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Foundation (UN Foundation), and the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), USA. It provides for global standards for sustainable travel and tourism; as well as providing international accreditation for sustainable tourism Certification Bodies.

This apart, the industry players and giants in the sustainability business have made large promises, as major companies set more aggressive targets around metrics like carbon emissions, water, and waste. The year that went by saw great ideas emerging out of industry leaders and governments to go past the pandemic and show resilience. Concepts like travel bubbles, net-zero models, staycations, transformative and regenerative tourism, tourism for communities and circular economy, sustainable gastronomy, decarbonising: all in the context of sustainable travel were coined and spoken of.

Governments were chalking out agendas and plan to tackle this grave situation, considering the employment loss. Some notable initiatives that are worth a mention are the Paris agreement climate emergency and sustainable tourism Agenda, Turismo de Portugal launched Tourism Sustainability Plan 2020-2023, the Swisstainable scheme launched by Switzerland, Utah and its Red Emerald Strategic Plan.

On 9 November 2021, at the UN Climate Conference in Glasgow (COP26), UNEP and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) launched 'A Net Zero Roadmap for Travel and Tourism' – an ambitious plan for the tourism industry to reach net-zero by 2050. The new roadmap sets targets and benchmarks for the travel industry and offers practical recommendations for businesses on how they can achieve their net-zero targets. This leads the tourism, travel and hospitality businesses to work towards sustainable certifications, ecolabeling and even self-certifications in many a case; thence, keeping the businesses in tune with Global norms.

Moving away from fossil fuels to sustainable energy sources could greatly reduce tourism related emissions. Hotels could and will usher in measures to improve energy efficiency, while new ones will have to be built using sustainable design practices. Airlines can improve existing aircraft technology by retrofitting and reducing weight, which increases fuel efficiency and lowers emissions. The cruise industry can reduce emissions by upgrading existing ships (through HVAC and lighting upgrades) and designing new ships to maximise energy efficiency.

***"Climate action needs a dramatic step-up if we are to have a shot at limiting global temperature rise to 1.5°C***", said Inger Andersen, the Executive Director of UNEP. ***"The travel and tourism sector has a big stake in decarbonization because a destroyed planet serves no one's purpose."*** The tourism sector has a widespread economic impact. Its revival and longevity will be critical to ensure its continued contribution to livelihoods and economies – but only if it can be made sustainable.




*(The Author is Consulting Editor- Sustainable Tourism with Conscious Carma and is a Member of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council's India Working Group)*

*Sustainable Startup* **STORIES**

# OSIA OSIA - Handcrafted Luxury herbal soaps from India to the World







OSIA OSIA, a unique name for a unique product and vision. That's what the founders of this handcrafted luxury organic and natural soap brand like to say.

## Inspiration behind OSIA OSIA

With more than 2 decades of owning a successful clothing export brand, Naren Jain along with his Son Harsh and daughter Anushree, ventured into an entirely different domain in the year 2017, all because of their strong desire to make a difference.



"“We wanted to make natural and organic soap accessible to everyone, as it is a commodity which is being used daily by everyone and is a major source of chemicals being absorbed by the skin. Also, as the essential oils are therapeutical, it helps relieve the stress and remove the negativity from the mind and the body", says Harsh Jain, Co-founder OSIA OSIA..

OSIA OSIA delivers old world wisdom of ancient wellness practices. Ayurveda and meditation are nature inspired beauty remedies. We aim to provide a zen like experience when you use our product which will not only pamper your body but also calm your soul.




## Journey and Important Milestones

It took a year of rigorous R&D, setting up factories in Bangalore and Delhi, finding the best sources for organically grown natural herbs and oils, skilling and training the artisans in the art of soap making through exclusive training sessions being conducted by the experts. Utmost care has been taken to minimize the carbon footprint, from raw material sourcing to manufacturing as well as packaging. Handcrafting nearly 20 varieties of soaps, providing livelihood to over 60 craftsmen and using reclaimed wood to make packaging boxes, Osia Osia is continuously working towards adding values to the product as well as preserving the environment.

OSIA OSIA was finally launched in 2018 simultaneously in India and Europe. In India, the offline retail presence is in the duty free shop at Terminal 3 of Delhi Airport and online its available in all the leading online retail channels viz Amazon, Flipkart, Snapdeal, Nykaa, etc as well as on the brand's website, www.osiaosia.com. For the European market, the company has formed a joint venture, and retails online and in select leading stores in France and Switzerland.

