Tipple for this season!

SOMY ALI
I will never return to Bollywood!

Recasting gender stereotypes
The UK is considered to be a safe haven for fugitive businessmen from across the world. In a recent court battle, Nirav Modi, failed to move his appeal to the top court in the UK. The diamond merchant fled India in 2018 for his involvement in the 2 billion dollars Punjab National Bank scam. The diamantaire was also directed by the High Court to pay GBP 150,247 related to the latest application.

After a hiatus of more than 4 years, King Khan is ready to break the chain of continuous disasters at the box office with “Pathaan”. Although the film’s teaser stirred up excitement among fans, Pathaan landed in the lap of controversy with the release of the song, “Besharam Rang”. #BoycottPathaan has been trending ever since the song was released on the internet. From calling the song vulgar to making lewd comments about the female counterpart Deepika Padukone to Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra raising objections over the saffron color bikini worn by the actress; the internet has been going gaga over the new song.

James Cameron’s Avatar: The Way of Water is a sequel to Avatar(2009). Cameron invented a new piece of technology to shoot some of the most important scenes in the film. Known for pushing technological boundaries, the Titanic director is more of an inventor than a regular filmmaker. Another two installments of the franchise have already been announced by the makers. With part one earning a lifetime gross of over 2 billion dollars, Avatar: The way of water is surely going to be one of the most profitable films of all time in the history of cinema. The movie’s pre-release business is going strong with most theatres selling out to full houses.

With the Christmas season around the corner, Delhi’s Indira Gandhi International Airport witnessed heavy congestion due to high footfalls. Airline carriers Indigo and AirIndian have requested passengers to arrive at the airport 3-4 hours prior to the departure time for a smooth security check-in. This seems to be a tedious affair for people flying out this festive season. The city traffic and the long waiting time at the airport is a big hurdle for most passengers who’ve been waiting all year to take a break. Could there be a possible solution to solve the problem? Time will tell.

A video of a 17-year-old being attacked by two masked men in Delhi has perplexed people. The young girl is said to have suffered eight percent injuries to her face and neck while her eyes have also been affected. Accused Sachin Arora who broke up with the class 12 girl attacked her after a serious breakup. All three perpetrators have been arrested post the incident and the Delhi police along with the forensic department are figuring out the deadly nature of the acid used in the attack. The incident has left netizens across India stunned and many condemned the brutal animalistic attack.
Recasting gender stereotypes:
Being manly through womanly eyes

In India, a vast majority of us have grown up in a society steeped in patriarchal systems and norms. Long repressed by men, women from all walks of society have begun to realise that they are being taken for granted. Many women have started fighting for their basic rights that include being treated on par with men in all respects. However, some of these changes have not been wholeheartedly appreciated by conservative sections, due to which oppression still exists in many forms.

The traditional stereotypical gender roles assigned to men and women by society fizzled out with time. Notions such as: a man should earn and a woman must take care of children; promiscuity is fine in the case of men, but women? It's bad! Ask them why? They start a lengthy sermon about character and upbringing. You get the idea, right? With modernity and awareness, these preposterous arguments have almost come to an end.

More than ever, women today are financially independent and capable of manoeuvring through life. By breaking the shackles of pre-existing shoddy norms, a modern woman is now in a position to live life on her own terms. Of course, there is still a long way to go. All told, women are in a better place today, when compared to bad old days!

Have you ever thought about what being ‘manly’ means? In a research conducted by evolutionary psychologist David Buss, it was discovered that men have a sexual over-perception bias; most of them think they are really great but it doesn’t reflect in reality; more so, in the case of a narcissist. In the study, a video of a man and woman conversing with each other was played out. The footage was paused abruptly at a point where the woman smiles at the guy. When the subjects were asked as to why the lady smiled at the guy; what was her intention and what was she trying to say to him? majority of the male subjects said, “Oh!” It is obvious, she’s sending sexual signals!” and the female subjects reacted to the same experiment with, “She was just being friendly and polite”.

