

WOMEN ARCHITECTS OF NEW INDIA

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Chandni Kapadia



Guneet Monga Kapoor



Dr Mariazeena Johnson



Nirmala Sitharaman



Niru Agarwal



Tulsi Gabbard



Nilanjana Mukherjee



Dr Maya Gantayet



Suma Devi Dash



Masaba Gupta



Priyanka Gupta



Adyasha Satpathy



Dr Sohini Sastri



Dr Grace Pinto



Devyani Jaipuria



Ananya Birla

Inspire Inclusion
let's forge a more
inclusive world for

Women



Bhavna Udernani



Ravneet Kaur



Dr Manjula Pooja Shroff



Roshni Nadar Malhotra



Nayanthara



Shilpi Sonar



Dr Nafeesa Ahmed



FLT LT Punya Nanjappa



Jaya Vaidhyanathan



Leena Nair



Seema Boppana



Sushma Boppana



Dr Neelam Mohan



Ritu Agarwal



Dr Niyati Chitkara



Dr Madhu Chitkara



Shivani Wagh



Prof (Dr) Shalya Raj



Nisha Kaur



Harpreet Kaur

"Human rights are women's rights, and women's rights are human rights." —Hillary Clinton



The women architects of New India continue to prove their mettle by defying societal norms, shattering glass ceilings, inspiring generations, and shaping the history of our country

Aditi Chakrabarty

The global theme for International Women's Day 2024 is 'Invest in women: Accelerate progress'. Investing in women emphasises on ensuring women's and girls' rights across all aspects of life to secure a healthy planet for future generations. International Women's Day takes on a global dimension, boosting the growing international women's movement, strengthened by four global United Nations women's conferences, a rallying point to build support for women's rights and participation in the social, political, and economic environment.

Women have set records in nearly every industry and area of life as they tread with efficiency and equity. Their journeys become motivational and universal, and they 'inspire inclusion' in its true sense.

Today, women are breaking down barriers and forging ahead with greater confidence. With contributions integral to the progress and development of our nation, Nirmala Sitharaman, whether in the arena of defense or being the custodian of the budget—the most difficult portfolios of the country—has shown deftness in successful handling. From Anshula Kant, MD and CFO of the World Bank, whose mission is to eradicate poverty at the grass-roots level, to Purnya Nanjappa, who soars through the sky as a fighter pilot,

to two-time Oscar winner Guneet Monga Kapoor, who wants to tell the world the wonderful stories of real people, these women have rewritten the narrative for the future.

In an AI-driven space, young technocrats like Roshni Nadar Malhotra are changing the trajectory of the tech world. Ravneet Kaur, Chairperson of the Competition Commission of India, is the second woman to serve the role of economic regulator, whereas Adyasha Satpathy, the daughter-in-law of the late Nandini Satpathy, first lady CM of Orissa, wears many hats, from being the CEO of Dharitri Oriya Daily and Orissa POST English Daily to a climate activist.

Leena Nair is the first woman and first Indian Global CEO of Chanel and Gita Gopinath, the first Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, facilitating global economic growth. From fashion to finance, these women have set the stage for those who dare to dream big.

In these pages, Outlook acknowledges the great feats and accomplishments of some notable 'change-making women', who have been responsible for trendsetting firsts and impressive cultural shifts. And in celebrating these stories, we celebrate the 'Indian everywoman', fighting her daily battles with equal parts grit and grace, dreams and commitment.

Dr Chandni Kapadia Exemplifying strong women leaders

Chandni Kapadia, Executive Director, GLS University, is a multi-skilled entrepreneur who has made a mark in all the fields she has ventured. Her professional journey from being a fashion professional to heading a leading university is an inspiration for all

Chandni Kapadia

Executive Director, GLS University



A leader, a lawyer, a designer, a scholar, a TEDx speaker and an educationist, Chandni Kapadia has diverse interests as reflected by her educational qualifications including a degree in Law, Fashion Merchandising from FIT, New York, and MBA from London School of Economics. Equipped with a PhD in Management, Kapadia in her role as Executive Director, GLS University, and Dean, GLS Institute of Design, takes care of the university's international collaborations with different universities across the globe, including marketing and promotions. Striving to meet the changing needs of students, she has been able to establish collaborations with Ivy League universities like Harvard, Luiss Business School, CBU, New Castle, etc. Kapadia also plays a significant role in top management level decisions at GLS University.

From her adolescence, Kapadia has had a quest for learning. Her professional journey has been a testament to resilience, focus, and unwavering dedication. From leadership roles as the Country and Asia Pacific head for various luxury brands like Calvin Klein, Starbucks and other Marquee organizations like Debenhams PLC, Delta Trade, etc., Kapadia is now focused more on education and steering budding talents under her care at the GLS University.

Kapadia's association with education

has been for more than a decade. At GLS University, established under Gujarat Law Society, she was initially associated as a consultant for international and professional education before taking charge as the Chief Operating Officer. A multi-tasker, apart from her leadership role at GLS University, Kapadia is a practicing lawyer at Nanavati & Nanavati, Ahmedabad (India), and an independent brand consultant for various international brands, which continue to seek her expertise to establish their brand identity in India and in the region.

Cherishing fortuitous encounters with like-minded individuals, particularly women, she has worked as President of WICCI National Design Council and Rotary Club of Mumbai. She is also involved with other NGOs that advocate for empowering women. In her role of a transformational leader and an ardent advocate for women, Kapadia has deliberately chosen to work with and lead teams predominantly composed of women as she recognizes their exceptional dedication, kindness, and mutual support. She attributes her current success to standing her ground, voicing opinions, and making decisions despite criticisms—a mantra she shares in her empowering TEDx talks.

Kapadia has been accredited in the Forbes List of Top 10 Women

Entrepreneurs of India as well as Forbes Women Power in 2022 and 2021. She has been named as one of the Asia's most Trusted Leader 2022 by WCRC International and Women Leaders of India 2022 by the Economic Times & Femina and has also been honoured with other prestigious awards like the Times Women Icon by Times of India, Asia's Most Trusted leader by WCRC International, Black Swan Award for Women Empowerment in support of UN Global Compact Network & Government of India, the World Women Leadership Congress Award by the Hillary Clinton Foundation, Leaders of Change 2021 Award by Economic Times and many more. At GLS, Kapadia has been conferred with "CEO of the Year" Award by Indian Achiever's Forum and has received World Women Leadership Congress Award 2019 for her immense contribution to the fashion industry.

Despite achieving international recognition and receiving numerous awards for her contributions like the World Women Leadership, Kapadia says, "When I look back today, there is nothing that I probably wouldn't do again. However, there are things that I would do in a different way." Kapadia emphasizes the irreplaceable value of hard work, dedication, and unwavering determination, strongly asserting that success will inevitably follow those who dare to dream and persist.

Riding the Wave

A combat veteran, who knows the cost of war and the value of human life

Tulsi Gabbard

Politician, Former Congresswoman, Veteran, Soldier



Tulsi Gabbard is grabbing attention globally as news of her teaming up with Republican frontrunner Donald Trump for the 2024 election is in circulation. Tulsi was elected in 2012 to the United States House of Representatives, serving Hawaii's 2nd District. She is one of the first two female combat veterans to ever serve in the U.S. Congress, and she is also its first Hindu member.

In 2002, at the young age of 21, Tulsi was elected to the Hawaii State Legislature, becoming the youngest person ever elected in the state. She joined the Hawaii Army National Guard to serve her country, and in 2004, she was the first state official to voluntarily step down from public office to serve in a war zone. In 2005, Tulsi was deployed for a year in Iraq and awarded the Meritorious Service Medal at the end of her phenomenal work. Tulsi served two tours of duty in the Middle East and continued her service as a major in the Army National Guard. She conducted non-military host-nation visits and served as a primary trainer for the Kuwait National Guard. Tulsi was one of the first women to set foot inside a Kuwait military facility and became the first woman to ever be awarded and honoured by the Kuwait National Guard for her work in their training and readiness program.

Tulsi served in the U.S. Senate as a legislative aide to Senator Daniel Akaka, advising him on homeland security, the environment, energy independence, and veteran issues in between her tours. In 2007, she graduated from the Accelerated Officer Candidate School at the Alabama Military Academy, where she was the first woman to finish as the

distinguished honour graduate in the Academy's 50-year history. Tulsi was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant and again assigned to the 29th Brigade Special Troops Battalion of the Hawaii Army National Guard—this time to serve as the Military Police Platoon Leader.

In 2010, Tulsi was elected to the Honolulu City Council, serving as Chair of the Safety, Economic Development, and Government Affairs Committee and Vice Chair of the Budget Committee. In 2011, she visited Indonesia as part of peacekeeping training with the Indonesian Army.

In the current political scenario, as the stage is set for a potential rematch between former President Trump and current President Joe Biden in 2024, Tulsi Gabbard might work with

"My mission in life is to serve our country and the American people and find the best way to be able to do that"

Trump for the 2024 election. There are discussions that Tulsi would be advising Donald Trump and his team on the nation's foreign policy. Former U.S. President Donald Trump has revealed he is evaluating Ron De Santis, Vivek Ramaswamy, Kristi Noem, and Tulsi Gabbard as possible candidates for his vice presidential running mate.

The Democratic Party's views on religion, police, and protecting citizens were not in sync with Tulsi's views, and so, she resigned from her post. She was vocal about President Joe Biden's foreign policy attributing to Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the involvement of the US in other countries' business. She appealed to Republicans who are sceptical of intervention overseas, which is now a majority of Republican voters.

An advocate for freedom of speech and equality, Gabbard has made a deal with Elon Musk to host a show on the X platform. The show will be about supporting free speech and giving a voice to those who have been silenced.



Innovation Growth Empowerment

A winner with sharp strategic insight and great team management, fosters innovation, sustainability, and community involvement

Shivani Wagh

Director, Supriya Lifescience Ltd

Shivani Wagh, Supriya Lifescience Ltd Director, a cGMP compliant API manufacturing organisation, with leadership position across key and niche products emerges as a strong force in the ever-changing environment of corporate leadership, propelling Supriya Lifescience Limited to sustained success. She supervises the company's efforts with sharp strategic insight, resulting in a significant improvement in corporate performance, growth trajectories, revenue streams, market presence, business innovation, and client connections. She is well-known for her excellent interpersonal skills and efficient team management, and she has played a key role in driving the organisation to exponential growth.

Wagh joined Supriya Lifescience Limited in 2014, armed with a strong educational background. She holds a Bachelor of Management Studies from

Mumbai University and two master's degrees, one in Commerce from Mumbai University and the other in International Business Management from the University of Manchester, UK, specialising in marketing and foreign trade. Her directorial role exemplifies a fusion of academic rigour and practical wisdom, allowing her to identify market needs and effectively align organisational objectives, thereby optimising overall performance metrics.

The Strategic Vision of Shivani Wagh Supriya Lifescience Limited's success is built on a seamless integration of design, innovation, and execution. The company's cutting-edge production facilities, together with its global reach, exemplify proficiency in API creation adapted to specific customer requirements. Under Wagh's leadership,

sustainability has emerged as a guiding concept, inspiring actions targeted at reducing environmental effects across all operating areas. Her collaborative leadership style and rigorous approach promote increased productivity and sustainable practices, while also minimising substantial risks and developing development prospects. Wagh clearly expresses her goal, stating, "We are unwavering in our commitment to fostering innovation and excellence within our products and operations, propelling sustainable growth and value creation for all stakeholders."

Empowering Communities

Wagh's idea of societal participation is based on empowerment and inclusion. She exhibits the company's commitment to social responsibility by being actively involved in activities that benefit marginalised and poor communities. Supriya Lifescience Limited implements CSR programmes with an emphasis on long-term effect via the Satish Wagh Foundation and connected implementation organisations. The company's CSR responsibility encompasses a comprehensive vision focused at improving rural livelihoods and supporting community well-being, ranging from educational enrichment to sports development, healthcare provision to sanitation projects, and assistance to differently abled persons. Wagh exemplifies the spirit of generational stewardship as a torchbearer of the organisation's principles, contributing to the company's benevolent legacy.

She says, "As a second-generation leader, I am deeply cognizant of the responsibility to sustain and enhance our company's legacy of success. Despite the challenges, particularly as a woman in leadership, I firmly believe that education and expertise are the keys to unlocking limitless potential. My message to parents resonates with the essence of empowerment – it is not merely a privilege but an inherent birthright."

Shivani Wagh's journey is not only a narrative of corporate triumph but also an example of resilience, empathy, and unwavering commitment. Her leadership approach reflects the spirit of purpose-driven corporate stewardship, poised to help shape a brighter future for all stakeholders as she charts new horizons and inspires future generations.



A Visionary Leader Inspiring The Modern Generation

In recognition of her services in the field of education, Dr Johnson was selected as one among the Top 12 Women Transforming India in 2016 by NITI Aayog and the UN. She was also honoured by former President of India Pranab Mukherjee as one among the 100 impactful women of India for her consistent efforts to provide world-class education to all

Dr Mariazeena Johnson

Chancellor, Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology

Redefining Excellence in Education System

Dr Mariazeena Johnson, Chancellor of Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology, believes that redefining the education system is a continuous

process by identifying potential 'thrust areas' and creating necessary 'academic ambience' in terms of infrastructure and intellectual pool. Innovation in academics and research balance have resulted in a consistent success story

of the institution in terms of student placement, successful start-up ventures, and transforming the dreams of students into reality, even before their graduation.

Sathyabama Centre for Advanced Studies is one such pioneering initiatives, designed to fuel progressive academic and research ambience. It entails advanced technological installations such as Metaverse Studio, Drone Laboratories, Advanced Characterization facilities, and Media Centre to create a plethora of opportunities for students to excel in future. At Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology, the expansion in research infrastructure is at par with global standards and the outcome of the methodologies and initiatives are visible in the institution's global alumni presence, its scientists making it to the 'TOP 2%' Stanford list, global rankings, and international recognitions such as ABET, USA.

"Innovation has become our new motto of success, we have provided annual *Seed Money Grants* and encouraged our students and faculty teams with innovative ideas to create new products in the past five years." Dr Johnson explains.

A compassionate leader and a prominent educator, Dr Johnson, is equally focused on gender equality and women empowerment. In the role of a mentor and a role model for other women, she encourages them to pursue careers in innovation and technology. As technology is chasing human evolution and changing the pace of our lives, gender equality and women empowerment are not immune to the influence of technological advancements. According to Dr Johnson, availability of information at the fingertips and the digital era driving dreams of budding entrepreneurs, are positive signs of a new age revolution in terms of potential start-ups. This technological hand-holding definitely facilitates businesses and mitigates challenges associated with the business.

As an empowered woman, Dr Johnson, strongly believes that determination, undeterred focus on goal and resilience are the key aspects towards making full use of digital technology for empowering the human race. Specifically, towards the concern of women, SHGs (Self Help Groups) are there to take up the challenge of empowering other women in society

In celebration of International Women's Day 2024, Dr Mariazeena Johnson believes that organisations should implement at least 5 key aspects of women empowerment to align with the bigger theme of 'Invest in women: Accelerate progress':

01

Women to be included as members of every planning and implementation body of every institution or corporation

02

Encourage women entrepreneurs by making it mandatory to have at least 2 girls or women in every start-up or entrepreneurial venture

03

Financial benefits to be given to the proposals with 35% of women representation in the emerging areas of innovation and skill development

04

Special focus to be given for improving women literacy in rural and backward areas

05

Hygiene and health factors to be placed at the focal point of women welfare

related to digital literacy, making effective usage of technology. Academic institutions, government and NGOs have the capacity to hand-hold this process at all possible levels.

Count Her In: Invest in Women. Accelerate Progress

Advocating the cause of women empowerment, Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology continuously strives to inspire others through its ideology, initiatives at every level of administration and workforce involvement. Due weightage and preference are given to deserving women professionals in terms of recruitment and encouragement to take up leadership roles. Recognising that financially empowered women are not just assets to their families but are also contributors to societal progress, at the institution 70% of the faculty and 85% hierarchical positions are held by women, thus emerging as a model of women empowerment, inspiring others to understand and value women and their work to forge a better world.