In 2019, it entered the Hongkong market through a distributor network and is available both online and offline. It's also, available in World's biggest luxury retail chain Harvey Nichols.

Towards the end of 2021, the brand signed a JV with US's leading brand ZEZE for entering US market and also expanding the retail presence in India. In US, OSIA OSIA is now available online on Amazon and Etsy, among others and will soon be available in more than 100 stores all across US.

## Growth, Expansion Plans and Vision

OSIA OSIA is witnessing 100% year on year growth and is planning to add a complete range of wellness and skin care products. The brand's vision is to make OSIA OSIA a household name globally as the most authentic, luxury and organic herbal skin care and wellness brand

## Shower Meditation coined by OSIA OSIA

- *Every time you take a shower, visualise washing away your stress and negative karma. Let it all go down the drain and feel the lightness in your body.*
- *Envision the power of essential oils washing away your negative thoughts, sad feelings, regrets, anger and depression.*
- *Concentrate on the feel of OSIA OSIA bathing bars upon your skin.*
- *Enrich your mind and body with the aroma of herbal and essential oils.*
- *Get ready for a new beginning.*

**Price**: Rs.295 - 495
**Availability**: www.osiaosia.com, all leading online retail platforms like Amazon, Flipkart, etc

*Sustainable Startup* **STORIES**

# SANYA GARG



Sanya Garg, born in the family of medical professionals, Sanya didn't follow the footsteps, rather went on to carve a niche for herself in the fashion industry.

Inspired by her mother and her maternal grand mother who used to stitch beautiful clothes for her, Sanya was intrigued by the varied textiles, colours, and patterns they use to design for her. Soon after passing out of school, she showed her interest to pursue fashion and inspite of objecting her decision, her family encouraged and supported her.

The Delhi girl went to NIFT, Gandhi Nagar, Gujarat for her formal education in Fashion. She came back to Delhi after the course and worked for an Export House for a year and then worked with a renowned designer for a year. However, her zest to have her own label and create what she really believes in, she set out to launch her sustainable fashion label, SANYA GARG.



## In her own words....

*"My love for colour and creativity led me to explore the beautiful Indian crafts and embroideries. I work with artisans from Gujarat and Rajasthan, two of the most vibrant states of the Country. And with natural fabrics and even create my own fabrics using various natural fibers"*





Sustainable fashion aims to create clothing that is environment friendly and is ethically made by providing better working conditions and a fair pay to its workers and employees. Sustainability not only plays a positive role in preventing climate change, it also helps in creating long lasting clothes of higher quality. You do have to pay a little more for them but they stay in your wardrobe for years. I am glad to see the change in consumers mindset as well. Now a days people come to me with old clothes from the wardrobes of their mother or granny for redesigning them and creating a new outfit which can fit in today's fashion. Using a garment and not reusing it is a waste of resource.

Sustainable clothing has started making its mark in the Indian market. From paying workers fairly to use of natural dyes. However, the idea of creating a sustainable wardrobe is still a daunting one. There is a prospect of not being able to wear the brand you are used to or is of your choice in terms of trends. This mindset needs to be changed. Though, Sustainability is not new in Indian market. Most of our leaders and fighters have always promoted the use of swadesi and organic fabrics for making their attires. Gone are the days when organic fashion was synonyms with the old boring clothes. The young Indians are realizing that they can contribute to saving the planet while looking good at the same time.

## Hurdles and Milestones

Being a woman entrepreneur from a non-business family, initially, Sanya did face difficulty in managing everything on her own, from creating designs to sourcing fabrics, overseeing production and ensuring timely delivery, but she never gave up. Within a couple of years, she could establish her brand in the market and orders started pouring in through word of mouth and social media. And soon she launched her Menswear collection. Today, her label is known for stylish and innovative ethnic wear and has a loyal customer base in Delhi and NCR. She's also exporting to Israel. Sanya has participated in several fashion weeks in India



## Latest collection

Taking inspiration from the age old craft of Kutch Gujarat : lipan kaam ( mud and mirror work ) we have created our new collection using cotton and silk as base fabrics with all hand work. This craft is done by the women of Rabari community. The women are so experienced that they don't have to draw or trace the pattern before working on the design. The craft attracted our attention for its intricate patterns and aesthetic perfection.

## Presence

She is presently retailing from a multi designer store in Delhi. Her label will soon be available in leading multi designer stores in Delhi and Ahmedabad.