It is possible to think that the definition of being manly might have stemmed from the sexual over-perception bias that most men have. Of course, mainstream Indian cinema has popularised heroes who indulge in activities like stalking, cat calling, and bullying — traits which are otherwise not socially appreciated at all. Oftentimes, the protagonist in mass commercial movies is someone who is macho in nature. Beating up 10 guys, being violent and insensitive for the heck of it, feeling entitled about everything around him. These are just some examples. This is not to suggest that every film portrays heroes in such light.

In another study, where men were asked as to why they cheat on their partners, the participants admitted to wanting more sexual variety. In the case of women, it had more to do with them building an emotional attachment with the person whom they were cheating with (emotional infidelity). Therefore, does having multiple partners make one manly? Definitely not, but we often hear men bragging about their notch count. What about having a chiselled body? Does that make a guy manly? Oh God! What makes a man, manly? Well, let’s ask the ladies what they think about it. Also, let’s find out what women desire the most in a potential partner.

Ankita Donthamsetty, a young character accountant, raises some interesting questions. “Broadly speaking, people associate masculinity with being strong, muscular and beating people up, but that’s not the case. The ability to empathise with people is really undervalued in today’s scenario. I think it is really important to be appreciative of the ones who are empathetic in nature. When we take relationships between a man and woman into consideration, what matters is how supportive can one be without any judgement? They might have their own insecurities, but are they willing to give the much-needed push and support that’s necessary? This quality is pretty rare to find and really attractive.”

Giving us an idea about how her preferences changed over time and what she fears the most in a relationship, Ankita points out: “When I was way younger, it was more like who’s more attractive and stuff like that. With experience, what I learned is that having a good emotional/spiritual connection is quintessential. If my partner can’t reciprocate with me emotionally and finds it difficult to handle my highs and lows, then it is going to be a bad match in the long run. I am mostly scared about investing my time and emotions on the wrong person. We all get into relationships thinking it is going to work, but you never know what’s to come.”

Speaking of a rather peculiar but common trait that persists in men, Ankita comments: “A few men have this idea of themselves that they can never go wrong. Even when they make a mistake, they don’t give a chance to themselves to correct the mistake. They simply can’t come to terms with what they’ve done. That kind of a character trait is a big turn-off for me.”

In agreement with Ankita’s views, Joyce Selvaraj, who works as a process associate, observes: “I don’t think being masculine means being muscular and strong. I think it’s got to do more with them trying to understand us. We’d love to have men who understand and support us. In my opinion, it is extremely attractive. More than physical appearance, if a man is kind towards others, that is good.”

Speaking of the kind of behaviour that annoys her the most, Joycey remarks: “Also, not respecting my need for some space is a big no for me and it’s really annoying if they constantly keep asking questions about who I am talking to or who I am going out with.”

Continued on Page 4...
According to evolutionary psychology, men and women chose partners based on certain cues. Men were often attracted to women who showed strong fertility cues and women preferred mates who demonstrated strong genetic cues. For the fear of exposing their offspring to disease-ridden environments, women seldom avoided men who possessed weak genetic traits. However, we live in a different world now. We no longer need to go hunting to put food on the table. With that being said, we are a product of our ancestors and we are hard wired in the way we organise our sexual mating strategies.

Resource-gathering capacity, high social status, industriousness, physical appearance, social adeptness, health and strength, intelligence, generosity, sense of humour, and conscientiousness are some of the most desired qualities that women look for while selecting a partner. For example, resource-gathering capacity (a man's ability to make money and accrue wealth in future) is considered to be indispensable in most cases. Several scientific studies found out that women place a great value on their mate's social status. While cues such as intelligence and sense of humour make men more attractive to a woman, they are not indispensable. Surprisingly, according to evolutionary studies, generosity is one quality that women admire in a man.

Concurring with the scientific findings with respect to the quality of generosity, Pragnya, a bright student from the city, enthuses: "A man is someone who is comfortable in their masculinity — a person who is not afraid to openly show his emotions and express his feelings."