Institutions of higher education can be critical facilitators for change, and in this context, Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology takes utmost care towards embracing gender equality and gender equity, as well as equal representation. "I always recommend that the value of women is not to be taught theoretically but to be practised for better results in society." Emphasises Dr Johnson by making the objective of women empowerment one of the key pillars of

success for the institution. Periodically, gender sensitization programs are conducted for both students and staff. **Women Empowerment Bureau**, which conducts several programmes that aid the economic empowerment and social upliftment of underprivileged women, takes special interest in designing programs related to awareness of equality and gender studies. Through implementation of case studies, workshops and projects as a part of the curricula, awareness, accountability, respect for women and the concept of equal opportunities are instilled in the students.

Inspiring Inclusion

Being the Chancellor of Sathyabama, Dr Johnson adds value from the perspective of inclusivity. Marginalized sections of the society and the cause of women are taken into account

while drafting any model or policy for implementation. Towards creating an inclusive environment that caters to all forms of diversity, the only way to foster human excellence is through education. **Anbu Foundation**, is one of her major initiatives towards enabling inclusivity. It was started with the objective of bringing back happiness in the lives of people who are striving to live the life to the fullest. Today, thousands of students, based on their merits, are being provided with a platform to attain higher education through Anbu Foundation. Dr Johnson has adopted 21 Panchayat schools and 7 villages and is contributing to their all-round development. She has recently initiated a project named '*Madugai - The Strength*', for the girl child, by providing 'health and hygiene' kits to female students in the sub-urban areas of Chennai.

Message from Dr Mariazeena Johnson, an educationist and a woman of substance, for the youth of today

|| *Courage and focus are the combination of qualities that I believe will make anyone the best in their chosen field. My success mantra is my CONVICTION; that I believe is good for others. Time is so precious, that we can't afford to waste it. I believe that courage isn't something that we act upon instantly, but it is an accumulated component of belief about our capacity; our past experiences and our nature of not to withdraw. This courage when combined with the real thirst for success makes our life inspiring to many others.* ||



A Beacon of Hope

Only Indian woman to serve as both, 'The Defence Minister of India' and 'The Finance Minister of India'

Nirmala Sitharaman

Minister, Finance & Corporate Affairs, Govt of India

Nirmala Sitharaman, the first full-time woman Finance Minister of the country, has presented five full budgets since July 2019. With the presentation of the interim budget on February 1, 2024, the 6th budget in a row, months ahead of Lok Sabha polls, she surpassed the records of her predecessors like Manmohan Singh, Arun Jaitley, P. Chidambaram, and Yashwant Sinha, who had presented five budgets in a row. She became the second woman to have presented a budget after Indira Gandhi, who had presented the budget for the financial year 1970–71.

The Hon'ble Finance Minister said at the Union Budget 2024 presentation that the next five years will see unprecedented economic growth in India. FY24 fiscal deficit seen lower

than target at 5.8% of GDP; pegged at 5.1% in FY25 with the aim to reduce it to 4.5% by FY26. India's economy, the fastest-growing among major nations, is going through profound change.

"The next five years will be years of unprecedented development and golden moments to realize the dream of a developed India by 2047."

"There is a need to focus on the 'four major castes' that are garib (the poor), mahilayen (women), yuva (the youth), and annadata (the farmer)." Sitharaman said, asserting that their needs, aspirations, and welfare are "our highest priority." She emphasized the importance of the government's priority areas: expansion of railway corridors and metro rail, construction of 2 crore houses for the poor, consideration of housing schemes

for the middle class, and extending interest-free loans to states for tourism.

Sitharaman elaborated that the government's inclusive approach to development is a marked and deliberate departure from the earlier approach of 'provisioning up-to-village level'. Development programs, in the last ten years, have targeted each and every household and individual through 'housing for all', 'hargharjal', electricity for all, cooking gas for all, bank accounts, and financial services for all, in record time.

Her futuristic approach urged the Security Printing & Minting Corporation of India (SPMCIL) to adapt to India's rapid transition into a digital economy, indicating potential challenges for SPMCIL's core business of printing currencies. Future-ready would also focus on deep-tech research and development in the defense sector.

The dynamic lady was first elected to the Rajya Sabha in the Parliament of India in 2014 and subsequently re-elected in 2016. She has also held several ministerial portfolios, including Minister of Defense, Minister of State of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance, and Minister of State in the Ministry of Corporate Affairs. She has been a member of the Bharatiya Janata Party since 2006 and previously served as a spokesperson for the party. She holds a Master of Arts degree in economics and an M.Phil. from Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi and a Bachelor of Arts degree in economics at the Seethalakshmi Ramaswami College in Tiruchirappalli.

'Women Empowerment' being an important area of focus, over 83 lakh self-help groups are transforming the rural landscape. They are an inspiration to others. Buoyed by their success, to encourage more women to become economically sound, the target for the 'Lakshpati Didi' scheme will be increased from 2 to 3 crore. She mentioned that female enrolment in higher education has risen by 28 percent in the last decade. In STEM courses, females constitute 43 percent of enrolment, one of the highest rates in the world. The participation of women in the workforce has increased, and their empowerment has gained momentum in the last decade.



A Believing mindset with a philanthropic nature

"We all have certain roles to play for the sake of mankind and those who are privileged should always stretch their hands towards those who are in need."

Dr Sohini Sastri

2 times President Award Winning Astrologer, Life Coach and Philanthropist

Dr Sohini Sastri believes in this philosophy and has maintained the path of spirituality since an early age and is always keen to help her followers with the divine knowledge and power she possesses. She has been practising Occult Science for more than 20 years. Her monumental personality, vast knowledge of astrology and unique skill of accurate prediction in astrological fields made her 'peoples' favourite'.

Dr Sohini Sastri is popularly known as a renowned KP astrologer. Along with Vedic astrology, she also excels at Palmistry, Numerology, Vastu Shastra, and

Color therapy. She received an honorary Doctorate and also 'D'Litt in Astrology by National American University, USA for her exceptional journey and contribution to society. Over the last few decades, she has helped thousands of her followers with astrological prediction and cosmic energy.

Dr Sohini Sastri has taken her to a pinnacle in astrology and entrenched herself as a Philanthropist and Life coach which is a strong testament to women's empowerment. Her vast knowledge of astrology and unique skill of accurate prediction has helped 80,000 people till date. She has a vast knowledge about

the movement of stars & planets and its influence over people.

As a life coach, Dr Sastri is popular as the first choice of Bollywood celebrities. She has been considered as an esteemed member of several communities. Over the years she has achieved a great height of astrology and was awarded with various honours like 'Pride of Nation 2022', 'Indian Achievers Award, 2023', 'Femina Brand Award 2021' and many more. She is a proud achiever of 'Champion of Change Awards 2019' from the former President of India Late Pranab Mukherjee and the former President of India Ram Nath Kovind in 2022. She has been regarded as 'Best astrologers in world' by the Astrological Association of Great Britain & honourably listed in 'World Book of Record UK, Switzerland, for her contribution in astrology. She has achieved 'The Most Searched Astrologer in India Award' under woman's world records' appreciation category in 2023. She is honoured by Global Book of Excellence, England in recognition of exceptional dedication and impactful contributions for the betterment of society through Astrology and humanitarian activities for 3 decades.

She is a regular columnist of Femina India, Times of India, Business Standard, Forbes India, Outlook, The Week, Mid-day and many other leading magazines.

Along with being a successful astrologer, she has been doing many social works over the years. She was very active in the Corona Awareness Campaign and several social arrangements. Apart from this, she is also associated with so many other charitable foundations. Her work in the field of child health, child education is creating a serious positive impact on society.

Her future mission is to take astrology to new heights and make society more prosperous with her contribution.

Another feather of success is her pen. She has authored four books with great success. Those books are gaining immense popularity.

Being a woman entrepreneur, she always expresses the need for woman empowerment and how it can help society. She says, "Be proud of being a woman, celebrate your womanhood".

Her wholehearted involvement in numerous social activities, humbleness, and candid nature help her to stand out from others.



Champion of Change

Leading a movement towards a stronger and more vibrant media landscape

Adyasha Satpathy

CEO, Dharitri Odia daily and Orissa POST English daily

Business woman, mother, wife, coffee addict and nature lover, Adyasha Satpathy wears many hats. She, glides through all her roles comfortably. As the head of a media house, she hails from the family of emancipated women. She is the daughter in law of Late Nandini Sathpathy, first lady CM of Odisha.

The Oriya daily, Dharitri, was started by the Samajwadi Society on November 24, 1974 from Bhubaneswar, the capital city of Orissa. During 1986, Dharitri started web offset printing to increase press production and reach out to a larger reader base. The real growth story of Dharitri started during late eighties and early nineties with increased distribution. It became the only newspaper in the state to cater to both urban and rural, young and upwardly mobile readers and also

to the cream population of Orissa. Dharitri catapulted to a whooping rise, both quantitatively and qualitatively, emerging as the No.1 newspaper not only in the capital city of Bhubaneswar but also in a majority of the districts and towns of the state. Today, Dharitri's circulation is the largest in Cuttack. Adyasha's husband, Tathagata Satpathy helms the responsibility of the Editor-in-Chief of the newspaper.

The couple is sensitive to environmental issues, underprovided strata of the society and lack of education. Inspired by their mother, late Nandini Satpathy whose progressive work with specific purpose to help the downtrodden proceed towards prosperity and land-ceiling reforms, are legendary, Adyasha and Tathagata strongly advocate for those values. They have used their publication to

address various societal problems and raise awareness among the people, focusing on the youth who represent the future of the country.

From the banner of Dharitri, Adyasha conducts various events and conferences to bring together people of excellence on a common platform. Several correspondents and journalists from different media houses were felicitated for their exemplary works in the field of investigative journalism, at the glorious event of the golden anniversary celebration of Odisha's leading daily. Addressing journalists at the special function, Tathagata Satpathy, a seasoned editor, spoke of the downside of dependence on secondary sources in journalism, which is creating a vacuum in the domain of ground reporting, resulting in misinterpretations and lack of depth in news reports.

Dharitri, being the most popular Odia daily, the publication follows strict adherence to immaculate Odia vocabulary, resulting in a strong reader base for the newspaper across Odisha. Hrushikesh Mallick, president of Odisha Sahitya Akademi endorsed that journalism at Dharitri continues to maintain the philosophy with which it was created and, therefore, has been able to uphold its critical editorial policy.

Climate issues being foremost on her mind, Adyasha is an advocate of environment conservation. She started the 'Dharitri Climate Fund', which will be given to young climate warriors at the grassroots for helping them in their endeavours in addressing climate change.

An initiative towards awareness drive is the creation of 'Dharitri Youth Conclave'. Tathagata feels that such conclaves bring together people, youth in particular, under one platform and provide them an opportunity to talk, discuss and thus, be aware and educate.

"In today's busy life, reporters tend to miss out vital aspects of a news story in search of a bigger lead. Later, these smaller developments become an important news story," Adyasha, in the capacity of the leading lady of the organisation said, "The observational skills of a reporter must be concerned with every arc of the story."



Creating a Meaningful Impact, a Changemaker's Dream Come True

IT Engineer turned visionary leader isn't just leading a successful cattle feed company, but igniting a revolution, that empowers women to transform lives both on the farm and in the boardroom

Ritu Agarwal

Managing Director, Gyandhara Industries, Lucknow

Ritu Agarwal, a passionate advocate for female representation in agriculture, declares, "If a woman can look up to me one day, believing in her strength to bring about change, my purpose is truly fulfilled. I am dedicated to ensuring that women are not only involved in the farms but also actively participating in the boardrooms steering the transformation of those farms." Gyandhara's mission goes beyond delivering top-notch cattle feed. It's about nurturing farmers, with a firm belief that empowered women hold the key to agricultural transformation. Driven by a passion for rural development, Ritu's mission is clear and this isn't just business; it's a commitment to empowering communities.

For Ritu, success isn't solely measured in growth and achievements. It's about the passion that fuels Gyandhara's

commitment to quality, animal health, and farmer prosperity. This translates into uplifting rural communities, amplifying the voices of those feeding the nation, and ultimately contributing to national well-being. Ritu champions social impact through initiatives like Gyandhara Mitra, empowering rural women with sustainable livelihoods.

"With a clear vision, Ritu Agarwal aims to raise the Indian standard of cattle farming and health, boosting average milk production from 6-7 liters/day to over 15 liters/day through premium products and awareness initiatives"

Manthan and Vet Camps educate farmers on best practices, offering free cattle healthcare, and encouraging knowledge and well-being.

With a clear vision, Ritu Agarwal aims to raise the Indian standard of cattle farming and health, boosting average milk production from 6-7 liters/day to over 15 liters/day through premium products and awareness initiatives. This ambitious goal speaks volumes about her dedication to rural development.

The Indian feed industry is a dynamic landscape growing at a CAGR of 9.5%, and Gyandhara is strategically positioned to ride the wave. With the dairy industry witnessing a white revolution, and India boasting the world's largest cattle population, the demand for high-quality feed is surging. Gyandhara is poised to meet this demand while prioritizing quality, affordability and focusing on farmers' income.

Since its inception, Gyandhara has prioritized quality and farmer well-being. Their commitment, combined with expert-formulated, technologically advanced feed, has resulted in consistently healthy cattle and high-quality milk production. It's no surprise that all Gyandhara products have cleared the BIS test for the past five years, and the company holds the distinction of being the region's fastest-growing feed company, achieving a ₹ 220 crore turnover in record time.

Ritu's dedication to empowering women has garnered well-deserved recognition. In 2023, she received the prestigious "ET Inspiring Women Leaders Award" from the Times Group. Awards like the "Mahila Udyami Award" from the Uttar Pradesh government further cement her role as a champion for women's entrepreneurship.

The story is more than just an entrepreneurial success but a testament to the power of passion, purpose, and a commitment to social impact. As Ritu charts the course for Gyandhara's future, one can be certain that her journey will continue to inspire and empower, leaving a lasting legacy of transformation in the lives of countless women and rural communities.

A changemaker superseding an entrepreneur with her mission of social responsibility, and unwavering commitment to women's empowerment, Ritu paves the way for a brighter, more sustainable future for rural communities.

Nurturing Global Citizens

The largest network of 925 Schools and colleges in Asia, nurturing over 900,000 students, Pioneer of education excellence

Seema Boppana

Academic Director, Sri Chaitanya Techno Schools

Seema Boppana gained her initial work experience as Administrative Director of Sri Chaitanya. Taking the foundation built by the chairpersons as a base, in 2008, she translated her dreams for Sri Chaitanya Techno Schools into reality. She designed a path-breaking curriculum for the students at the primary, middle, and high school levels in collaboration with academic experts from the IITs and the NITs to meet the requirements of a competitive world. This led to the introduction of the 'Integrated Syllabus' for classes 6–10, which laid a strong foundation for students facing the entrance examinations. Starting with five schools, the chain now has more than 564 branches across 24 states and 248 cities in India.

Igniting Young Minds

Seema graduated in science and further pursued higher education abroad, majoring in management studies with a computer science minor. Studying in the USA gave her exposure to exploring the science of the development of a child's brain. Using scientific knowledge as the core, along with her Research & Development team, she developed the **Star Mavericks Program** in pre-school education in 2018, which paved the way for 'Creating a Child Prodigy'. Following the success of the **Mavericks Learning Approach**, it was further developed for higher grades to meet new-age demands and broaden young minds.

The '**Techno curriculum**' is a unique framework that accelerates the analytical part of the child's mind based on the concept of 'self-learning through practical interactive sessions' in the classroom. Therefore, it makes learning more holistic, comprehensive, and application-oriented.

Redefining Education

Education at **Future Pathways: The New Generation Global Schools** follows

Advanced Brainology – powered by the Mavericks Learning Approach, integrating academic enhancers like design thinking, STEAM, robotics, gamification, entrepreneurship, financial literacy, visual and performing arts, career guidance, and mentorship programs. Thus, enriching the individual's potential through project-based learning and global exposure through international curriculum for the all-round development of the future generation.

"At Sri Chaitanya Schools, we have always been focused on providing quality education at an affordable price to our students. We are present in all the big cities as well as in very small towns. Our fee is on par with any local school and can be afforded even by lower-income families."

Celebrating Edu-Preneur

Empowering students through scientific learning and outcome-based education, producing future leaders

Sushma Boppana

CEO and Academic Director, Sri Chaitanya Educational Institutions

Shaping the Future Generation

A dynamic leader and a visionary, Sushma Boppana recognised the need of an engaging holistic learning environment to develop the skills and mindset needed to thrive in an ever-evolving world. Boppana's exposure to education abroad and working with

The curriculum is mapped to board examinations and supplemented by enriched mathematics and science to prepare students from an early age for IITs and premier engineering and science colleges.