## Mission & Vision

To make SANYA GARG, a high-end label and to have her signature studio in Delhi To check out her collection, please visit her instagram page sanyagargcouture.

# Conscious Products

## Himalayan Origins : promoting holistic way of living




Himalayan Origins, was launched in Uttarakhand towards the end of 2020. “The idea behind the creation of this brand was to promote a more holistic way of living while respecting our moral and ethical responsibility towards Mother Nature. We used our natural surroundings in the lower Himalayas to build products that are natural and devoid of any harmful chemicals while ensuring they were zero-waste and plastic free”, says founder sisters Neha Parmar and Soumya Parmar From the time they started, till now, the brand has come a long way. They started with 6 products, now have almost 16 products ranging from zero waste skin, to haircare and accessories. They are currently retailing across 8 platforms, 3 retail stores and 2 hotels.

And have recently launched their first external market outside of India in Singapore and are available across key online platforms there.

Available at Online: https://himalayanoriginsindia.com, Amazon India, Kindlife.in, Vanity Wagon, Sustainkart.com, OneGreen, Sublime etc.

Offline Retail stores : Arista Organic Store

## Pahaadi Organics – an organic venture by a 16 year old




Aryan Kaistha, a 16 year old, class XII student living in a village called naggar just 20km from Manali, started Pahaadi Organics in May 2021.

“I was inspired by such similar ventures promoting healthy organic food of the hills and decided to start one myself during the COVID 19 lockdown of 2021. My goal was to help the small traditional farmers as well as to provide chemical free and healthy food to our customers from cities where such products are rarely available. So I decided to buy my produce from villages and small farmers to help them out during the lockdown since they didn't have much income during that time”, says the young entrepreneur.

Pahaadi organics selIs organic , chemical free produce collected directly from farmers and include products like, rajma, red rice honey, himalayan ghee, organic fruits like persimmons and apples and is planning to introduce other fresh fruits like plums, pears and apricots, next year. Aryan is handling the business all by himself with some assistance from his dad, who helps in finding the produce in villages. The young chap wants to expand his business to benefit as many farmers and customers as possible.




Availability: www.pahadiorganics.in



## Metro Shoes launches its eco-friendly ‘Nature Pro’ footwear collection for Men

Nature Pro Collection made from Merino wool and recycled plastic bottles; shoes that can be recycled, use locally sourced material, and decompose naturally without harming the environment



Indian footwear retailer Metro Shoes has launched a new eco-friendly collection titled ‘Nature Pro’ for men. The range offers footwear made using Merino wool tagging the collection — ‘The Pair That Cares’ as well as from recycled PET plastic bottles. For decades, the brand has been associated with creating stylish, functional, and durable shoes. The new extensive sustainable collection is 100% natural and eco-friendly and aims to reduce the carbon footprint on the earth by developing an innovative range of shoes that have zero impact, can be recycled, use locally sourced material, and decompose naturally, without harming the environment. Merino Wool natural fiber allows breathability, helps keep feet dry and sweat-free, and is odor-free. The eco-friendly PET bottle range is made from plastic sourced from, beaches, oceans, and garbage that is further processed and transformed into fabrics that are used in the shoes. The Nature Pro collection address this problem as it recycles 1000s of PET bottles to create the first collection of loafer-style slip-on shoes for men.

Availability – The Nature Pro Collection range is available in all Metro stores across India and on the online platform www.metroshoes.net

## Green And Beige, A Clean Beauty Brand launches body scrub and body lotion

Established by Dr Merin Liza Jacob, Abraham Marett, and Jacob John, Green And Beige was launched to protect consumers from unnecessary chemicals in the name of face/skin/hair care, that would do more harm than good.




Their latest product additions include :

1. Body Scrub Exfoliating Coffee Scrub: It is important that your body scrub has the right ingredients to help you exfoliate, without leaving your skin too dry. And also that your exfoliator helps smoothen skin. Coffee is the chief ingredient and it boosts collagen levels and reduces the premature aging of the skin. Cocoa butter and moisturizing oils then help smoothen skin. Give yourself a scrub at home and come out glowing (and feeling like a million bucks).
2. Body Lotion- Intense Hydration: Skin lotions are one area we are spoiled for choice. And maybe that is the reason that the entire space is a little soiled. There are enough and more products floating around and even more claims. This is why it is essential to know what you are applying to your skin and more importantly, what you need to. This Green And Beige body lotion is created from vegetable oils, the lamellar structure of this lotion makes it quick absorbing and therapeutic to skin and senses. It rehydrates skin, revives rough and dry spots, smoothens calluses, and softens rough skin. And most important, it is not sticky and does not make your skin feel oily.