On characteristics that she looks for in choosing a potential mate, Pragnya shares: "A guy who is kind and treats you right and respects your feelings." While she adores the rare quality of kindness, for Pragnya, physical anger is the ultimate in a relationship. When we questioned her about what scares her most in a relationship, she pointed fingers at the two usual suspects: abuse and cheating.

When it comes to mate selection, in most cases, boys and girls from orthodox families don't have an option but to listen to their parents. The matter gets a tad serious when the families deal with a girl child because it boils down to prestige. Guys! I'm not saying this… but it is a fact in India. Just in case, if the individual musters up the courage to confess about her true love, the parents have an emotional breakdown. In some cases, the girl's lover finds himself at the back of a truck. Anyway, there are individuals who are fortunate enough to make their own decisions. For now, we are concerned about the ones who take complete responsibility in choosing someone for themselves.

Sriya Rina, a journalism graduate, shares her views on the topic: "Men should try to understand women more than anything else. They've got to behave according to the circumstances. Patience! I'd say that'd top my list. It's alright if they're prone to anger, but they need to know how to balance it. I mean if my going out with a guy friend is a huge problem for him, then it's not something that's desirable. If guys feel the girl has done something they don't like, I feel there's a way in which they should question them. Most of them get aggressive and that makes things worse. Of course, appearance matters, and financial stability plays a crucial role. When it comes to finances, there should be a good balance from both ends. In my opinion, people should first settle down in their careers and then take important decisions in life. What's my biggest fear in a relationship? I think I have basic insecurities like what if he falls for another girl? I feel a bit jealous when he moves along too closely with other girls. I also fear being cheated on in a relationship. Again, if the guy is honest and comes clean with whatever he's doing, that wouldn't be a problem."

In conclusion, folks! When will we realise that it took two wonderfully naughty people to put us here on the planet? Well, we can't be sure if it was a cozy night or a sunny morning that landed us here. All that we should be concerned about is we took off without crashing anywhere. A few bumps here and there shouldn't be a big deal. We're just lucky to be here: living, breathing, eating, and working. Finding a partner is not rocket science, but a skill that can be picked up over time. For sure, it is interesting to know what the opposite sex thinks of you. It is intellectually titillating and certainly gives a great insight into what they truly desire. Putting gender aside, finding out a piece of us with every setback in life is all the more important. Heartbreak, treacherous past looming over the horizon or the comments of an insensitive partner that makes you question the idea of masculinity or femininity shouldn't let you down. In somebody's point of view, you might not be man or woman enough. Hang on; don't you think it is for you to define who you are? Happy mating! (wink).

K Navya Sree, a married woman puts out her thoughts on how her firm filmy idea of a "man" changed post marriage, "When I was in my early 20s, while I was dating my now husband, thanks to Indian movies, my definition of one being manly was very filmy. Like I wanted my husband to be the protective one, the caring one, and all those filmy stuff. But all that is good in movies only. In practicality things are different. Now that I have been married for over 7 years, I find my man 'manly' when he is himself around me. Shares finances, household chores, responsibilities with me and not just boss around at home for being born a male. A man who respects, adheres to my needs and responsibilities, and knows his boundaries in all ways, is what being 'manly' is to me."
Somy Ali: I will never return to Bollywood!

A former Bollywood actress of Pakistani-American origin, Somy Ali, remembered as the love interest of Salman Khan back here is lashing out at him on various occasions. And now she is running an NGO in the US and helping victims of rape and domestic violence. Despite walking away from Bollywood, she ended up becoming hugely popular on social media, and let’s get to know her past a little bit more in this week’s edition of Celeb Talk as The Pioneer’s Shikha Duggal converses exclusively with the actress.