Inclusion in Education

The schools celebrate all festivals, respecting all religions. Including parents and grandparents as stakeholders in learning and interpersonal skills, there is a tremendous social impact in mid-sized and smaller towns. Students are subtly introduced to gender sensitization and respect for women as a part of the code of conduct, and they participate in various social awareness campaigns, animal care, and social responsibility programs that would help them become responsible citizens. Seema further included Kindergarten through 10th Grade to provide students with a standardised foundation. She believes that schools should educate both students and parents for Competitions, Olympiads, and other opportunities that children require for skill enhancement.

Seema emerges as a pathfinder for her contribution as a leader in the education sector, who has made an indelible mark in school education and is a source of inspiration for other women who wish to give wings to their dreams and, in the process, contribute to the larger cause of society.

US firms, allowed her a perspective into understanding the need-gap in traditional learning. Introducing 'Cognitive and Social-Emotional Learning' methodology at Sri Chaitanya Group of Institutions fostered creativity, innovation and contemporary approach to education.

Boppana graduated in Computer Science from Birla Institute of Technology and Science (BITS), Pilani and completed Master's degree in IT from the United States. Her experience in meeting deadlines, customer care and team collaboration, working with cross-cultural teams, and conducting research, prepared her for structuring and executing her expansion plans. She was able to transfer her knowledge to bring in better reforms and practices into preparing for competitive exams. In the capacity of the CEO, she spearheaded an integrated curriculum spanning national, state, and board levels for the students to excel academically. Her initiative towards preparing students for nationwide entrance examinations, such as JEE Advanced and JEE Mains for Engineering aspirants and AIIMS, NEET and JIPMER for medical students, defined the future for students from rural areas and small towns to pursue successful careers in medicine or engineering.

Inclusivity in Learning

Aligning with the vision of Dr B. S. Rao and Dr Jhansi Lakshmi Bai Boppana, founders of Sri Chaitanya, the institution continues to support eager learners irrespective of financial constraints or geographical limitations. The group has also leveraged advancement in Technology and founded Infinity Learn, an EdTech platform that currently delivers outcome-based learning to 7 million registered users, and 800K active subscribers with its premium content.

In an attempt to nurture future-ready citizens of India, the institution endeavours to offer a scientific learning system that provides equal opportunity to millions of students across social and physical boundaries; creating student-centric methodologies that would develop problem solving skills, analytical power and spark innovation.

"I want to create sustainable and high-quality education for millions of learners across India. Every child has the right to dream for a better future. Our job is to help Transform those dreams into reality. My journey so far has been very positive and rewarding."



Seema Boppana

Sushma Boppana

Fostering Women Empowerment

Sri Chaitanya Group is sensitive to the cause of "Education of the Girl child". Since 1986, starting with a Jr college for girls, Dr Jhansi Lakshmi Bai has played an active role in creating a solid platform for girls to thrive and build successful careers. She is a living inspiration to her daughters and all the past and present girl students of Sri Chaitanya.

Boppana advocates for increased female representation in senior educational and leadership positions.

60% of Sri Chaitanya's workforce comprises women. "My life's ambition has been to empower women, especially girl children through education. I take inspiration from my mother, and all those women leaders who are in the process of transforming the future," she expressed. "Educated and empowered women have unlimited potential to become the catalysts for social changes in modern India. But for this to happen, we need to create nurturing and supportive spaces for girl children."



Trailblazer and New Age Entrepreneur

Striving towards bringing change to the world by creating opportunities for all stakeholders in society

Ananya Birla

Indian Entrepreneur, Songwriter and Singer

Ananya Birla, at a young age of 17, founded her first start-up, Svatantra Microfin Pvt. Ltd., a microfinance institution (MFI). This maiden entrepreneurial venture demonstrated her aptitude and potential to recognise the need for women to be financially independent and encourage their entrepreneurial spirit by extending differential banking solutions. One of the fastest-growing MFIs promoting financial inclusion, Svatantra provides micro-loans to rural women entrepreneurs to become economically self-sustainable. The loans are used for business requirements such as working capital and other setup costs.

Under Ananya's leadership, the company has played a significant role in bringing about change in the microfinance industry through constant innovations and improving its offerings. In just over three years as the Chairperson and Managing Director, the young entrepreneur wrote her success story by creating a financial service entity that

could create value for its stakeholders. The portfolio includes over 5 million clients across 100,000 villages, with disbursements in excess of Rs 21,500 crore since inception, or a CAGR of 67 percent in the FY18–23 period. Ananya Birla is the Chairperson of Svatantra Micro Housing Finance Corporation and Co-Chairperson of ASSOCHAM's Microfinance Council of India.

Amongst various other noteworthy titles, Ananya was conferred by the former Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Shri Devendra Fadnavis, for her role in

“Recently, Ananya and her brother Aryaman Vikram, children of billionaire Kumar Mangalam Birla, joined the boards of Aditya Birla Management Corporation, Grasim Industries, and Aditya Birla Fashion & Retail”

empowering more than 500,000 rural Indian women and pioneering 100% cashless disbursement since the beginning of Svatantra's operation. Expanding the scope of work, with the recent acquisition of Chaitanya India Fin Credit, Svatantra has become the second-largest NBFC MFI in India.

Recently, Ananya and her brother Aryaman Vikram, children of billionaire Kumar Mangalam Birla, joined the boards of Aditya Birla Management Corporation, Grasim Industries, and Aditya Birla Fashion & Retail. Their nuanced understanding of new-age business models and emerging shifts in consumer behaviour will infuse fresh energy into the board of Aditya Birla Fashion as they take responsibility for taking the business to greater heights.

A multifaceted personality, Ananya Birla is a singer who pursues her music seriously, and it was a moment of pride when her English single 'Meant to Be' made the platinum list in India. Another of her artistic endeavours is designing. Her passion for artforms has led to the creation of Ikai Asai, an artisanal home décor and tableware brand. In an attempt to create soulful handmade crafts connecting to the past legacy, she has built a community of craftsmen, designers, and artists to thrive. From ceramics and tableware to furniture, lighting, and floor coverings, Ikai Asai champions distinctive decorative objects that make the experience of aesthetic living possible. An alumna of the University of Oxford, Ananya leads a constantly expanding team, relentlessly working towards providing solutions. With innovation at the core of the business, she has launched her own e-commerce venture, Curocarte.

During the pandemic, she founded the Ananya Birla Foundation with the aim of 'forging a realm of compassion, equality, and inclusivity'. It has a program to provide resources across sectors—mental health, equality, education, financial inclusion, climate change, and humanitarian relief efforts. Ananya also co-founded the Mpower movement, an awareness initiative that works towards eliminating the stigma associated with mental health illnesses.

Her management style revolves around strength identification, thought building, nurturing ideas, and empowering people. Undeterred by obstacles, Ananya loves a challenge, and her breakthrough ideas, coupled with her perseverance, make her a thought leader of this generation.

Education for Girls is a Now-or-Never Question

Investing in skilling young women to empower them for increased equal participation in the workforce is critical

Devyani Jaipuria

Chairperson, Dharav High School, Pro-Vice Chairperson-DPS International Gurugram, DPS 45 & DPS Jaipur

We are witnessing a watershed moment for advancing gender equity and equality for women, as we slowly inch closer to the SDG deadlines. Last year, India climbed eight places in the annual Gender Gap Report 2023 in terms of gender parity; a good sign many will argue, but also a clear indication that a lot more needs to be done. The government's many initiatives for women's empowerment are a testament to its commitment to improving gender parity. However, there needs to be a systemic change and increased financing to match the ambitious plans.

First step of gender equity is Inclusive education

Inclusion truly is the cornerstone of progress. Ensuring girls have equal opportunities for access and quality education is the first step to attaining gender parity. The Samagra Shiksha initiative by the government provides access to quality education for all. However we cannot be oblivious to the intersectionality of the challenges that are faced by girl children and their opportunities for equal education. Investing in safe environments for girls, creating an ecosystem of care for younger siblings, ensuring access to toilets and behavioral change campaigns are all keys to incorporating systemic changes to arrive at inclusivity.

Focus on skilling of Young Women

Investing in skilling young women to empower them for increased equal participation in the workforce is critical. When we equip our girls and young women with the requisite skills and knowledge to confidently enter the

workforce, we set in motion a chain of events that positively impact other outcomes. We break generational cycles of child marriage which lead to poor maternal as well as child health, we improve access to nutrition, and we break cultural and societal norms that restrict women to only specific activities. The skilling initiatives by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Ministry of minority affairs for young girls are a great example to this end and aligned with the revamped NEP (National Education Policy) However, more public-private partnerships are required for offering further opportunities to girls to interface with the private sector workforce and its needs.

Getting our women to advance In tech

This brings me to another pertinent aspect around focus on STEM education for girls which will ensure we have a cohort of young women year on year who are driven by innovation, critical thinking and creativity. This is all the more important considering that women make up only 14% of the total workforce in STEM fields in India. We must integrate innovation and critical thinking early in K-12 education so that girl children are encouraged to take up tech-based courses later during higher education.



Women as leaders and decision makers

We need to move towards a world where women have a greater voice in decision making, across policy, business and communities. We must encourage and hone young women to have a stronger agency and be equipped to lead businesses. What also needs to be addressed is the fact that access to credit for women entrepreneurs still remains a challenge, with institutional gender bias limiting their growth. What we are looking at is a gigantic untapped potential of women world over. In fact, gender parity in entrepreneurship could add 5-6 trillion USD in net value to the global economy. This also has a cascading effect, as each women-led firm is more likely to hire female employees than male-led ones. Women need to be given equal opportunities to build and lead businesses on an equal footing as men.

It is only when we look at every aspect of our economic growth and progress with a gender-lens, can we actually advance. This is not just a way to ensure equal opportunities for women and create just economies, but it will improve economic outcomes and GDP, help us battle environment challenges and move us closer to our SDGs.



Changing the Trajectory for Women in Tech

A role model driven by a purpose to bring about meaningful transformation through her leadership and contribution to a diverse and inclusive tech industry

Roshni Nadar Malhotra

Chairperson, HCL Technologies

Roshni Nadar Malhotra, Indian billionaire and philanthropist has achieved stellar growth as the first woman leader of a listed IT company in India. In 2020, the young, energetic leader assumed the position of chairperson of HCL Tech, a multinational IT services and consulting firm based in India, founded by her father, Shiv Nadar, in 1976. HCL emerged as a central player in India's rise as an IT hub, and when Roshni took over, her strategic decisions and futuristic approach for the company took it to the next level.

In spite of the slowdown in the global economy and geopolitical issues, Roshni Nadar Malhotra has steered the business towards consistent growth. As a visionary leader, she credits her leadership team for the company's success and acknowledges the contribution of the entire organisation that has managed to land major deals in the past few months.

Positioning as a market challenger with differentiated products and services, catering to 25 geographies.

HCL Tech achieved a significant milestone with its total revenue hitting Rs. 1.01 lakh crore for FY23, a year-on-year growth of 18.5%. The company has also recently closed a mega deal worth \$2.1 billion (Rs 17,508 crore) with US-based Verizon Business for managed network services (MNS), which is expected to

“Roshni holds an undergraduate degree in communications from Northwestern University and an MBA from the Kellogg School of Management. At Kellogg, she was awarded the Dean's Distinguished Service Award”

start contributing towards the bottom line soon. Additionally, in Europe, the company won a contract from Siemens AG to modernise its cloud-led digital transformation. A key initiative that benefited the company was the acquisition of IBM Software Products in 2018; its annual recurring revenue crossed \$1 billion in FY23. HCL Tech delivered a share-holder return at a CAGR of 22.2%, the highest among competitors.

The company has witnessed rapid expansion in a short time period, and to further consolidate, Roshni has set a strategic objective to 'deliver top total shareholder returns in the medium- to long-term', while having already delivered the highest returns to shareholders (in the industry) in the current year.

As the Chairperson and Trustee of the Shiv Nadar Foundation, she is the driving force behind VidyaGyan, a leadership academy for the economically underprivileged, meritorious rural students of Uttar Pradesh, and has been working towards nurturing future leaders from rural India who can be catalysts of change for their communities, villages, and the nation at large.

Passionate about wildlife and conservation, The Habitats Trust was established in 2018 with the goal of protecting India's natural habitats and indigenous species. To create awareness, she produced a TV series for Animal Planet/Discovery based on the most endangered wildlife species in India, 'On The Brink', whose episode on bats was the recipient of the Best Indian National Film Award.

In recognition of her outstanding work both in business and in philanthropy, Roshni has received numerous prestigious awards and accolades. She is a member of the Dean's Advisory Council at the MIT School of Engineering, USA, and is a member of the Kellogg School of Management Executive Board for Asia. She serves on the board of directors of the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) and is an independent director on the board of HDFC Asset Management Company.

Roshni holds an undergraduate degree in communications from Northwestern University and an MBA from the Kellogg School of Management. At Kellogg, she was awarded the Dean's Distinguished Service Award. In 2023, Roshni was conferred with the Schaffner Award by Kellogg for her contribution to society.

Love Yourself International Women's Day

Dr Manjula Pooja Shroff is the MD & CEO of the Kalorex Group. She holds a Doctorate and is an executive alumni from IIM Ahmedabad and London School of Economics. A visionary Edupreneur with dedicated and diverse experience in the field of education, her educational institutes and social projects have made a noteworthy impact on the educational landscape

Dr Manjula Pooja Shroff

MD & CEO, Kalorex Group

International Women's Day is not only a celebration of the achievements and contributions of women but also a time to reflect on the challenges they face and the empowerment needed to overcome them. In the midst of advocating for gender equality, it is crucial to acknowledge the significance of self-care, particularly the concept of "me time" for women.

In the hustle and bustle of daily life, women often find themselves juggling multiple roles – as professionals, caregivers, wives, mothers, and more. Amid these responsibilities, it is easy to lose sight of one's own value and significance. "Me time" serves as a powerful tool for women to reconnect with themselves and nurture a deeper understanding of their inherent worth beyond what the society expects from them as stereotypical behavior.

Taking a break from external pressures allows women to introspect, appreciate their accomplishments, and recognize their unique qualities. Some may wish to explore certain hobbies and talents that have remained dormant for years. This self-awareness becomes the foundation for building self-esteem and confidence. By investing time in activities that bring joy and fulfillment, women can develop a stronger sense of identity, ultimately contributing to a positive self-image and self-worth.

Empowered women are often seen as individuals who not only overcome obstacles but also proactively seek opportunities for personal and

professional growth. However, maintaining high levels of motivation in the face of challenges can be demanding. Spending time with yourself acts as a catalyst for rejuvenation, helping women recharge their mental and emotional batteries.

The societal expectations placed on women often revolve around self-sacrifice and putting others' needs before their own. This sacrificial mindset can lead to burnout, resentment, and a sense of discontent. **International Women's Day** serves as a reminder that women have the right to prioritize their own needs and desires.

Women have an opportunity to live for yourself – to indulge in activities that bring personal satisfaction and joy. Whether it's dedicating time to personal growth, pursuing passions, or simply enjoying moments of solitude, living for yourself is in no way a selfish act as it is sometimes perceived as. As women embrace this autonomy, they break free from societal expectations, asserting their right to lead fulfilling lives on their own terms.

Let us take inspiration from women who have been role models for us on personal, professional or patriotic level. These are the ladies who may have made a mark in some way or the other on how they have managed to face adversity and make the changes that they wanted to see in their world. They made sacrifices stepped out of their comfort zone many a time, but managed to balance out pressure to handle everything beautifully. International Women's Day is a wonderful occasion to recognize and celebrate the



achievements of women globally. It's crucial to emphasize the importance of self-care and self-improvement in the journey of every woman. Taking the time to invest in oneself, both physically and mentally, plays a significant role in personal growth and well-being.

Encouraging women to love and prioritize themselves is a powerful message. It's a reminder that their worth extends beyond societal expectations and roles. Every step taken towards self-improvement is a step towards becoming a better version of oneself.

While we celebrate the accomplishments of women, let's also acknowledge the strength, resilience, and potential within each woman to create positive changes in their own lives and in the world. Here's to empowering women to embrace self-love, pursue their passions, and continue inspiring others with their remarkable journeys.

As women across the globe embrace themselves, they pave the way for a future where self-love and self-empowerment are integral components of the journey towards gender equality. Let this International Women's Day be a reminder to every woman – love yourself, live for yourself, and with every step forward, become a better version of the incredible person you already are.