Availability: www.greenandbeige.com

## Indic Inspirations, a culture startup representing India's glorious heritage




Indic Inspirations aspires to narrate stories of India's culture, history, traditions, and scientific achievements through collectibles, souvenirs, and gifts. Founded by Sunil Jalihal and Padmaja Jalihal, it endeavors to empower India's artisans, heirloom makers, and local communities. Their work with 65+ crafts, and 400+ artisans around the country through Heart for Art Charitable Trust over the last 7 years gave the founders the understanding and the opportunity to create products that convey traditions yet built for modern utilities and sensitivities. Creating collectibles, souvenirs, and gifts by interests, and a series of collections make these art objects unique. "India has over 3000 crafts, 10M+ artisans, and a meagre 2% of the world handicrafts market of $42B. Creating a new set of products that represent various facets of India was a crying need to help increase India's soft power as well as increase artisanal incomes and help them get back their pride," Sunil says. The startup has signed up with ISRO as their first official merchandiser to narrate India's Space stories. And has recently opened its first Experience Centre in Pune which acts as a Lounge Store + Space for Workshops and Talks.

Available at : www.indicinspirations.com

## The Hemp Studio for a guilt free and pro environment fabric shopping

The Hemp Studio is a planet-first slow fashion brand. We aim to not only inspire but provide means for the shift to Sustainable Fashion. Hemp by its very nature tackles the environment related issues other fibres bring to the table, that's why we call it Nature's BFF. It can grow with little to no need of chemicals and instead enriches the soil where it grows, to the extent that it even works as a cover crop and acts as a carbon sink to reduce greenhouse gases. That's why we've developed Hemp fabrics to help people shop new clothes guilt-free and pro environment. Moreover, Hemp has excellent durability, is anti-microbial and protects your skin from harmful UV rays. It gets softer with every wash and its breathable nature enables it to regulate your body temperature making it the perfect all-season wear. The Hemp Studio has a portfolio of 50+ fabrics with stock availability in the B2B market. For end consumers, they launched an online store in October 2021.



Availability : www.thehempstudio.in



## Label Shivika Agarwal's first collection - Teikirshyv

Shivika Agarwal, a budding designer is all set to add the oomph factor in sustainable fashion with her first collection Teikirshy.

"Being the youngest in the family, I always stayed close to everybody. I remember growing up around all sorts of crafts, painting, knitting, either done by my mother, maternal grandmother or aunts which kind of embraced me into who I am today. I always had an extraordinary love and inclination towards crafts which I didn't realise until the last year of my graduation which gave birth to my brand which is devoted in uplifting lost crafts in India", says the young designer.

The collection is inspired by the lives of a tribal group living in the Nilgiri hills. These craftswomen carry on an age-old tradition of embroidering designs inspired by mother nature. The collection is dedicated towards the upliftment and recognition of the craft to the rest of the world. The materials used are 100% cotton whether they are laces or fabrics and recycled Lycra for swimwear.

Availability : www.shivikaagarwal.com, Pernia's Pop-up Shop and 6 degree store.

Created with perfection, Damba Halter Neck Maillot is a statement choice for your next getaway. Crafted from regenerated lycra, it features embroidery on neck & cross back straps with a cut out detail forming at back hand crafted by tribal women artisans of Toda based in the Nilgiri hills. Pair it with a midi skirt and strap sandals for a brunch.



These flare pants are tailored from lightweight fabric and embroidered; inspired by the tribal lifestyle in India corded with wrap round top with raglan sleeves. The duo is perfect for any day or night party.

This charming dress is crafted with sheer and fluid fabric. Detailed with lace on hem and under bust accompanied with an embroidery inspired by tribal crafts from the lanes of India , wear yours with sandals and a mini bag for a special occasion night and day.



# Myths About Spirituality



Yogi Ashwini, Dhyan Ashram

## Spirituality and religion can not be equated or compared.

In the modern-day world, the study of spiritual science has been confused with certain religions or sects that are prevalent. A major myth about spirituality is that it is actually a part of a religion. Religion is a code of conduct prescribed by certain highly evolved souls who have taken birth in the physical world at a time when they were needed for the benefit of mankind. A particular group of people following a specific religion is actually following a way of life or a code of conduct and certain practices for its upliftment. No religion can be judged or commented upon by a human being. This domain belongs to the Almighty. Spirituality and religion can not be equated or compared.