Born to an Iraqi mother and a Pakistani father, former actress Somy Ali is a mix of two beautiful cultures. But after studying in Karachi until age 11, she moved to South Florida with her mother and brother. Being very tautful with what we write now, Somy was actually sexually abused at the ages of 5 and 9 by her household staff while living in Karachi. This agony didn’t end there, because when she shifted to Florida, she was bulleted at school and raped by a neighbourhood boy at the age of 14. Not just this, her mother was also a victim of domestic violence in Pakistan that she and her brother would have to witness! All we know now is that she’s a survivor. I was an extremely shy child, but I was obsessed with learning new words; thus, scrabble was my favourite board game, and playing cricket with my dad’s office staff would always get them and me in trouble (she laughed), I literally had three best friends, and coincidentally, even at this age, I still have only three very close friends, I always believed in quality over quantity,” Somy says of her childhood.

When her interview talking about a leading man and her former relationship news came out, it instantly grabbed the attention in our country, and even Somy’s brother could not believe what just happened. That’s how every news channel and publication is catching hold of her, and there we get to learn about what a wonderful Samaritan she is. “I left India in 1999 and drowned myself in education. I am a human rights activist,” My mom was like, ‘Who is Salman Khan?’” Salman Khan, and my mother cracked up. I had the power to do so, I would destroy Al Qaeda and the Taliban in a heartbeat. They are the quintessential terrorists, not Muslims! They are brutal and heartless people and need to be put away in prison for life. They are using faith to mislead the whole world about what Islam truly means, and they are creating discriminatory thoughts towards Muslims. I find them disgusting. However, I am not ashamed of being born in Karachi; it’s not like I had much of a choice in the matter. I miss my childhood friends and my school, and I do have some good memories too. But I reiterate: there should never have been a Pakistan. We are one people who are all the same.

I remember I once had the pleasure of meeting with Manoj Kumar, and we talked for hours about his family being from Lahore. Similarly, my beloved Rishi Kapoor and I talked about his forefathers being from many parts of India that now solely belong to Pakistan. So, we have a lot in common, but why are we different today?” She is still perplexed as to how she completed 10 films, beginning with Salman and ending with Govinda. She shares, “Mithun Chakraborty was the most patient star ever. I was an extremely shy child, but I was also a victim of domestic violence. I was the darkest moment of my life and left such an imprint that I still remember the cook’s smell. It’s sickening!”

Another moving anecdote she shared was when she received enormous backlash on social media for disclosing how the Biggie of B-town practised domestic violence with her. “I had to turn off my comment box; the saddest part was that most of the comments were written by fellow women because they oblige him. Those women weren’t uplifting me at all! Fame can lead to many atrocities; consider the example of Harvey Weinstein. Because of the fame the hotshot has, he got away with it. The comments were deemed to be very hateful, to be precise. They called my torture a publicity stunt and shameful. Dating Salman was enough publicity! My organization is receiving awards from George Bush to Barrack Obama; what publicity will I acquire from a perpetrator? This won’t stop me from telling the truth,” shares the philanthropist.
Symptoms may vary from mild to severe.

Cough: Dry or productive

Critically Ill Patient - Antipyretics and

Pneumonia in infants may present with

Adequate Hydration,

Cough relief medica-

Oxygen Therapy for

Other symptoms: Fatigue, headache,

Fever with increased pulse rate

Appropriate Antibiotics

Breathlessness or fast breathing

Chest pain

Hemoptysis: Blood in cough

Images of a chest X-RAY to look for detailed information compared

A CT scan provides more

plications such as lung

show the presence of com-

scan (CT scan) shows the

extent of the lung affected

by pneumonia. It may also

show the presence of com-

plications such as lung

abscesses or pleural disorders.

A CT scan provides more
detailed information compared to a Chest X-RAY.

Pneumonia is an infection that inflames the air sacs in one or both lungs, which can range in seriousness from mild to life-threatening. In order to shed light on it, The Pioneer's K. RAMYA SREE connects with a few experts, who explain and share insights about the same, its symptoms and also possible lines of treatments.

A Bronchoscopy to look inside the lungs and the airways using an endoscope with fiber optic cable connected to a screen.

Complete Blood Count (CBC) which includes total white blood cells (TLC) and differential count (DLC) to screen and assess the body's response to pneumonia. It is used as a baseline to assess severity at the beginning as well as to monitor response to treatment.