Touching the Sky

More power to those who dream with their eyes open, navigate through every challenge and eventually emerge as winners

FLT LT Punya Nanjappa

Indian Air Force

Nari Shakti being the theme of India's 75th Republic Day celebration, the grand parade on Kartavya Path, in the heart of the National Capital, New Delhi, displayed a spectacular combination of military feat and cultural vibrancy on January 26, 2024.

IAF showcased a breath-taking performance with a flypast featuring 51 aircraft during the Republic Day celebrations. This impressive line-up included 29 fighter aircraft, 8 transport planes, 13 helicopters, and one heritage aircraft. When 51 Indian Air Force (IAF) aircrafts zoomed over the Kartavya Path, piloting one of the fighter jets in the flypast was a young woman pilot from Mysuru. Flight Lieutenant (FLT LT) Punya Nanjappa was piloting the MiG-29 fighter and was among the eight female pilots who flew in various formations at the Republic Day parade. It was indeed a proud moment for India.

Breaking barriers is nothing new for Punya Nanjappa. She was the only girl in her batch training with 40 male cadets and the only female cadet from Karnataka to be selected as a trainee pilot for the flying branch training at the Air Force Academy, becoming the second woman from the state of Karnataka to be a fighter jet pilot after Meghana Shanbough from Chikkamagalur to do so. The training for cadets who are selected for the flying branch is divided into three stages. Punya completed Stage 1 training at the academy in Dundigal and was selected to join the fighter stream. Commissioned into the IAF in



December 2020, FLT LT Punya is from the No. 47 Squadron of the IAF.

The sky is literally the limit! While choosing a career path, not many students are able to pursue their dreams and turn them into reality. Mysuru-based Coluvanda Punya Nanjappa is one such dreamer who followed her childhood passion to be a fighter jet pilot and worked hard towards achieving it. Not only is it a personal and professional achievement for Punya, but a social one too, a rare distinction for a woman who has her roots in Kodagu, a land of many

“Flight Lieutenant (FLT LT) Punya Nanjappa was piloting the MiG-29 fighter and was among the eight female pilots who flew in various formations at the Republic Day parade. It was indeed a proud moment for India”

‘defence personnel’. Though the district basks in the glory of producing a Field Marshal, a General, and innumerable Lieutenant Generals, Brigadiers, and Majors in the Indian Army and their equal ranks in the Navy and the Air Force, for the first time a woman fighter pilot emerged from the tiny district.

Punya is the daughter of Coluvanda Anuradha Nanjappa, who served as a teacher at St. Joseph’s Central School, Vijayanagar, and the late Coluvanda P. Bala Nanjappa, who held the position of manager at Prabha Theatre. Though the family hails from a small district, they encouraged their daughter to aim high and achieve through hard work and courage.

Punya Nanjappa’s achievement represents a remarkable moment, highlighting the strides made by women in the IAF and representing women-power, equity and equal ownership in every walk of life with their male counterparts.



Trailblazing Leadership Dr Nafeesa Ahmed’s Vision for Empowering Minds in Education

In the bustling city of Bangalore, where the convergence of tradition and modernity creates a unique educational landscape, Dr Nafeesa Ahmed stands as a beacon of transformative leadership in the field of education. Dr Nafeesa has carved out a unique path for herself as the Director of the Presidency Group of Institutions while also carrying on her father, Dr Nissar Ahmed’s legacy of excellence and innovation

Dr Nafeesa Ahmed

Director, Presidency Group of Institutions, Bengaluru, Karnataka

Dr Nafeesa’s educational journey is nothing short of impressive. A graduate of Mount Carmel College, Bangalore, she holds a Bachelor of Business Management (BBM) degree and pursued postgraduate studies in English literature at Bangalore University. Her commitment to education led her to earn a bachelor’s degree in education from IGNOU. Venturing beyond Indian shores, Dr Nafeesa enriched her perspective with a Master’s in International Management from Royal Holloway, University of London. This

international exposure was instrumental in shaping her understanding of global education trends.

Her dedication to continuous learning took her to the prestigious Harvard School, where she honed her skills in management and leadership. Dr Nafeesa’s academic prowess is underscored by her diverse qualifications, including a BBM, a B.Ed., an MA in English Literature, and a Master’s in International Management. Her educational journey serves as an inspiration, reflecting the importance of a broad and holistic approach to learning.

Leadership at the Presidency Group of Institutions

Taking the reins as the Director of the Presidency Group of Institutions, Dr Nafeesa has led the K-12 chain of elite institutions with a commitment to “Equal Opportunity in Diversity.” Her vision is to provide high-quality, affordable education to students from diverse backgrounds. Focusing on aspects like course structure, pedagogical innovation, and outcome-based evaluation, she has fostered a conducive teaching and learning environment.

During the challenging times of the pandemic, Dr Nafeesa displayed exemplary leadership by seamlessly transitioning the education system from physical to virtual and eventually to a mixed classroom approach. Her leadership has been pivotal in ensuring that the team of highly-qualified educators delivers the finest education to students.

Accolades and Achievements: A Trailblazer in Education

Dr Nafeesa’s journey is adorned with prestigious awards and recognitions, attesting to her significant contributions to the field of education. Notably, she received the Economic Times Power Icon Award for “Exceptional Contribution in Education” in 2020 and was honoured as “The Education Icon of the Year 2021” by Education Today. Her recognition as a ‘Speaker’ at the “APAC 5th Global Education & Skill Conclave” and features in Women Entrepreneurs and Education World India showcase her as a thought leader in the education domain.

A crowning achievement in her illustrious career is the conferral of a Ph.D., Philosophiae Doctor Honoris Causa (HC) in Education Management by Ecole Supérieure Robert De Sorbon (ESRDS), France, Europe. The recognition, awarded at The House of Lords, London, is a testament to Dr Nafeesa’s global impact and commitment to educational excellence.

As Dr Nafeesa Ahmed continues to shape the future of education, her journey stands as an inspiration, showcasing the transformative power of visionary leadership in the realm of academia. In the words of Dr Nafeesa, “My loved ones have been my rock through thick and thin. Having their back has been crucial to my success.” Indeed, her success radiates not only through personal accolades but also through the positive impact she has had on the lives of countless students and educators.

Bagging the Oscar

A storyteller who is forever in love with her scripts tells the world wonderful stories set in local-global scenarios

Guneet Monga Kapoor

Producer & CEO, Sikhya Entertainment



Two-time Oscar winner Guneet Monga Kapoor has made over 35 movies and been around for 15 years in the film industry, but still retains the enthusiasm of a newcomer. With Academy Award-winning films like 'Period. End of Sentence', 'The Elephant Whisperers', 'Pagglait', 'Kathal: A Jackfruit Mystery', etc., Kapoor is inclined towards making women-centric movies, believing in the power of the medium to influence the general mindset and society at large.

The Delhi-born producer moved to Mumbai in 2006 in order to pursue her dream of making movies. She worked as a line producer on 'Say Salaam India', 'Rang Rasiya', and 'Dasvidaniya', before launching her production banner, Sikhya Entertainment, in 2008. When Kapoor was associated with Anurag Kashyap's two-part cult film 'Gangs of Wasseypur' in 2012 as a producer, being a young girl in her twenties was more challenging than being a woman in the industry. Her struggle was not on the gender equality front, but it was her age that proved to be a deterrent in an industry that strongly endorsed legacy and longstanding associations. She dyed her hair gray and wore saris for meetings to appear old enough so that potential clients trust her with 'a lot of money'.

Kapoor takes a balanced approach to 'making money while breaking the glass ceiling' while making films. As someone who's at the helm of both creative and financial processes, she has earned the

reputation of being one of the most successful producers in the movie business, which is all about working in a 100 percent equity industry. So, it is imperative that her investors see money in her production work and are willing to finance her next film. Lunchbox, with its storyline about an old person and voiceover, proved to be a hit in spite of speculation, and the 10-crore film made 100 crore. Recently, she collaborated with Karan Johar on the action-thriller 'Kill'. It belongs to the extreme action genre, a rarity in Indian cinema. The film Kill made profits even before coming to India. Upcoming projects for the producer include an action film, a series called 'Gyaarah Gyaarah', and a Netflix documentary on rapper Yo Yo Honey Singh. While creating her montage of

"The Delhi-born producer moved to Mumbai in 2006 in order to pursue her dream of making movies. She worked as a line producer on 'Say Salaam India', 'Rang Rasiya', and 'Dasvidaniya', before launching her production banner, Sikhya Entertainment, in 2008"

films, she hopes that her journey will inspire young producers to join the Indian film industry.

Kapoor wants to continue telling great stories for the rest of the world while reinventing the wheel. It is a complex process that starts with objectively evaluating the 'idea' or the concept and the 'genre' that a moviemaker would choose, followed by the 'fitment' and knowledge of the 'market size'. That, in a nutshell, is the craft of producing!

The British Academy of Film and Television (BAFTA) roped in the acclaimed producer as an ambassador for the Indian extension of its 'Breakthrough India Initiative'. The initiative, is a part of the institution's year-round work to support new talent, operates alongside their awards ceremonies worldwide.

Inclusion is the stepping stone to any kind of empowerment. While there is so much work being done with the Black and South Asian communities, Guneet Monga Kapoor strongly advocates that it's time to talk about the brown community and not stereotype India as the land of snake charmers and cows. She acknowledges BAFTA and Netflix for creating a platform to showcase Indian talent.



Leading the Path of Educational Excellence

Woman power emerges as powerful force shaping the future, the visionary leadership makes education universally accessible

Dr Grace Pinto

Managing Director, Ryan Group of Schools

Dr Pinto's journey is a testament to her unwavering commitment to quality education. Collaborating with her husband, Dr A. F. Pinto, she has led the establishment of one of India's largest chains of educational institutions with her faith in Lord Jesus Christ. Spanning over 40 cities, 18 states, the Ryan Group has left an indelible mark on countless lives, embodying a commitment to excellence and progressive

development.

As a leader, Dr Pinto steers the strategic direction of Ryan Group, placing emphasis on inclusivity and contemporary relevance. With 95% female teachers nationwide, her leadership radiates amiability, articulation, and awareness, leaving a lasting impact on education.

Dr Grace Pinto, equally passionate about education, has dedicated her career to teaching

science and math. Committed to providing intellectual, emotional, physical, social, and spiritual support, she envisions creating opportunities for women to wear as many hats as they desire. Madam Grace Pinto stands as the epitome of character and leadership—an 'Edupreneur'. Following Gandhi's wisdom that educating a woman educates an entire family, she oversees the education of nearly a quarter of a million students, infusing her commitment and love for humanity to elevate educational excellence in tune with the modern era. Her commitment to providing quality education has a profound impact on families and society as a whole.

At Ryan, the vision is to equip students with 21st Century skills and to prepare them for the future. The emphasis is placed on making academics the cornerstone of a multi-faceted educational experience. The unique approach to learning enhances lessons taught within the classroom by incorporating developmental experiences outside the classroom.

Dr Grace Pinto's outstanding contributions have garnered her prestigious awards, including the "Women Leadership Award in Education 2023" by Economic Times, the "Lifetime Achievement Award 2022" by H. E. Mr. Prithvirajsing Roopun, GCSK, President of the Republic of Mauritius, and the "Her Power Award 2022" by Brand Story. Despite her accolades, she remains grounded, attributing her success to a higher power.

In conclusion, Dr Grace Pinto's journey is characterized by visionary leadership and a profound impact on education. As she continues to shape the educational landscape, her legacy as a transformative leader in Indian education will endure, inspiring inclusion and paving the way for a brighter, more promising future. This Women's Day, we celebrate Dr Pinto's contributions, acknowledging her as a beacon of inspiration for inclusivity in education and beyond.



The World Is Her Oyster

Helping countries to close gaps in income, reduce poverty and inequality, and make a sustainable planet

Anshula Kant

MD & CFO, World Bank Group

Anshula Kant is on a tough mission to eradicate poverty and increase income levels globally. Kant is the first woman Managing Director and Chief Financial Officer reporting to the President of the World Bank Group. She is responsible for financial reporting, risk management, and mobilization of IDA and multiple financial resources, among other key management duties. The World Bank is a preeminent global institution that aids developing countries in achieving their financial goals, and with a proven track record of more than 35 years in service, she earned her position on October 7, 2019 for the much-coveted post. She earned her bachelor's degree with honours in economics from Lady Shri Ram College for Women and a master's degree in Economics from the Delhi School of Economics, and ever since has applied

her knowledge in the banking industry. A confident banker who has been successfully handling a diverse array of retail and corporate banking, mortgage finance, local currency and foreign exchange instruments, and overcoming leadership challenges covering finance, risk, operations, treasury, funding, regulatory compliance, and general management is using her collective knowledge and skills to execute a large-scale operation across 130 of the World

"The expertise of Kant was visible recently at one of the G20 Finance Track meetings during discussions on the Multilateral Development Bank (MDB) going for a lower credit rating"

Bank's office locations, with a mandate to help 189 countries.

As the Managing Director and member of the Board of the State Bank of India (SBI), she was recognised as one of the most competent finance professionals in the world. She has managed \$38 billion in revenues and total assets of \$500 billion. She was directly responsible for the SBI's risk, compliance, stressed asset portfolio management, and long-term sustainability. Anshula Kant spearheaded the creation of investment opportunities while empowering risk management throughout the bank.

The expertise of Kant was visible recently at one of the G20 Finance Track meetings during discussions on the Multilateral Development Bank (MDB) going for a lower credit rating. The bank commands the highest rating currently, which allows it to raise funds at lower interest rates and may restrict its flow of funds. Defending the MDB's rating, Kant said, "We are among the world's biggest non-sovereign issuers. Size and scale are important." She explained that any rating downgrade would mean an increase in borrowing costs for it.

Empowering women in banking service was another important milestone achieved. During her tenure at SBI in 2017, when 46,000 women employees comprised 22 percent of the bank's labour force, the workplace infrastructure, from chairs to room temperature to basic amenities, was not conducive to women as it had been over the years customized to fit men's preferences. Kant brought in several changes to the employee policies, such as leave eligibility and other constraints, to support women in continuing their careers. In January 2014, SBI granted two years of sabbatical leave from work for female employees to meet their personal needs. Under her leadership, in May 2017, SBI also permitted the 'work from home' option for most of its employees, except for jobs such as customer handling that required face-to-face interaction. Remote working was further extended for more than a year in the case of female employees. Taking into account the effect of the husband's job posting on a woman's career, the bank also came up with the scheme to provide transfers to married women employees to their preferred location. Her mantra for women is "quitting is not an option." Anshula Kant inspires women to 'not give up' in their leadership journey.

Celebrating the Accomplishments of a Trailblazer Woman in HR Services

Executive search and talent advisory firm, providing staffing solutions across the country and globally

Bhavna Udernani

Managing Director, Adhaan Solution

HR Leader Pursuing Excellence

Led by a female entrepreneur, Adhaan Solution brings a unique and innovative approach to talent sourcing. Udernani has had a remarkable journey, starting from scratch and making a difference in Human Resource Management. What once began as a small team, has now grown into a strong workforce of 150+ employees, spread over 23 satellite branches across India, providing employment to over 2,50,000 people. The company has undergone an incredible transformation, developing and diversifying itself to keep pace with the ever-changing market. Recognising the importance of digital innovations, she incorporated new technology, advanced software, and a data management system. Udernani's remarkable contributions, culminated in the winning of numerous prestigious awards and honours.

Despite humble beginnings, Udernani envisioned owning a business of her own. Her dream became a reality through Adhaan Solution, a small start-up with a solid foundation. Her strong leadership and business acumen were crucial in safeguarding Adhaan's stability and positioning for continued success, even during the global COVID pandemic. Her exceptional business development skills and ethics supported Adhaan in collaborating with prestigious clients and MNCs.

Right Team and Right Talent

Competing with the best in the industry, Adhaan Solution uses cutting-edge technology, a masterful database, and a dedicated team that has industry knowledge to cater to

cost-effective, flexible, and tailor-made staffing requirements ranging from temporary and contractual placements to permanent and fixed employee placements across various sectors. India has witnessed a huge demand for talent recruitment services. In the post-pandemic period, a large number of global corporations have set up offices in India, fostering growth and development. Talent acquisition is focused on hiring the best talent to achieve the long-term goals of the organisations. To identify the requirements and competencies sought after by organizations when hiring for specific leadership or executive positions, Udernani created a talent pool of professionals. Inspired by talent mapping and landscaping across diversified industries, the company focuses on the continuous honing of skillsets, impactful purpose of directing and mentoring its employees.