## Just listening to a few discourses will not take you towards salvation

Another major myth about spirituality is that listening to discourses of evolved people and spending time with them would have the result of giving us salvation. In the world of the spirit, it means to take us to the subtlest layer of our 'ether'. It is definitely possible but the possibility is a very remote one. Because how do we know that the person we are going to is not just another money maker. The newspapers are full of stories of supposedly evolved people indulging in acts, which are considered not so



pure and pious by the law of our country! (Are we not law-abiding citizens?) Depending on the law of probability, it is a little risky here. To walk on this path, you need a Guru to guide you through this journey. It is a long process. Just listening to a few discourses will not take you towards salvation. Remember how shishyas spent years in gurukuls to learn this science.





## Spirituality is not the proprietorship of the recluse

Often people equate spirituality with being a sanyasi or use it as a way to escape everyday responsibilities. But spirituality is not the proprietorship of the recluse. When the knowledge was given, you were never supposed to give up everything and go and sit in the mountains. As a human being, you are expected to evolve stage by stage. There are levels of dhyan for all the four ashrams prescribed. You start from step one and slowly master each level and then progress, from brahmacharya to grihastha to vanprastha to sanyas.

It is well known that when Buddha came back to his palace to visit his wife and child after attaining nirvana, he had commented that for what he had achieved, there was no need to have abandoned his family. He said that it would have been possible to do it while being with his family. The Vedic Masters proved this in their daily lives. The majority of them had families and the duties towards the families and society were discharged in a much finer way compared to the modern kalyug man.

The Puranas and the Upanishads are full of stories of rishis and maharishis who were happily married and attained salvation while being grihasthas. Rishi Kashyap, rishi Dhadhichi, rishi Gautam, etc. are examples. So there is no recommendation for any kind of escapism. Do not forget that a man and a woman both are individually incomplete (concept of Shiva and Shakti); there is the need for a union between them for creation to take place, and once you create you have the responsibility to nurture it also; so escape how, to whom, and from where? We do not find in any book the Great Lord Shiva, who is also called Mahadeva, at any point letting go of his responsibilities towards Mata Shakti or his family. So what escapism are we talking about?

It is unfortunate that in the modern-day world, misguided people think that to enter into the spiritual realm, you have to leave your family and responsibilities. I remember here a song from the Hindi movie of the early seventies, Chitralekha, which is appropriate to describe the fallacy of such claims: ***"Sansar se bhage phirte ho bhagwaan ko tum kya paooge, is lok ko tum apna na sake us lok ko kya apnaoge...."*** (You try to escape the world, how do you expect to find the Divine; you could not embrace this world, how do you hope to embrace that one).

## Saluting the Awakened Soul

# TULASI GOWDA (THE TREE GODDESS)



The barefoot worder woman, encyclopedia of the forest, barefoot ecologist & tree goddess, etc. are few of the names given to the humble and timid 72-year-old Tulasi Gowda. An illiterate tribal woman from Karnataka, India, Tulasi was honoured with the **Padma Shri Award, the country's fourth-largest civilian award** in the year 2020 for her immense contributions towards preserving the environment. Her deep knowledge of trees surpassed all the formal education of the world, which she gained while working with her mother since the age of 12. Having lost her father when she was just 2 years old, Tulasi could not receive formal education and had to start earning at a young age.

Belonging to the Halakki indigenous tribe in Karnataka known for their knowledge of medicinal plants which they mostly utilize to prevent disease than for cure, Tulasi can identify more than 300 medicinal plants. She is also renowned for her ability to identify the mother tree of every species of tree in the forest no matter its location. Tulasi has planted more than 30,000 saplings and worked as a daily wager with the forest department for 35 years, before she was offered a permanent job looking at her dedication and hard work. Barefoot and dressed in traditional attire, she received India's fourth-highest civilian award from President Ram Nath Kovind. Her simplicity and modesty touched everybody's heart and the social media was abuzz with her praise. **Gowda, however, said that she is very happy that she got the Padma Shri, but she "values the forests and trees more"**.

Today, even after her retirement, she continues to nurture plants and share her vast knowledge with the younger generation about the importance of the forest as well as how to find and care for seeds





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