Culture and antimicrobial susceptibility testing of sputum, respiratory secretions and blood especially for bacterial and fungal causes of pneumonia is done to identify the exact organism involved and to identify which antimicrobials to be administered whether anti-bacterial, antiviral or antifungal depending upon the identified organism based on antimicrobial susceptibility test results obtained.

PCR test: Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test quickly identifies the DNA or the RNA of the causative pathogenic micro-organism. It is of value, especially where the organism is difficult to grow on culture-based tests. Such a PCR test may be a single micro-organism specific one that looks for only one specific pathogenic organism at one time. For example: COVID 19 RT PCR or it could be a multiplex meaning that multiple pathogens may be looked for at one go is Filmurray multiplex PCR where either a nasal swab or sputum respiratory secretions may used as the sample to be tested. It is quick and saves time due to the syndromic approach. Results are available within hours on the same day including genetic markers of antimicrobial drug resistance.

Arterial blood gas test: This is done in very sick patients to measure the blood oxygen levels from the blood in the arteries in the wrist.

Pleural fluid culture to identify the causative pathogenic microorganisms is performed by culturing fluid collected by doctors using special needles from the pleural space present in between lungs and chest by a procedure termed as thoracocentesis.

Symptoms

• Symptoms may vary from mild to severe. Fever with increased pulse rate chills/sweats.

• Cough: Dry or productive

• Hemoptysis: Blood in cough

• Breathlessness or fast breathing

• Chest pain

• Other symptoms: Fatigue, headache, muscle or joint pain

• Pneumonia in infants may present with inability to feed or drink, unconsciousness, hypothermia and convulsions.

Dr. Kanika Khanna further lists a few treatment for the same:

• Appropriate Antibiotics

Adjunctive measures:

• Adequate Hydration, Nutrition and Rest

• Oxygen Therapy for Hypoxemia

• Antipyretics and Analgesics for fever and pain relief

• Cough relief medication may be required

• Critically III Patient Vasopressors and Assisted Ventilation when necessary are critical to successful treatment.

“The main preventive measure is vaccination. Recommendations of the advisory committee on immunisation practices should be followed for influenza pneumococcal and covid vaccines,” concluded the doc.
O ur health is in crisis, and so is our climate. What if there was a way of eating that could help us live healthier lives for longer while also protecting the future of our planet? The good news is that evidence now shows a plant-based diet may offer us exactly the solution," wrote Simon Hill in his book, The Proof Is in the Plants. Simon Hill is the founder of the huge- ly popular Plant Proof podcast and blog of the same name. And rightly so, "flexitarian diet" sums up the thought. Here at The Pioneer, we pen down everything you need to know about the flexitarian diet.

Flexitarians are people who are making efforts to restrict the amount of meat in their diets, even though they may not actively be vegans or vegetarians. Reports suggest that this cohort makes up 42% of the market, and this percentage is constantly on the rise. Another survey illustrates that 54% of Gen Z and 34% of baby boomers are making active efforts to restrict the amount of meat in their diets by adding more plant-based substitutes.

The Pioneer spoke with Sheetal Bansal, an integrative nutritionist and gut health coach, to delve deeper into this diet plan, and she shares, "A flexitarian diet is a diet that focuses on plant-based foods and beverages. The word flexitarian is a combination of two words flexible and vegetarian. This diet is super flexible in terms of calorie count and macronutrient goals (carbs fats proteins). This diet is extremely beneficial to dieters. The benefits are more than just weight loss, as it reduces the risk of cholesterol and regulates blood sugar levels, making it a diabetic-friendly diet. The plant-based concept helps our body assimilate and absorb nutrients at their best and improves our gut health as it multiplies the good microbiome inside the system. I have seen many people who are not able to follow the fad diets because of limitations, and my clients are not having any limitations as we follow the principle of flexitarian diet where no food group (fruits/vegetable/grains/dairy/legumes) are eliminatedGerman."