A pioneering initiative by Adhaan Solution is the creation of a new technology platform, **Swagatham**.

"Our commitment to delivering services on time and with an unwavering dedication to compliance sets us apart, ensuring that our clients can confidently entrust their staffing needs to us as they focus on their growth journey."



Integrated with intelligent automation solutions, it increases efficiency and simplifies document collection. This new age software facilitates 'to request and collect' all necessary employee documents in one place, reducing error and time required to complete the onboarding process. **Swagatham** software ensures compliance with all necessary regulations by providing a secure platform for storing sensitive employee information. The company has developed **Flickjobs**, a unique aggregator platform, to seamlessly link businesses with people, therefore, being ahead of their game in tapping the best resources in a quick turnaround time span.

Adhaan Solution's journey indicates the management's ability to navigate a dynamic market, solidifying its position as a fast-growing, trusted, innovative organization focused on delivering the highest quality of service.

Building the X Factor Team to Achieve Goals

Bhavna strongly believes in gender equality and gender equity and has created a platform for women wanting to start a second career. Sharing opportunities and growing together with people beyond region and ethnicity, LGBTQ, and retired veterans makes the workplace accepted and valued. The team of diverse contributors offers truly inclusive solutions to garner higher productivity and profitability for the organization.



Reaching the Pinnacle of Success

A brilliant actress, a successful businesswoman, and a role model for millions of people across the country

Nayanthara

Filmstar, Producer and Entrepreneur

Nayanthara is an Indian film actress who predominantly appears in Tamil, Telugu, and Malayalam films. Nayanthara made her acting debut with the Malayalam film *Manassinakkare* in 2003. However, she became a household name with the variety of roles she played in her Tamil films. Her first Tamil film was *Ayya*, followed by *Chandramukhi*, in which she starred in many super hit films, including *Vallavan* (2006), *Billa* (2007), and *Sri Rama Rajyam* (2011), among others. After almost a year off, she returned to the big screen with the 2013 film *Raja Rani*, which became a box office hit. Her movies became superhits, and she ruled the box office. By 2015, she was considered the highest-paid female actor in the South Indian film industry.

Nayanthara made headlines for her performance in powerful and

commercially successful women-centric films. Through her 20-year journey in the film industry, the actress has evolved from a Malayalam TV anchor to a superstar, a brand ambassador, an entrepreneur, and an investor. In addition to her playing career, Nayanthara is a producer. A confident achiever, she believes strongly that once a thought comes to the mind, it starts to manifest itself, and she has given shape to her dreams by venturing into

“The film industry has taught Nayanthara the art of multitasking, communication, presentation, and showcasing, among others”

business with her filmmaker husband, Vignesh Shivan. The duo’s film production house, *Rowdy Pictures*, produced the critically acclaimed Tamil film *Koozhangal* (2021). Under the banner of Rowdy Pictures, she has made movies such as *Netrikann*, *Kaathu Vaakula Rendu Kaadhal*, and *Connect*.

While Shivan analyzes the business opportunities, Nayanthara chips into build the brand and contributes towards the aesthetics and branding of the products. The couple is entrenched in every business decision and is quite hands-on. They actively participate and nurture their brands. Diversifying into other businesses, the couple launched *The Lip Balm Company* in 2021 and invested in the Chennai-based start-up *Chai Wale*. In order to rapidly grow the business, the couple collaborated with professionals to launch a skincare brand called *9Skin*. She also founded a company, *Femi9*, that makes sanitary napkins and invested in the superfood brand, *The Divine Foods*.

The film industry has taught Nayanthara the art of multitasking, communication, presentation, and showcasing, among others. Availability and time management are important factors for sustenance in the movie industry, and maintaining work balance becomes the key to staying at the top of the game. Garnering multiple skillsets, which contribute positively to strategy planning, has helped her embrace her role as an empowered businesswoman. Nayanthara makes no bones about making money in the business, but it is important to her that the end-user and her customers are happy and the products make a positive difference in their lives.

Fresh off the release of her 75th film, Nayanthara is geared up to pursue many more ventures and not just limit her entrepreneurial skills to beauty and personal care. Nayanthara is also a fitness enthusiast who follows a strict workout and diet regimen to keep herself in top shape and look beautiful.

The year 2023 turned out to be a big milestone in Nayanthara’s film journey. One of the highest-paid female actors in the South, she debuted in Bollywood opposite Shah Rukh Khan in one of the biggest Hindi blockbusters of the year—*Jawan*. The film continued its upward journey at the box office as the worldwide gross collections crossed ₹1152 crore. Her star continues to shine.

Inspiring Exquisite Work And Lifestyle

Interior designer and a brilliant woman professional who made her niche in the design world with timeless and elegant creations

Shilpi Sonar

Founder, Creations

Shilpi Sonar is a highly regarded interior designer with over 35 years of experience in the field. She has successfully completed more than 3500 projects during her career and is recognized as a leading figure in the interior design and lifestyle industry in Central India.

Originating from Nagpur, Shilpi was born into a modest family. Surrounded by a lineage of artists, Shilpi opted to pursue a technical education, specializing in architecture at LAD College in Nagpur. As her knowledge of the field expanded, she developed a keen interest in interior design, diligently honing her skills in this domain.

In 1988, Shilpi established Creations in Raipur, Chhattisgarh, which was then a modest town in Madhya Pradesh. She pioneered the concept of interior design at a time when the field was dominated by carpenters and civil contractors. During the 1990s, she faced challenges as a woman in the architecture and design industry, but her unwavering determination led her to introduce design to Raipur and its environs.

Shilpi achieved a significant career milestone when she was selected as the principal design consultant for The Hirni Project by Larsen and Toubro (now known as Ultratech). At the time, she was the youngest consultant appointed by the company and oversaw the execution of a project encompassing over 700 structures, including hospitals, schools, staff quarters, clubhouse, guest houses etc. Her exceptional work quickly gained national recognition and established her as a respected figure in the industry.

In 1997, she established her office in

Raipur, embarking on a journey in the realm of luxury interiors. Shilpi pioneered the concept of luxury interiors in Chhattisgarh, introducing a lifestyle that emphasized elevated living standards. Her significant contributions to the state were acknowledged by the state government, which recognized her as one of the top 25 most influential individuals and featured her in the state-produced article titled “Credible Chhattisgarh.”

Her diverse portfolio encompasses high-end residential projects, hospitals, government institutions, educational institutions, commercial spaces, and banks across 10 states. Each project stands as a unique masterpiece, reflecting her exceptional talent and dedication. Her work has been consistently featured in various media outlets, gaining widespread recognition and acclaim. In her recent collaborations with her son Satyadeep and daughter in law Arpita, Shilpi is venturing into the realm of modern luxurious marvels, adhering to the philosophy of creating timeless and elegant spaces.

Shilpi has emerged as an icon of women’s empowerment within the design sector. Her journey serves as a source of inspiration for aspiring designers across the gender spectrum, especially in

Chhattisgarh and neighbouring states.

In 2010, she founded the Aesthetic Institute of Design, an esteemed institution dedicated to fashion and interior design education. With an impressive alumni network of over 3000 students, the institute has garnered widespread recognition and numerous accolades, both nationally and internationally, for its exceptional contributions to the field.

Shilpi has received numerous accolades from prestigious institutions worldwide. Notably, she was recently honored with the Satya Devi Memorial Award from IBC in recognition of her significant contributions to the design industry. Ranked among the top six female designers in India, Shilpi exemplifies how talent and dedication can lead to remarkable achievements, overcoming any challenges that may arise.

Fondly called as the “Mother of Design”, Shilpi has not only earned respect amongst the fraternity but has contributed back equally. During her tenure as the Chairperson of the Institute of Indian Interior Designers (IIID) Raipur Centre from 2021 to 2023, she diligently worked to empower designers by addressing both professional practice-related matters and the social responsibilities of designers.



Unconventional Urban Narratives on Screen

Weaving dreams, showcasing reality, and opening the eyes to diverse narratives of life through cinematic brilliance

Zoya Akhtar

Indian Director, Screenwriter and Producer

Zoya Akhtar made her debut as a filmmaker with 'Luck By Chance' 15 years ago. An insightful movie starring her brother Farhan Akhtar in the lead role offered a sneak peek into the life of an outsider struggling in Bollywood. As an aftermath, the issues of dealing with fame became the topic of discussion for the first time. Ever since, she has been surprising the audience by telling unique stories with more nuanced characters in mainstream cinema.

In a maze of male-dominated Bollywood directors, Zoya Akhtar paved her own path with her soul-stirring films like 'Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara' (2011) and 'Dil Dhadakne Do' (2015). The internationally acclaimed 'Gully Boy' (2019), which premiered at the Berlin International Film Festival, has since acquired cult status along with numerous global awards and accolades. Akhtar has taken Indian cinema by storm with six Filmfare awards, an Emmy nomination, and India's official entry to the Oscars.

With director Reema Kagti of Talaash fame, Akhtar co-founded the film production company Tiger Baby in October 2015 with the aim of telling stories that break conventional norms, creating waves globally. Tiger Baby has been making waves under her watchful eyes, especially in the OTT space. The acclaimed series Made in Heaven (2019) for Amazon Prime and the international Emmy-nominated Lust Stories (2018) for Netflix have further extended Zoya's reach as a storyteller internationally. While Dahaad and Made in Heaven 2, which were released on Amazon Prime Video in

2023, left a lasting impression with strong female and LGBTQ+ characters, its latest offering, 'The Archies' on Netflix, which launched Suhana Khan, Agastya Nanda, and Khushi Kapoor in Bollywood, is yet another feather in Akhtar's cap.

Tiger Baby further diversified and joined hands with musician Ankur Tewari to launch an audio label, Tiger Baby Records. The label aims to delve into the diverse soundscapes of the subcontinent and represent them globally. Akhtar's vision is to create albums, EPs (extended plays), singles, music-driven documentaries, podcasts, live events, and collaborate with a vast array of artists to create fresh musical projects.

The launch of Tiger Telly, the company's new advertising cell, in April 2023, is an innovative platform for creating short-

"Zoya Akhtar holds a diploma in filmmaking from the illustrious New York University. She has worked as an assistant to famous directors like Tony Gerber, Dev Benegal, and Mira Nair before she went on to become a writer-director"



form content ranging from TV and digital video commercials to music videos and brand films while maintaining a high standard of innovative and visually compelling storytelling. Tiger Telly recently launched its first commercial for the used-car sales platform, Spinny, starring legendary Indian cricketers like Sachin Tendulkar, Anil Kumble, and Yuvraj Singh. Akhtar aims to tell stories across all formats, and the campaign helped in successfully leveraging the capacity of the studio to create the right content for the commercial. Tiger Telly's services include scripting, treatment development, and final edit deliverables ready for distribution.

Zoya Akhtar holds a diploma in filmmaking from the illustrious New York University. She has worked as an assistant to famous directors like Tony Gerber, Dev Benegal, and Mira Nair before her role as a writer-director. Her collective experience and passion have driven her to achieve her dreams. Tiger Baby is an excellent platform for the go-getter to put herself out there as a champion of strong characters, showcasing her commitment to creating a variety of narratives and establishing her as a successful game changer in the constantly changing landscape of the film industry.

A leading Educationist and a Woman with an Insatiable Zest for Life

Niru Agarwal is a dynamic educationist and the Managing Trustee of Greenwood High International School, Bengaluru. She is also the Director of Sattva Group, a leading real estate company headquartered in Bengaluru

Niru Agarwal

Managing Trustee - Greenwood High International School, Bengaluru.
Director - Sattva Group

A life of quiet ambition and steely resolve has been the blueprint of Niru Agarwal's life. Proving that stereotype is just a word in the dictionary, she wears several hats with ease, balancing each role with grace and dignity. Be it in the boardrooms of the leading real estate giant, Sattva Group, where she is a director, or among the students of Greenwood High International school, Bengaluru, where she is the Managing Trustee, or on the lawns of her beautiful home, where she is the gregarious hostess to her girl gang, Niru Agarwal has the rare quality of embracing the present and taking life head-on.

The many roles that Niru plays to perfection, is a reflection of her multi-faceted personality. Like the proverbial phoenix she has resurrected herself within her several 'avatars', determined to rise above the ordinary circumstances of her childhood, to grab her spotlight on the larger stage that she was destined to shine on. Moving to Bangalore in 1993 post her marriage, the stage was set for her true calling, education, and her tryst with real estate alongside her husband Bijay Agarwal, Managing Director of the Sattva Group.

Indeed, Niru Agarwal is the quintessential small town girl, from a middle class family, who grew up in a small town in Assam, majoring in

Economics from Tinsukia University. The serene greenery of her hometown still holds a special place in her heart and she is committed to nature conservation, having planted more than a lakh trees. The verdant greenery of Sattva Group's own residential projects and Greenwood High's green campuses, showcase her love for nature. There are two men in her life who shaped her dreams and understandably, it was her father and her husband. Her father a businessman, took inputs from his young daughter who displayed a keen interest in the vagaries of his business. While her husband Bijay Agarwal, was instrumental in honing these early skills, letting her spread her wings and taking her into the echelons of power.

Today, she is a leading educationist and a business leader with several awards to her credit, putting Greenwood High into the spotlight as she takes it to new heights, as one of India's leading international schools. A passionate educationist, she has dedicated her life to nurturing young minds and raising the bar for academic excellence. The school has 8000 students and two major campuses at Sarjapur (40 acres) offering ICSE and IB syllabus and Bannerghatta (21 acres)

and 7 pre-schools, with many more in the offing across India.

Niru Agarwal has ignited a spirit of creativity and critical thinking among students. By fostering a culture of collaboration and open communication, she has engendered a supportive environment where both students and faculty thrive. Small wonder, that Greenwood High continues to be a trail blazer in education in the country.

Ask her about the significance of Women's day and Niru Agarwal articulates: "To me, feminism is a philosophy that advocates for the social and economic equality of all genders. Feminism aims to address inequalities and strives to create an equitable society for people of all genders". Says she, "men and women bring their own unique strengths to the table and one cannot do without the other. Let us create a world where everyone has the freedom to make choices about their own lives, has access to opportunities and resources, and is treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their gender. I am indeed fortunate to be in a place where I can help other women, be their voice and flag-bearer and I will continue to do the best I can for them".





Dr. Maya Gantayet
& Suma Devi Dash

Like Mother Like Daughter Mother-Daughter Duo Outshines Odisha's Healthcare Sector

Ashwini Hospital, Cuttack, is providing tertiary level healthcare in select super-specialty branches of medicine and surgery. It has been able to carve a niche for itself in critical care in the field of trauma, neuro, cardiac, pulmonary, and other complex medical fortes

Mother-daughter relationships are complex enough as it is. But when business is thrown into the mix, and one that is not for the faint of heart, only few duos can thrive like this team from Cuttack, Odisha. We are referring to Dr Maya Gantayet and her daughter, Suma Devi Dash, who manage Odisha's Ashwini Group of Hospitals.

Dr Gantayet is not an unfamiliar name in Odisha and known as one of the best Neurologists and Diagnosticians in East India. After graduating from NIMHANS Bangalore with a gold medal in DM Neurology, Dr Gantayet moved back to Odisha to start her family and practice Neurology. She took voluntary retirement from a government position,

and along with her plastic surgeon husband Dr Subrat K Jena to set up a 25 bedded Nursing Home focused on Neurology, Plastic Surgery and Trauma. The hospital quickly ran out of beds, and this strengthened the couple's resolve to build a full-fledged 50-bedded Ashwini Hospital, named after the Ashwini Kumaras – the twin gods associated with divine healing and medicine in Indian mythology.

Today, Ashwini Hospital is Cuttack's largest private medical centre, with 3 hospitals across Cuttack and Bhubaneswar and 500 beds providing tertiary-level healthcare in select super-specialty branches of medicine and surgery. It has carved a niche for

itself in the critical care of patients with trauma, neuro, cardiac, pulmonary and other complex medical specialities. The Ashwini brand is a popular choice in Odisha for its honest, qualitative service and for providing advanced care to its patients.

As Dr Maya Gantayet, Managing Director and Co-founder says, "Ashwini Hospital was established in 2006 in an easily approachable area just outside the busy city centre at Cuttack. Very soon it became the hotspot for all types of emergencies. The hospital kept on scaling new heights, winning the trust of people and the medical fraternity who treated the unit as a referral centre for all their patients with complex

medical and surgical problems. The hospital was empanelled by major insurance providers and public as well as private institutions and industries. Constant upgradation of technology and training, continuous optimization of standards of care was rewarded by various accolades and accreditations."

Their eldest daughter, Suma, loved to stay involved in the growth of the company throughout this time, spending many of the vacations from her BTech course in IIT Kharagpur or from work at Lehman Brothers, Mumbai to do improvement projects or business analytics or lead other state-of-art managerial interventions. To transition into business, she went on to secure an MBA from the Wharton School, UPenn and spent two years with BCG at Boston, MA working across industries.

When COVID hit in 2020, Ashwini Hospital was the first hospital in the state that stood up and volunteered to become a dedicated COVID hospital. By this time, Suma, was working with Mass Gen Brigham, one of the largest healthcare system in Massachusetts USA developing medical AI. Seeing the role healthcare was playing in the pandemic and having always a long-standing desire to come back to India, she decided to quit and moved back to Odisha to join the company. The hospital did commendable work in the fight against COVID receiving the Chief Minister's Award for Best Covid Hospital in the state.

Post COVID, the mother-daughter duo lead the operations of the entire enterprise with the goal of making the organization ready for the next generation. Under their leadership, the group is on a rapid modernization and expansion path. In just three years, they have opened Post Graduate courses in six disciplines: Neurology, Neuro-surgery, Plastic Surgery, Orthopaedics, Emergency Medicine and Respiratory Medicine with plans to open at least three more disciplines in 2024. The group has expanded their nursing college from two courses to 12+ courses across nursing and paramedical sciences. They have started Ashwini Wellness, a unit entirely dedicated to wellness, disease prevention and rehabilitation. The company has also launched a pharmacy chain that is emulated on international business models.

Dr Gantayet, being a pioneering clinician in the state is dedicated

"We think about the organization and the people when taking any decision – whatever their gender, background or situation may be. The only thing we consider is how the decision would impact their work at the hospital"

to enhancing patient outcomes, academic performance and overall clinical excellence. Suma is involved in strategic planning to identify growth opportunities; financial planning; developing protocols for operational improvements to drive efficiency and lower costs, and establishing measures to improve service levels. The mother and daughter duo don't agree on many things – but they are completely aligned on the course of their business.

As Dr Gantayet says "as lifestyle changes and global phenomena are affecting people's health, medical science needs to adapt and open itself to new protocols and methods. Education, therefore, plays a big role in getting the medical professionals for tomorrow ready to face challenges that nobody expect but are inevitable to appear. Setting up a hospital to treat patients will no longer be enough – the approach needs to be holistic and extend into their homes and social environments." Says Suma, "healthcare as we know it is going to change and companies that are not innovating now will fall behind faster than they expect. Being tech-shy or thinking AI is just the new buzz word will not be enough. Clinicians and Non-clinicians alike need to be open to learn and experiment with technology. Healthcare organizations should adopt data analytics and hire people not because they have relevant experience, but because they have the right attitude to learn and deliver."

Both of them consider themselves as entrepreneurs. Being women has never been the reason to take or not take any action. "We think about the organization and the people when taking any decision – whatever their gender, background or situation may be. The only thing we consider is how the decision would impact their work at the hospital."

In fact, Suma led a study on the hospital's diversity metrics and realized that over the last decade, the hospital's hiring methods, promotion methods etc. have no indications of social biases. "We are very proud of that," she says.

The state is eagerly watching this duo and excited about the promising future they present in the field of healthcare.





Setting Goals For Sustenance

Monitory stimulus, corporate tax cuts and recent policies to help rural income growth, collectively speeding up recovery

Gita Gopinath

Deputy Managing Director, International Monetary Fund

Gita Gopinath is the first Dy. MD of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the first woman to be featured on the IMF's 'wall of former chief economists', making it a proud moment in the history of the IMF. This makes her the second Indian to achieve this honour after Raghuram Rajan, the IMF's Chief Economist and Director of Research.

Gita Gopinath was a visiting scholar at both the IMF and a member of the economic advisory panel of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. Gopinath received her PhD in Economics from Princeton University in 2001 after earning a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Delhi and a Master's from the Delhi School of Economics and the University of Washington. She joined the University of Chicago's

Booth School of Business in 2001 as an assistant professor before moving to Harvard in 2005. Gopinath was scheduled to return to her academic position at Harvard University in January 2022 after having served as the IMF's Chief Economist for three years. Instead, she was appointed the first

"Two big areas of progress have been physical infrastructure—roads, ports, airports, and so on—but also digital infrastructure. I think both of them have been areas of remarkable progress, and that is beneficial to all parts of society, not just the very rich"

deputy managing director of the fund and the second-ranking official by the end of 2021.

As the Chief Economist, she spearheaded the IMF's research department and contributed to multilateral surveillance through the World Economic Outlook, developing a new analytical approach to help nations respond to international capital flows via the Integrated Policy Framework.

She co-authored the "Pandemic Paper" on how to end the COVID-19 pandemic that set globally endorsed targets for vaccinating the world and led to the creation of the Multilateral Task Force made up of the leadership of the IMF, World Bank, and WTO and the establishment of a working group with vaccine manufacturers to accelerate delivery of vaccines to low-income countries. Based on her research and experience, Gopinath has also authored several books and articles on emerging markets, trade, investment, the stock market, and international crises.

According to Gopinath, the world is at a turning point, and the risks of a fragmenting world driven by "friend-shoring" and "de-risking" could end up overwhelming the benefits—and even lead to a new Cold War. She confirms interest rates are likely to remain higher than during the global financial crisis but are expected to decrease in the second half of the year.

Gita Gopinath believes that India is on a positive growth curve and is one of the fastest-growing economies in the world. Though the government's public investment in public infrastructure, including digital public infrastructure, has contributed to driving economic growth, there is a need to build more reforms and ensure that they are consistent for the country to be able to truly realise its potential.

"In terms of specific reforms, for instance, financial access to medium, small, and micro enterprises, I think it's still an area where more work is needed, like credit growth for that particular sector. Labour market reforms are needed. Female labour force participation is incredibly low. More needs to be done to bring that up," Gopinath further elaborated, saying that reforms were not just required at the national level but at the state government level too.

Expansion is Directly Proportional to Innovation

Driving growth and innovation in leading enterprises, leveraging financial markets and new-age technologies

Jaya Vaidhyathan

CEO, BCT Digital

Jaya Vaidhyathan is the CEO of BCT Digital, a global company delivering FinTech, RegTech, and SustainTech solutions to diverse industries. With an initial education in India and a BE in Computer Science & Engineering from Madras University, she holds an MBA from Cornell University and is a CFA Charter holder. Jaya is an independent director on PwC Global. She also serves on the boards of UTI Mutual, Godrej Properties and Indigrid.

With over two decades of industry experience, she drives growth and innovation in leading enterprises, leveraging financial markets and new-age technologies. Under Jaya's leadership, BCT Digital's flagship Risk Management Suite, rt360, has significantly impacted India's public sector banks, recovering around Rs 2,100 crore annually before it turned into a Non-Performing Asset (NPA). Recognized by Chartis Research among the top 100 RiskTech companies globally, rt360 has been instrumental in this success.

Jaya's leadership spearheaded the creation of innovative solutions like the rt360 Real-Time Monitoring System (RTMS) to combat fraud, recognized by the RBI in its 'Prevention and Mitigation of Financial Frauds' sandbox initiative, showcasing her commitment to integrity.

Jaya has prioritized addressing Environmental, Social, and Governance

(ESG) concerns, expanding offerings in climate risk and sustainability to align organizations' strategies with sustainability goals and bolster stakeholder confidence. Additionally, Jaya sees the banking and financial services sector as crucial in advancing the climate risk and sustainability agenda, thereby enhancing BCT Digital's portfolio in this area. The company excels in quantitative ESG analysis, aligned with global standards like SASB, CDP, CDSB, and TCFD. Over the past few years, Jaya and her team have tackled the burgeoning problem of climate change, developing ESG Monitoring products. ESG considerations are integral to BCT Digital's values, driving the company towards a future of resilience and responsible stewardship, as we collectively navigate towards sustainability and equity.

In summary, Ms. Vaidhyathan is renowned for her courageous approach to tackling mammoth issues such as NPA, fraud, and climate change, leveraging technology solutions to address urgent matters of national and global issues.

Throughout her career, Jaya has broken gender stereotypes, excelling in M&A across various sectors and she played pivotal roles at Wall Street firms.

Jaya is actively involved in several industry bodies, including NASSCOM, the Confederation of Indian Industries, the Indian Chamber of Commerce, and the Institute of Directors. She is a strong advocate for women in STEM fields and strives for gender equality in board positions. Additionally, she serves as the chair of BCT's Women's Advancement, Transformation, Empowerment, and Recognition (WATER) Committee. The WATER Committee is dedicated to promoting gender equality and empowerment, providing mentorship programs and support platforms for female employees.

Jaya is committed to women empowerment beyond BCT, collaborating with NGOs and serving as an advisor to organizations like the Mastermind Foundation. Her accolades include Fintech Woman Leader of the Year 2022, India's Most Trusted CEO Award 2022, Global Indian of the Year Award 2022 and the Stevie Awards.





Removing the Blocks and Plunging Ahead

A dynamic lady, full of enthusiasm and a powerhouse of energy, she stands apart for her commitment to her work and compassion for the people she serves

Ravneet Kaur

Chairperson, Competition Commission of India

The Indian market continues to face numerous challenges from an antitrust perspective. Addressing those challenges effectively, Ravneet Kaur, Chairperson, Competition Commission of India (CCI), plays a crucial role in ensuring robust enforcement, promoting fair competition, and continuous monitoring of market dynamics. Kaur is the second woman to serve in the role of an 'economic regulator' after Madhabi Puri Buch, who was appointed chairperson of SEBI. In her current role at CCI, she is making a

breakthrough at a time when artificial intelligence (AI) is taking quantum leaps across functions and industries.

"It is indeed a very interesting assignment. With the new Competition Amendment Act 2023, lots of new developments are on the brink of taking shape. New frameworks are being put in place as the rapid technological advancements are taking place," said Ravneet Kaur while facilitating the office she heads with her intellect and leadership skills.

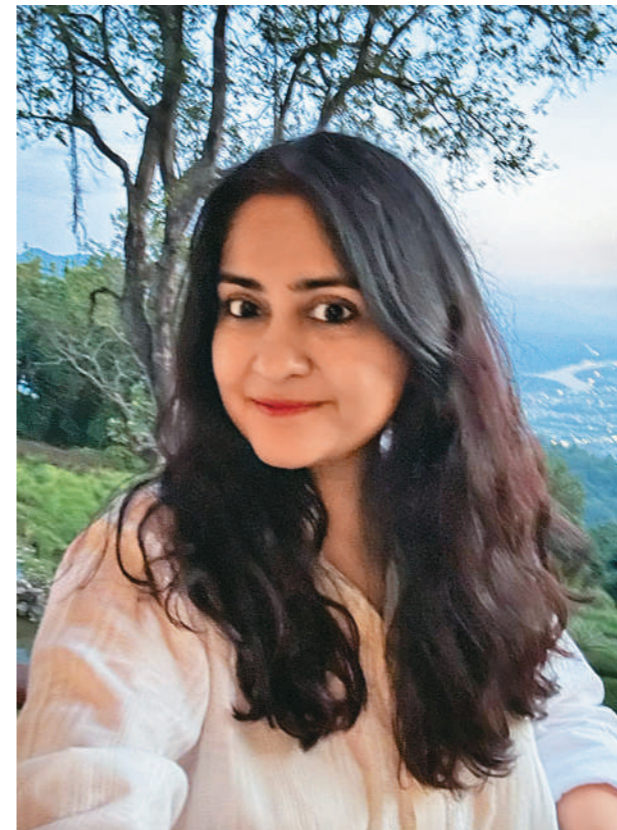
In the past, there have been issues

such as dominance and potential abuses by big tech companies, data practices and privacy concerns, platform policies, self-preference, and market concentration, leading to reduced competition in merger and acquisition activities. She was appointed at a time when CCI was in the process of conducting inquiries against tech giants like Amazon, Google, and Facebook, among others, for alleged anti-competitive practices. While these challenges persist, new ones are emerging, including areas like blockchain and algorithmic collusion. "But I think nothing is impossible," says the gritty and determined leader.

An alumnus of University of Birmingham, United Kingdom, and a Hubert H. Humphrey fellow at Cornell University, New York, Ravneet Kaur has held several key positions in Government of India and the State Government of Punjab during her 34-year career as a bureaucrat in the Indian Administrative service. A Punjab cadre officer, she has headed different departments in Punjab in the rank of Special Chief Secretary and also as a Joint Secretary in Government of India from time to time.

As Chairperson and Managing Director, India Tourism Development Corporation (2017–2019), she implemented various initiatives and the tourism sector of the country witnessed revolutionary changes. In appreciation of her contribution in the growth story of tourism in India, she received the ISAW Women Achiever Award for 'Professionalism in Management' at the ITB (International Tourism Fair) in Berlin.

"It has been a very satisfying journey, and I got many opportunities to do public good. I have been on my toes all through and never stopped learning", the bureaucrat said. A strong believer in gender equality, she advocates for equal opportunities for everyone. The value system that she follows in every step of life was inculcated by her parents, whom she considers her role models. Her father was a top bureaucrat in Punjab. At the pinnacle of her career, Ravneet Kaur attributes her success to her father. "The values of integrity, dedication, and public service that I observed in my father have been a game changer in my life. I put to practice these values in my day-to-day work," said Ravneet Kaur, who always adorns the grace of humility and compassion.



Pioneering Excellence in Competition Law

Women are at the forefront, leading the charge in various spheres across the globe. The legal profession is no exception

Nisha Kaur Uberoi

Partner & National Head, Competition Law Practice, Trilegal

Nisha serves as a shining example of women's exceptional achievements, advocating that discipline, self-confidence and consistency are the key pillars of success. An alumna of the National Law School of India University and National University Singapore, she has risen to be one of the most acclaimed lawyers in India.

At present, Nisha is Partner & National Head of the Competition Law practice at Trilegal. Spanning multiple locations in India, her team is among the largest and most successful competition law teams in Asia, comprising over 45 dedicated lawyers with multi-jurisdictional experience.

Nisha, who herself shattered stereotypes surrounding women leaders, strongly embodies her belief in 'equity with equality.' Her choice to be part of Trilegal, whose core principle is 'one partner, one vote,' reflects her commitment to merit. Nisha makes gender equality, merit and diversity

a priority and has been a key proponent to contributing to the paradigm shift in a largely male dominated legal profession. As a role model and a brand today, Nisha sets aspirational goals by embodying that strong women in leadership can be the norm rather than the exception. She embodies woman power and credits her

Nisha was part of the Working Group of the Competition Law Review Committee, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India to recommend changes to the Indian competition law regime

mother, Davinder Kaur for her strength and self belief.

Nisha was the first woman partner hired by Trilegal in its Mumbai offices, a full-service top-tier law firm in India with market leading practices. She took up the challenge to set up the Trilegal competition practice and hasn't looked back since then.

Her strong knowledge of the competition law and keen understanding of business has made her the trusted and go-to advisor across boardrooms for marquee names like Apple, Aditya Birla, Heineken, Schneider, Flipkart, GIC etc.

Under Nisha's trailblazing leadership, Trilegal Competition practice became the first amongst Indian law firms to win the prestigious award of the Global Competition Review (GCR) 'Regional Firm of the Year – Asia-Pacific, Middle East, and Africa' at the GCR Awards. Major wins at the GCR Awards 2022 include the 'Behavioural Matter of the Year' and 'Merger Control Matter of the Year – Asia-Pacific, Middle East and Africa.'

Nisha remains the first and the only Asian to win the coveted 'Dealmaker of the Year' at the Global Competition Review (GCR) Awards for her work advising on complex merger transactions aggregating USD 150 billion. From being named 'Competition Global Leader' by Who's Who Legal, Private Practitioner of the Year, India and Middle East' in the ALB Women in Law Awards, Competition Lawyer of the Year' at the Legal Era Awards and 'Woman Lawyer of the Year' at the ALB India Law Firms Awards to finally emerge as the recipient of the National Legal Excellence Awards Best Woman Lawyer 2023, she has been globally lauded for her litigation strategy and strong M&A expertise.