Bansal believes that the flexitarian diet is the sensible diet because it can be maintained for a long time and over a lifetime. Hence, it's a non-restrictive diet that allows an individual to relish their favourite foods too. Anushka and Virat's love to experiment with cuisines around the world is known to everyone. They are ardent animal lovers too, and therefore, have been following a meat-free lifestyle for years. In their journey, they discovered that plant-based meat tastes and feels 100% similar to traditional meat products, that's exactly when they joined hands with Blue Tribe, a brand working on the mission to reinvent meat-consuming methods. Their wide range of products are made with peas, soybeans, lentils, grains, and other vegetarian ingredients that mechanically extract proteins, vitamins, and other nutrients.

Touching on the details, Sohil Wazir, CCO of Blue Tribe, asserted, "With time, people are becoming aware of the problem of environmental degradation. Efforts are being made all over the world to reduce carbon footprint and promote sustainable development. Like the way the fashion industry is exploring sustainability as an alternative to mass fashion, which generates tonnes of waste every year, the food sector is evolving drastically. This is demonstrated by the expansion of the alternative food industry and the rise in the number of flexitarians. This has provided a boost to the plant-based meat or mock meat industry, and they have come up with multiple options to cater to this demographic. Innovation and research are the driving forces behind the popularity associated with this sector, and its large market share is thus not surprising."

Planning your flexitarian meals well is essential to satisfy nutritional deficiencies and reap the most fitness benefits. Food expenses are rising around the world. But greens are commonly less expensive than meat. According to celebrity nutritionist Shweta Shah, switching to a more plant-based diet is not only healthier, but also less expensive. If you want to be a vegetarian because of the numerous health benefits but also enjoy barbecue and burgers, the answer is to become a “bendy vegetarian” — a “flexitarian”.

This diet is being followed by many people around the world. There are certain drawbacks. Shredding light on them, here is what Dr Ruchi Soni, a diet and nutrition expert at ToneUp, said about it: "The main reason for starting this trend might be the increasing awareness against animal cruelty and livestock malpractices. But, on the other end of the spectrum, this trend will lead to ecological imbalance. As a result, demand for crops will increase, leading to an increased rate of deforestation to expand agricultural land, ultimately affecting the ecology negatively. Also, vitamin B12 deficiency will become a major concern among the population. This diet can be good for people who are looking for weight management, or to manage certain medical conditions like diabetes, as it is high in dietary fibre, vitamins, and minerals. Conclusively, this flexitarian diet is good for health and can be easily incorporated into your routine. Yet this diet has certain environmental setbacks."

The Pioneer brings a quick recipe by celebrity chef Nishant Choubey for all the flexitarians. Sharing the recipe, Choubey added, "Flexitarian diet is an emerging trend that is in the news and is being effectively followed as well. Interesting and tasty dishes such as a black bean quinoa bowl, vegan coconut curry with chickpeas, chole kulcha hummus, gu ragi ladoo with kaju coconut malai, and so many more can be enjoyed. But for now try Mushroom pakora with watermelon."

### INGREDIENTS

- Mushroom: 300 gm
- Maida: 100 gm
- Cold water: Enough to make the batter
- Chilli powder: 1 tsp
- Onion seed: 1/2 tsp
- Baking powder: 1 tsp
- Baking soda: 1 tsp
- Watermelon (cut into rounds): 6 pieces
- Mint sprig: A few
- Sea salt: A bit
- Jasmine tea decoction (if there): 1 tsp
- Mayonnaise: 1 tsp
- Milkmaid: 1 tsp
- Oil: Enough to fry

### METHOD

1. Make a batter with refined flour, onion seed, chilly powder, baking powder and baking soda.
2. Add cold water and make a batter.
3. The consistency of the batter should be the same as pakora.
4. Dust the mushrooms with refined flour and dip it in the batter
5. Deep fry them till it becomes crisp.
6. In the meantime cut the watermelon into rounds and marinate with jasmine tea decoction or brew, add mint sprig, and sea salt.
7. Mix mayonnaise and milkmaid together.
8. Coat the crisp mushrooms with mayonnaise and milkmaid mix.
9. Serve neatly on top of the marinated watermelon.