Nisha was part of the Working Group of the Competition Law Review Committee, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India to recommend changes to the Indian competition law regime. Nisha also serves as India's Non-Governmental Advisor for the International Competition Network (ICN). As a strong believer in diversity and inclusion, she is on the Board of Advisors of 'Increasing Diversity by Increasing Access', a nation-wide movement to empower underprivileged and marginalized communities get access to quality legal education.

Nisha's remarkable journey to becoming India's foremost competition lawyer, demonstrates her significant impact by consistently outperforming even when people tend to hold women leaders to a higher standard.

Queen of Prints

Inspiring women of all ages to embrace their flaws and imperfections and celebrate their individuality

Masaba Gupta

Indian Fashion Designer, Actor, & Entrepreneur

Designer Masaba Gupta, who helms House of Masaba, started her design career at the young age of 19, unveiling her ground-breaking debut at Lakmé Fashion Week. Born to West Indian cricketer Sir Vivian Richards and actress Neena Gupta, her cultural identity became the natural backdrop for her bold design aesthetics expressed in quirky prints and innovative silhouettes, making her eponymous label much sought after for its 'India-proud diffusion label and Caribbean heart'. A symbol of inspiration for those with an ardour for fashion, the range of clothes can be worn anywhere in the world.

The House of Masaba was introduced in 2009. Its design expression is playful and experimental, breaking stereotypes and transcending conventions, yet blending effortlessly with sophistication. The brand has a total of 15 stores across India, of which 4 are situated in Delhi, 4 in Mumbai, 2 in Bengaluru, and 1 each in Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Gurugram, Kolkata, and Ludhiana.

The millennial designer's growth story started right after she launched her brand upon graduating from SNDT Women's University. Her diverse clothing line includes Indian wedding solutions, festive wear, and luxe resort wear, all imbued with the brand's distinctive hues, motifs, and aesthetics. She is the first Indian designer to have done a fashion show via Instagram, and she sells 60 percent of her clothes through WhatsApp. In 2019, she received the 'Business Excellence & Innovation Best Practices' award from the former Prime Minister of India, Dr Manmohan Singh.

Masaba Masaba, a hit series on Netflix in 2020, starring the real-life mom-daughter duo Neena and Masaba



Gupta, playing versions of themselves in a fictional peek into their lives in fashion and film, was an unexpected experiment by Masaba into acting on the OTT platform, and she came out with flying colours, paving the way for a successful second season. While providing a distraction to many during the pandemic, it made people aware of what goes on in a designer's life. Modern Love: Mumbai in 2022 established her as a versatile actress, and the screen loves her.

The next venture for the creative Masaba was launching her own makeup line, Lovechild, in August 2022, with a dedicated e-commerce store offering lipsticks, lip glosses, and nail polishes in a range of bright shades, fragrances, foundations, and makeup kits. Masaba

"Masaba Gupta has a natural flair for business, and she showcased a personalised and stylish 'wedding collection' from the House of Masaba, worn by her whole family, when she tied the knot with beau Satyadeep Misra"

has become known for the creative and artistic names she gives each collection. The makeup's packaging features bright, bold patterns with cartoon pieces of sultana on lipstick tubes and cameras on nail polish bottles. The line has an air of youthful whimsy to it. The company forged a strategic partnership with Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd. (ABFRL) in January 2022, resulting in ABFRL holding a 51% stake in the venture.

Masaba Gupta has a natural flair for business, and she showcased a personalised and stylish 'wedding collection' from the House of Masaba, worn by her whole family, when she tied the knot with beau Satyadeep Misra. She looked ravishing in a barfi pink lehenga with gold embroidery and a wallflower-printed lime green dupatta, using muted tones for a more maximal ensemble, making a case for the return of colour to wedding wear.

As a professional, Masaba has learned to value herself and her creation and to ask for a fair deal. She urges young women not to give away their brand. Through her designs, campaigns, and social media presence, Masaba has championed body positivity, diversity, and female empowerment.



Making Life Spectacular

The face is a work of art that deserves a great frame

Priyanka Gupta

Director-Brands, GKB Opticals

The desire to look good, see better, and feel your best is universal. On that note, the optical retail chains across the globe have taken the eyewear segment to the next level, transitioning smoothly from a functional to a fashionable product line. In India, GKB Opticals, a legacy premium retail chain, has been a pioneer in the eyewear industry, keeping pace with global brand trends.

Priyanka Gupta, the third-generation Director of GKB Opticals, ensures that GKB consistently delivers high-quality, stylish, and functional eyewear that meets the diverse needs of its customers. After graduating with a degree in business administration from Loyola

Marymount University in Los Angeles, California, Priyanka joined the family business. In her capacity as Director of Brands at GKB, she is responsible for the selection of eyewear brands and their allocation to the top stores as per market demand. Not just in the array of product lines, its promotion, and customer-connect, but also as an astute businesswoman, Priyanka is very much in sync with the eyewear industry and the competitive landscape, comprising both organised and unorganised sectors.

Staying Ahead of the Curve

As a professional, she demonstrates a deep understanding of the market, exceptional leadership skills, and a passion to innovate. Identifying

emerging trends and consumer preferences have been key areas of focus. Buying events such as 'Wedding Edit', which has an exclusive collection of high-end luxury eyewear brands curated for Indian weddings, and private viewing of designer brands for the target customers have been her brainchild. Catering to the aspirations of the fashion-forward gentry, Priyanka collaborates with top-notch fashion houses like Lindberg, Tomford, and DITA to curate a high profile from time to time, inviting loyal customers who have partnered with GKB to establish itself as one of the most sought-after brands in India.

Delight the Customer

To make the retail experience better, Priyanka has come up with the concept of 'unique store design' which adds to the overall shopping experience for the customers of GKB stores. An example of that is the Gurusaday store in Kolkata, which has the first lens experience zone with a customization of lens tints according to the customers' preferences for style and functional needs. To lend a personal touch, she is the founder of the 'Home Service' vertical, which caters to the customer base who need eye check-ups and has the option of choosing from 20+ branded frames and 100+ different styles in the comfort of their homes.

The Evolving Eyewear Fashion

Priyanka is driven by a genuine passion to communicate the positive impact that eyewear can have on people's lives. It is more than just eyewear! "My vision is for the optical industry to transform from a purely need-based industry to an important component of style and self-expression!" Says Priyanka Gupta. With the rise of social media, eyewear has become even more important as a style statement. Influencers as well as celebrities are often seen sporting the latest eyewear trends, from coloured lenses to transparent frames. Priyanka advocates that glasses are more than just a corrective tool; they can be an expression of personal style, a confidence booster, and even a gateway to improved vision and well-being.

Pruning the Business of Fashion

A woman, an Asian, and an Indian; steering the timeless French luxury brand with panache

Leena Nair

Global CEO, Chanel

Leena Nair's appointment as the CEO of Chanel marks a significant position in the crème de la crème of the world's fashion history. As an Indian-origin woman, she is a rare outsider at the tightly controlled family fashion house, defying stereotypes and embodying the power of diversity and inclusivity in leadership roles.

With her appointment as the global CEO of the French luxury retailer in January 2022, Leena's journey is an inspiring tale of success and recognition in the corporate realm. She is the second female boss in the 113-year history of Chanel, an iconic and admired company. Leena becomes the latest to join the list of Indians who have taken on challenging roles at the helm of global companies. She is also the second Indian-origin woman to become a global CEO, after former Pepsi Co. Chief Indira Nooyi.

Before joining Chanel, Leena Nair's career was on a stellar growth curve at Unilever. She held the leadership position of Chief Human Resource Officer at Unilever, a global consumer-goods multinational. In 2016, she joined the Unilever leadership executive team, based in London, and added a milestone to her career growth by becoming the youngest and first woman and first Asian to be elevated as the CHRO. Her strategic acumen and transformative leadership played a pivotal role in shaping the company's human resources function and fostering a progressive work culture. As chief HR officer at Unilever, she was awarded Global Indian of the Year at the Economic Times Prime Women Leadership Award 2020.

After completing her Bachelor's degree in electronics and telecommunications engineering from Walchand College of Engineering in Maharashtra, she completed management studies at XLRI Jamshedpur, obtaining a gold medal for excellence, and joined HUL as a management trainee. Her determination and hunger to excel, prompted her to opt for unconventional postings. She was the first woman to be appointed as the factory personnel manager of Lipton India in 1993. In 2013, she took over as global head of diversity.

Throughout her illustrious career, Leena Nair has garnered well-deserved recognition for her exceptional

"Coco Chanel, the designer, exuded elegance, strength, and grace. The iconic Chanel logo with the 2 'C's' interlacing was created to reflect the founder's name; it also stands for sophistication, luxury, elegance, and vision"



contributions to the corporate world. Verve magazine recognized her as one of the 50 most influential women in India, highlighting her influence in shaping gender dynamics in business. Starting with the 'Young Woman Achiever in Business Award' from FICCI in 2008, she received acknowledgment for her outstanding achievements at a young age. The World Human Resource Development Congress crowned her 'Human Resource Achiever of the Year' in 2009 for transforming HR practices. Her professional growth was sharp, and she earned the role of senior vice president of HR at Unilever, responsible for leadership and organisational development. She earned recognition as an 'Experienced HR Professional for 2010' by NHRD and many other prestigious awards from associations and the media industry.

Leena Nair's rise from Unilever to Chanel is a testament to her remarkable leadership and pioneering spirit. Leena Nair's inspiring career growth is a reminder that determination, talent, and dedication can lead to unparalleled success, regardless of one's ethnicity or gender.



Leading The Way In Healthcare

A Changemaker in the true sense, epitomizes women leaders who have emerged stronger with their grit and talent for thinking ahead and delivering the best, not anxious of taking on new responsibilities as her career graph shows

Nilanjana Mukherjee

Managing Director, Kalinga Hospital Ltd., Bhubaneswar

Nilanjana Mukherjee, Managing Director, Kalinga Hospital, Bhubaneswar, started her career in the hotel industry with Taj Group of Hotels, before switching to the healthcare sector. While making the switch, she has brought the best of her training and experience of working in the hospitality industry into the healthcare sector. Apart from working for many years with AMRI Hospitals in different areas and locations before reaching her current position, Nilanjana has also worked with other leading private hospital groups like Apollo and Columbia Asia.

Recalling her professional journey, Nilanjana states that it was a bold decision to switch into the hospital sector from the hospitality sector. "My career began with the prestigious Taj Group of Hotels in Kolkata, but I had to take a sabbatical post-marriage. Circumstances forced me to simultaneously raise my child and build a career for myself," she states.

It is remarkable how Nilanjana rose through the ranks in the healthcare

sector. She started as a Receptionist at AMRI Hospital, Kolkata in 2005. "The management appreciated my work and I was assigned with the charge of Departmental Coordinator for Radiotherapy. Post this, I became the Assistant Manager with more responsibilities and my career grew. Thereafter, I was given the charge of another new unit and was assigned to complete three new projects. By 2010, I was upgraded to the Senior Manager level. By then, I got my MBA Degree in Hospital Administration under the able leadership of my mentor Mr D N

"Nilanjana takes pride in her multiple roles being a mother and a passionate professional, who has established herself as a true Changemaker by her untiring commitment to excel in life"

Agarwal, Executive Director, AMRI, who always appreciated my performance and my abilities. From a Receptionist to a Managing Director, it has been a long journey and indeed a very fruitful one," says Nilanjana which is an eye-opener to any woman of today.

Further to her journey at AMRI, Nilanjana switched over to Apollo Hospital and thereafter joined Columbia Asia Group of Hospitals. During this tenure, she was proposed by the promoters of AMRI, Kolkata, to help establish a hospital in Bhubaneswar. At the new establishment, Nilanjana started as the General Manager- Operation Head and after four years, during COVID, was assigned the entire charge of the hospital. She became the Unit Head in 2020 and thereafter shifted to Kalinga Hospital and as of today holds the responsibility of the Managing Director.

Despite ongoing challenges, Nilanjana did not quit her responsibilities or her pursuit of excellence as a professional. Apart from her duties, her objectives were very clear to her in all respects. Besides being an accountable mother she pursued her career and even got a management degree to deliver the best results on her way forward. Her mission and vision proves that the sky is the limit for a woman who can achieve anything if one is determined, Nilanjana takes pride in her multiple roles being a mother and a passionate professional, who has established herself as a true changemaker by her untiring commitment to excel in life. Her aspirations superseded her challenges and paved the way for more brighter days ahead. For Nilanjana, success isn't exclusively assessed in progress and accomplishments. It is entirely about her passion and commitment.

At the 2nd Odisha Mining & Infrastructure International Expo, Bhubaneswar, Nilanjana recently received the "Women Change Makers Award" for Outstanding Achievements & Contributions in her professional field. The award is indeed for her outstanding contributions, relentless dedication, and transformative impact on the healthcare industry.

"One who aspires shall achieve great deeds" Nilanjana has proved this. "You can find the desired freedom in what you aspire to become as your life is the result of the accumulated choices you make. Don't even try to be like others. Always aspire to be better than them, says Nilanjana.

Healing Lives and Motivating Generations

Balancing the pillars of medical procession - clinical acumen, skills, academics, research, and social service

Dr Neelam Mohan

Senior Director, Department of Paediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology & Liver Transplantation, Medanta Medicity Hospital, Gurugram, President - Child Society



A phenomenal woman whose indelible contribution to the medical world makes her one of the top doctors in India. She has been conferred with the prestigious 'Dr B.C. Roy National Award' in recognition of her pioneering development of 'Paediatric Liver Transplant and Hepatology' services in India. She has also developed 'Advanced Liver and Gastro-Intestinal Care' for children. Her achievements in liver transplantation put India on a global map for providing the best level of care, comparatively much higher than many centres in the USA, at a 10 percent international cost.

After completing MBBS from Osmania Medical College, Hyderabad, Dr Mohan dreamed of working in the field of liver transplantation, which was not popular in India in the '90s. High neonatal and infant mortality rates prompted her to train in paediatrics at AIIMS-Delhi, a premium institute, followed by a specialisation in paediatric liver transplantation in the UK. She returned to India in 1999 and established a liver transplant programme including the first "Cadaveric liver" transplantation and the first 'blood group incompatible liver' transplant.

In 2000, she set up the first Paediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology, and Liver Transplant services at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, Delhi, and in 2010 created the first department in India, at Medanta Medicity Gurugram, a well-equipped department with comprehensive facilities, state-of-the-art infrastructure, and

advanced technology to improve patient outcomes while making healthcare more accessible and efficient.

As President of the Commonwealth Association of Paediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology, and Nutrition, she presented on controlling morbidity and mortality in Commonwealth countries in the presence of Her Excellency the Queen and Prince Charles of the UK. She has drafted several guidelines globally on the management of a range of ailments in children besides national guidelines on behalf of the Indian Academy of Pediatrics. She was nominated as Co-Chair of Standard Treatment Workflows (STWs) Development in Pediatrics an endeavour by Niti Ayog, Government of India, with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), and is also an advisor for Arogya Bharat: Pradhan Mantri. Jan Arogya Yojna.

A popular teacher who trained dozens of young doctors for the country was awarded the 'Distinguished Teacher Award' by the National Board of Examinations for her selfless service. Her

"Dream big for our country and work with focus, dedication, and sincerity to realize our dream for India"

efforts resulted in a structured training and education programme for young doctors with an intention of promoting improved health care delivery to children across the country. With more than 200 publications and journals to her credit, she has received many distinguished awards from prestigious bodies. Dr Mohan has travelled across the country and covered most districts and cities in India, delivering 1000+ lectures to disseminate knowledge and empower doctors to provide good healthcare services to children with gastro-intestinal and liver problems.

In an attempt to give back to society, Dr Mohan Founded 'Cherry Hill Education Society', providing free basic education to underprivileged children in Delhi. She conducts free clinics, school awareness seminars, and annual collection drives for the treatment of needy children.

Her strong bent towards women's empowerment led to the training of several women doctors and female staff. She has been constantly working on mentoring young female doctors and was the Founder Chairperson of the Women Forum of Global Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (GAPIO). In addition, she is the representative of the North Zone IAP (Women Paediatric Forum), which works for women empowerment and inclusivity.



Strengthening the Social Fabric

First Woman IPS Officer Of Rajasthan becomes First Woman Chief Of CISF

IPS Nina Singh

Chief of Central Industrial Security Force

It is a much deserving honour for Nina Singh to be elevated by the Union Home Ministry to head the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), becoming the first woman IPS officer to lead any Central Armed Police Force (CAPF). Singh, a senior Rajasthan cadre IPS officer, was serving the nation in the capacity of the officiating Director General (DG) of CISF. In 2021, Singh came on central deputation to the CISF as Additional Director General and grew up the ladder to become the DG.