### A shift from plant-based regimen to flexitarian diet!

According to a survey, 54% of Gen Z and 34% of baby boomers are making active efforts to restrict the amount of meat in their diets by adding more plant-based substitutes.

TANISHA SAXENA spoke to experts in the field to delve into the new diet plan, i.e., the flexitarian diet.
I have substantial field experience, including in implementation of World Bank funded Andhra Pradesh Forest Project, rehabilitation and development of degraded forests with active participation of local communities and implementing various nature-based solutions. As an initial step, I facilitated and monitored the preparation of Environmental Impact Assessment reports and processing of all necessary clearances. As a Conservator of Forests, Hyderabad, apart from regular forest administration in Hyderabad, I have been involved in Rayalaseema, Mahabubnagar and Yadadri districts and in the notification of more than 36 pumping forest tracks. I have been involved in the construction of bunds around perennial forest areas. In addition, I have been involved in the preparation of soil and moisture conservation and protection plans, environmental compensation, where I can stand out as an efficient official on the ground.

We motivate people to work on various development and conservation related issues by effectively engaging the ground. In a conversation with dr. V.B. Jathar, he observed: ‘There are different sections of people living in forest and our work is to reach out to them. By my experience, I help them out of the way if necessary and that is satisfying. When it comes to payment of monetary compensation, where I can intervene and reduce the time involved, then my work is complete if I make even one family smile!’

**DREAM**

I have a love marriage and we happily faced all social challenges associated with inter-caste marriages at that time. For me, it was due to inspiration from my wife Kanakan and her motivation that helped me fulfill my dream of becoming an IFS officer. We are normal and happy married couple and take frequent and brisk walks with our dog with a smiling face.

**CHILDHOOD:**

I was born in a Telangana Village of Namakkal District. I completed my primary education in a government school and continued my schooling and education from DSB National.

**QUALITY TIME:**

Weekends and holidays are only available available to savour your hard work. In addition, the way of life and profession I have chosen requires a lot of hard work. I do not break this rule for putting the time back into my life.

**FAMILY BOND**

I love a small family - my wife Lakshmi and Sunil with a caring and loving family. I have strong faith in God and his presence in my life. From my first attempt, I shared the enthusiasm.

**HOBBIES**

I enjoy reading and watching news, I love to know new facts and information. I also watch movies and listen to music. I am very conscious about my Diet and fitness. I love sports and especially cricket.

**INITIAL POSITIONS**

I joined the Indian Forest Service (IFS) as a Sub-divisional Forest Officer (SFO) at Hyderabad on July 1993 and then as a Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Nalgonda (from July, 1993 to 1994) and then as Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Khammam (from July, 1994 to 1997).

**HIGHED EDUCATION**

I have a B.Sc (Hons) in Botany from Kumaon University, Nainital; M.Sc (Hons) in Forestry from Orissa University of Agriculture and Technology, Bhubaneswar and LLB from Osmania University, Hyderabad.

**AREA OF INTEREST AND SPECIALIZATION**

I specialize in environmental conservation and protection, rural and urban forest administration, soil conservation, environmental sustainability, forest and landscape restoration and nature-based solutions.

**THREE ATTEMPTS**

I made these attempts for cracking IFS. I avoid being cautious in my second attempt as I was impressed with my performance. In my third attempt, I scored the examination.

**A MEMORY THAT BRINGS SMILE**

During my career of over 32 years, I have worked on various initiatives, including implementation of a Project for the first time, the construction of bunds and conduits for conservation and development of forests. I was also associated with launching of flagship programmes of the government, Tusker Bi Reshika Tharai (green corridor for Telangana) aimed at increasing the awareness and participation of people of Telangana. I discharged the duties of Member Secretary of EPCA, a network of nearly 2,000 environmental enthusiasts of Hyderabad and adjoining areas working in the field of water and energy conservation, tree planting, river cleaning, waste recycling etc. I have utilized this work with my NGO programmes in various initiatives, including cooperation with UBC Limited.