Year 2023 turned out to be a lucky year not just for the celebrated officer Nina Singh but also for 37 female IPS probationer officers passing out of the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy, constituting 23% of the total

166 recruits of the batch of 2021, an impact of the 'Nari-shakti' bolstering effort of the central government towards attaining gender equality and empowering women in prominent leadership positions.

There are more 'firsts' to Singh's credit. She was the first woman IPS officer allocated to the Rajasthan cadre in 1989, where she served in many important assignments across the state, as ADG Training and DG, Civil Rights and Anti-Human Trafficking. During her stint at the center from 2013 to 2018, Singh worked as Joint Director in the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), handling many high-profile cases with national and international ramifications regarding

anti-corruption, economic offenses, bank frauds, and sports integrity. The Nirav Modi case and the PNB scam were tried under her supervision.

The experienced police officer played an important role in the Rajasthan State Commission for Women, and during her tenure, she initiated a community outreach program wherein commission members conducted hearings for women facing difficulties in various districts.

She was appointed Principal Secretary of Health in Rajasthan during the COVID pandemic. As a committed officer, she has been closely associated with the police reform initiatives in Rajasthan and has spearheaded many projects in connection with transparency in recruitment, modernisation, capacity building, training, and proficiency in service. These efforts underscore her commitment to fostering positive relationships between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

A graduate from Patna Women's College in Bihar, Singh joined Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi to pursue her master's and went on to Harvard University, USA, for a Master of Public Administration (MPA). She is also trained in the evaluation of social programs at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA.

Nina Singh, a decorated officer and recipient of the Police Medal for Meritorious Service and the President's Police Medal for distinguished service, also excels as an academician. The meritorious officer led an evidence-based reform initiative for the Rajasthan Police in collaboration with MIT, USA. The research initiatives were spread across 150 police stations in Rajasthan and were carried out over a period of four years. Based on the findings, she has co-authored research papers with 2019 Nobel Prize winners in economics Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo.

Nina Singh's journey is a testament to her exceptional skills, leadership qualities, and steadfast dedication to her profession. Her numerous achievements, accolades, and contributions to law enforcement and police reform mark her as a celebrated figure within the Indian police force. As the Chief of CISF, there is no doubt that she will continue to make a lasting impact on the organisation and serve as a source of inspiration for others to strive for excellence in their careers.



Accelerating Abilities

Harpreet Kaur

Managing Director, Doaba Public School, Parowal

A seasoned academician, Harpreet Kaur of Doaba Public School, Parowal has non-chalantly enabled countless students to pursue dreams that are lucrative and kindle chain reactions of empowerment.

An educated woman illuminates three homes. First, the one she is born in, second the one which she creates and third is the world she lives in. A confident leader whose eyes beam brighter and bigger than the vision and a heart that desires to amass and promulgate knowledge, Mrs Harpreet Kaur amalgamates culture with the contemporary. With her tribe at the Doaba Public School, Parowal (Punjab, India), the Managing Director, envisions and realizes to produce lifelong learners.

Living and loving the legacy bestowed by her parents, the founders of Doaba Public School, Parowal, Late Sardar Balwant Singh Sandhu ji, and Late Sardar Balvinder Kaur ji, Harpreet Kaur aligns her energy towards the holistic growth of the pupils and anchors at the harbour of success year after year and augments the voyage her parents set on, back in 1977.

Spread across 10 acres and supported by an architectural design that effortlessly aligns the students with Mother Nature owing to natural cross sectioned ventilation, direct natural light and solar energy run, zero energy consuming lavatories bagged the institute with BEST

WASHROOM DESIGN at NDTV Design Architecture awards, 2017.

Recognised globally by The House of Commons (London), Certified by British Council, the institute won the International School Award 2017-20. School is affiliated with the CBSE, New Delhi with options to be chosen post 10th Board exams, secured with inter personal student - counselling sessions, the levels of teaching extend to the 12th Board.

Led by an approach *Every Child Matters* that puts the potential of the tutees to kinetic move, as a leader Harpreet Kaur is the epicentre of one who sprouts the confidence that drives the Doabian tribe (students, teachers, administrative staff) to be propelling towards being better with the self that ultimately transforms the social environment.

To keep abreast with the newest, she leaves no stone unturned to take the establishment up to the mark in order to furnish the students, the best grasp over skills -theoretical and practical in its 75 classrooms equipped with smart boards and state of the art laboratories, library, peculiar spaces to amplify the variant skills - dance, fine arts, music, drama and the list extends beyond the holding capacity of mere words.

A mind that brims with ideas complemented by a crew that steers those ideas into a direction and a quantum of

strength of about 2300 young citizens, budding into responsible and giving adults, wishing and working together to find this world a better place to live, in a rural setup of a place at the back of beyond in Punjab, Harpreet Kaur actually doesn't feel the force of work, for she enjoys it so that work doesn't feel like work.

Optimism and perseverance driven by passion, we tell you is a deadly duo and it causes explosions of blissful careers and hope to the humanity. This is evident from the membership that DPS, Parowal harvested of the Conseil International de la Dance (CID), the umbrella organization for all forms of dance in the world.

Meticulously recruited teaching faculty strengthens the plinth of any school and Harpreet Kaur walks an extra mile on this front by chairing the board of interviewers and running the procedure under her monitorship besides the impromptu inspections during the working hours.

Safety ensured by the sturdy boundary and unrelenting security, an in house infirmary and guarded transport allows the parents, easier and happier breaths for their precious ones are at home away from home.

And for the thunder and the splashes kept for the last, is the Semi olympic sized swimming pool with of course an adroit coach (male and female).

The times that call for exerting the energy out, sweating big and shouting loud, DPS, Parowal boasts of a well pruned outdoor stadium (6.5 acres), encompassing football, cricket, volleyball grounds, a basketball court and a space for other outdoor sports, having a capacity to cater 2500 people at large for school events.

Empowering her team, creating sustainable job opportunities, expanding careers, soaked in the heavenly blessings of her visionary parents - the founders of DPS Parowal, Harpreet Kaur staunchly exercises a lifestyle that finds her effortlessly hinged to her roots and lead by example.

Where wisdom is prevalent, one resorts to serve the co-existants prior to fill oneself, *Service Before Self* is the motto of this place of happiness in Parowal.

Honouring an Iconic Leader Let us celebrate and honour the extraordinary journey of Harpreet Kaur, the beacon of inspiration for women and educators around the world. Her dedication, resilience, and commitment to empowering education serve as a shining example on this International Women's Day.

Passionate in reinforcing vision and mission

A well-versed academician, an avid clinician and a dedicated individual ardently strengthening the ideals of the institution

Prof (Dr) Shalya Raj

Chief Executive Officer,
Swami Vivekanand Subharti University



Prof. Dr. Shalya Raj is the Chief Executive Officer of Swami Vivekanand Subharti University, Meerut. She completed her graduation from SDM College of Dental Sciences, Dharwad & her Masters in Conservative Dentistry & Endodontics from Subharti Dental College, Meerut. Dr. Shalya has a captivating persona and believes in making today better than yesterday while keeping a watchful eye on tomorrow. Over the years, she has proven that motto by example. Supporting students and faculty to reach newer heights, win national and international awards and achieve their goals.

She is a well-versed academician, a fervent clinician and above all,

a dedicated individual who is passionately reinforcing the ideals of Subharti, of strengthening Nationalism among the youth through education and healthcare to all sections of our society. Dr. Shalya is an exponent of Indian classical vocal music and a trained Kathak dancer. She excels in the field of performing arts for which she has won various accolades in the field of painting, craft & drama. As a well-grounded personality, she is tied to her humble beginnings and her sincerity to give back to the community has seen her getting diligently involved in various philanthropic works. Her high calibre of temperament and enthusiastic proficiency sets her well

above her contemporaries in the field.

Facing new challenges every day, Dr. Shalya has demonstrated her resilience in handling delicate situations with discretion and poise. She handles the administrative responsibilities of the University with poise and has a clear vision of where she would like to take the University while encouraging National and International linkages. Her leadership has seen the University progress by leaps and bounds achieving various milestones along the way.

Subharti has a leading role in shaping the future of the country ...

We hold the view that the people of India have a fascinating history and a rich cultural heritage to celebrate and be proud of. We need to remove every trace of the colonial mindset, and believe in our own ancient Indian value system, as we have roots in the earliest civilization of the world.

Constantly contributing to the nation's economy, which is the world's fastest growing major economy, Subharti has always encouraged young minds to have original and creative ideas, and has made enough space for forward-thinking. As a centre of holistic development, Subharti University takes care of every aspect of student's life, be it physical, mental, intellectual, social, or moral.

We'll never forget our Nationalist Icons and the Guardians of our Borders ... We love our country very much and are very proud of it.

- * At the Subharti campus, there is *Shaheed Smaraka*, which has been built in memory of those who made ultimate sacrifice for the nation; and there is *Kargil Shaheed Upvan*, where each tree has been planted in memory of every soldier who laid down his life during the 1999 Kargil War.
- * Every road & every building within the campus has been named in honor of an Indian nationalist or an Indian revolutionary.
- * A museum devoted to the life & struggle of *Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose*, the most revered leader of Indian Independence Movement, is housed at the campus.
- * Subharti has started a tradition of celebrating 21st October as the 'Independence Day of United India' at the campus to commemorate the declaration of independence by *Netaji* in 1943.

No other private university in India has such unique features.

Maverick Educator and a Doyen of the Society

A Teacher by heart with quest of excellence in mind and education as a mission of life

Dr Madhu Chitkara

Pro Chancellor, Chitkara University, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Chairperson, Chitkara International Schools, Chandigarh, Panchkula

Dr Madhu Chitkara is listed amongst "India's finest and fiercest academicians". It has been the good fortune of all those who came under the chieftaincy of Dr Madhu Chitkara, the doyen of teachers and the living example of a true academician. A woman, whose journey is not only stunning, but also conveys, how human beings can realise their exceptional abilities and be a winner. A woman of substance who looked at the bright side of life, and stoically endured the lows.

An entrepreneur, an educator and a philanthropist who built Chitkara, India's most

outstanding educational Institutions with grit, passion and with vast & illustrious experience spanning 47 years. She got her Bachelor's degree in 1975 and subsequently studied education. She was honoured with State Award of 'Teacher of Outstanding Merit' in 1987. She met her life partner during this journey. They together pursued M.Ed. and M.Sc. (Maths). She earned a Ph.D. in education and became a college instructor. After earning his Ph.D., her spouse joined as University faculty.

She along with her husband started Chitkara Institute of Competitions to train students for competitive exams. Students noted their skill as instructors, and CIC's reputation expanded. Her husband had great intellectual capital to educate, and she was enterprising. In India, only a registered Trust or Society may create a formal educational institution. They formed Chitkara Educational Trust in 1998.

India was traditional at that period, and women entrepreneurs were rare. Thus, verifying her qualifications to the bureaucracy and banks was a headache.

When they risked their careers to start PTU - affiliated Chitkara Institute of Engineering and Technology (CIET), their children had yet to finish school. For a woman, it was definitely twice as hard. But her passion of teaching kept her going. For ethical reasons, she ensured all CIET admissions were merit-based. Early on, the Trust gave up Management Quota Seats. She received 2004 Lifetime Achievement Award.

She is the first woman in her family to work in education, first as an employee and then as an entrepreneur. In 2008, she and her colleagues toured top US institutions to understand their pedagogy. She received 'International Achiever's Award 2009 for Women Entrepreneur' in education.

With over 25000 students & 3000 professors, Dr Madhu is the spirit of all her campuses. She helped create over 90 industry-relevant graduate, postgraduate, and doctoral programmes. Chitkara University is the only university in the world with 67% female employees and women in most leadership positions. In 2013, Washington School of Business published her entrepreneurship case study, and she won the South Asian Women Entrepreneur Award. Her work includes developing student incubators with over 100 incubating start-ups. Her vision has led the University to form partnerships with over 200 educational

institutes worldwide. Former Lt. President Sri Pranab Mukherjee named her a Visionary Educator of India at the 2017 Rethink INDIA Fifth Estate Summit.

Dr Madhu created the Global Week, a footprint of Global Engagement to internationalise student learning. BRICS International Forum awarded her with 'Award of Honour for International Digital Leaders' at 'Vision For Future-2019'. Her story is included in IFEEES' third edition of "Rising to the Top". She adopted 12 villages with her university campuses spearheading her philanthropy initiatives for two decades now.

She has always mentored her team to look for opportunities in challenges. In pandemic, with the robust technological setup, Chitkara had the efficacy to move completely online in a very short time. Chitkara received the 2020 E-Learning Excellence for Academic Digitisation Certification for its readiness and excellence in online education, for "Technological Innovation of the Year" for the prestigious Times Higher Education Asia Awards 2020.

Dr Madhu Chitkara advises women worldwide to take risks. Avoid cynics and critics. Think and remember what occurs when history favours one person. One person can be you. You should be that. You must be it. Game rules will change. Make sure you change the game. Create the future.



Empowering Women, Flourishing Societies

When women are truly cherished & earnestly invested in, great things happen

Dr Niyati Chitkara

Vice President - Chitkara International Schools, Chandigarh

Like a myriad of women, I often find myself pondering about how my life would have been, had it not been for the support and understanding of the people that surrounded me. Indeed, the terms like "equity" and "equality" hold a great significance for the likes of us, who have not only benefitted from them but also hoped to afford the same understanding and opportunities to other women in their respective modest capacities.

From the get go, what I've found exceptionally inspirational is the immensity of influence that my teachers had over me (most of them females) and the significant roles that were played by them in shaping the lives of youngsters. A strong inspiration coupled with my own passion to make a difference therefore encouraged me to join the revered field of education, as I strived hard to leave an indelible mark with my endeavours, not shying away from doing what I truly believed in. Yet, this, I believe, couldn't be merely ascribed to valour but also to the incredible opportunities, learnings, and support that I had received throughout

my journey. Today, as I stand as the Vice President of a leading educational institution in the country, I hold immense gratitude to those whose cooperation led me to where I am today and whose investment has indeed made me accelerate growth for others.

Oftentimes, it is said that when we invest in women, we support those who invest in everybody else. Yet, by their very nature, women are considered giving and nurturing and truly, what better an investment would there be than in the women of one's own house and society? This investment, having received and rendered personally, I reckon, is truly priceless.

Correspondingly, at Chitkara International School, we have endeavoured to build a community that not only gives a platform to women to shine but also celebrates their merits as they do so. With a workforce comprising 61% of female workers, CIS has been able to promote a culture of "investing in women", where equality and equity are both defined and practised and inclusivity remains the natural way of

doing things. Here, the emphasis lies not just in providing equal opportunities to all, but providing the right opportunities to them, on the basis of their merit, likes and inclinations.

Moreover, whether it is encouraging women to undertake research or to come up with their own initiatives, many an efforts are made to empower women at work. This also includes observing female-centric days including National Girl Child Day, International Women's Day etc. and honouring the women of excellence for their meritorious contributions. Having undertaken such measures and many more, Chitkara International School has invariably upheld the significance of women in our society and has left no stone unturned in promoting the cause of women empowerment.

As a matter of immense pride, furthermore, Chitkara Fraternity also holds a longstanding association with the women of Chitkara University's adopted villages, encouraging them to engage in small scale businesses and work like handicrafts, sewing, etc., wherein these endearing women are not only rendered adequate vocation-specific training but also taught the varied steps taken to start a small scale business. Such an endeavour remains an exemplar of not only inclusivity (of the underprivileged women) but also equity, as it ensures that appropriate sources of income are generated for these hardworking women.

Yet, financial empowerment (although crucial for bringing women at par with men in contributing towards expenses), isn't the only thing that one must render to the women of the society. Investment, therefore, shouldn't be limited to the finances, but also towards promoting the mental wellbeing and health of women. Similarly, at Chitkara International School, many a measures are undertaken to spread awareness of various preventable diseases, for instance, breast cancers, which women stay prone to. Along with that, special heart-to-heart counselling sessions are being rendered to female employees that ensure their mental wellbeing.

Thus, by inspiring inclusion and embracing equity, much difference can be made in the society where the women feel not only empowered to support themselves but also to support those around them. Yet, *inclusivity remains an attitude that all Chitkarians embrace 24/7*, solidifying the fact that with inclusion, there's really no limit to what a society can accomplish.