As a committee of Tree Protection Committee of Hyderabad and Rangampet districts, I facilitat- ed the first reforestation of Rose trees. As Special Secretary Environment, Forest, Science and Technology Department, Government of Telangana, I was associated with the implementation of various programmes and policies related to consumption and development of forests. I was also associated with the implementation of flagship programs of the government of Telangana, such as Tusker Bi Reshika Tharai (green corridor for Telangana) aimed at increasing the awareness and participation of people of Telangana. I discharged the duties of Member Secretary of EPCA, a network of nearly 2,000 environmental enthusiasts of Hyderabad and adjoining areas working in the field of water and energy conservation, tree planting, river cleaning, waste recycling etc. I have utilized this work with my NGO programmes in various initiatives, including cooperation with UBC Limited.

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Top 10 in-demand jobs in IT sector

The pandemic was a time for introspection and reformation, not just for individuals and organizations but for the entire corporate sector. With a new world order, those in the corporate segment were forced to think outside the box and develop innovative ways to sustain themselves and continue operations. One such methodology that enabled organizations to optimize their functioning and utilize human resources efficiently is Agile hiring.

What is agile hiring?

In the simplest terms, agile hiring refers to a method of hiring for projects that allow the team to work in smaller increments and optimize their performance. The process has five phases. The first phase consists of understanding the requirements and the scope of the project and ways of integrating it into the mainstream business model. The team is incepted in the next phase. While hiring members of the team, it is essential to keep in mind that they will be responsible for the entire project from start to end. In the iteration part of the process, the team works on the blueprint of the project, incorporating feedback at every step. In the next phase, validation, release, quality testing and documentation are carried out. In the production phase, the team is responsible for tracking progress, ensuring that the project adheres to its timelines. In the last phase of the Agile methodology, the team reviews the final project and the objectives that it set out to meet.

Why agile hiring gained popularity?

Organizations, before Agile Hiring gained traction, relied primarily on the waterfall methodology. However, this method necessitates excessive documentation and coordination between several teams before the project is implemented. The process is further complicated if the customer requires changes in the final product. This leads to unnecessary wastage of time and resources. Other delicts of this system include its insistence on sequential testing, testing only in the last phase, difficulty in coordination, and inability to incorporate unexpected changes. As opposed to the mentioned drawbacks in the previous system, the Agile method is result oriented, flexible, and efficient. This is possible because it relies on effective tools like Scrum and extreme programming. In addition, this system offers the benefit of allowing teams to work directly with the clients and cuts the need for middle persons. It allows the team to work in a focused manner with clear goals in mind.

The methodology incorporates best practices and skills in customers that are happy and satisfied with the product and its timely delivery. They are more involved in the process of design and production and get regular updates from the team in relation to the milestones achieved. It increases transparency and ownership of the final product. The accountability accorded by this process enables the team to understand and accept iteration goals. Both parties are thus more engaged in the process and work in a coordinated manner.

The State of Agile Report, released in 2018, illustrated that the Agile method resulted in a 46% increase in software quality, a 49% increase in business opportunities, a 55% increase in productivity, and a 15% increase in managerial efficiency, especially in terms of the management of heterogeneous and remote teams.

Bottomline

The post-pandemic world is characterized by several changes in the corporate structure. Agile hiring is one of the most effective of these changes. It offers companies distinctive advantages like using fewer resources, timely delivery, better coordination between different stakeholders, and greater accountability and transparency of the designing and production process. Due to these advantages, this system is gaining popularity, and many companies are implementing it on a larger scale with greater success.

The writer, Apurva Sheth, is the executive director, head, enterprise business of TalentOnLease
Tipple for this season!

Winter is that time of the year when one seeks to experience some cozy comfort. Our favorite indulgence for this season is rum which with its molasses like sweetness, makes for the perfect drink, when the mercury drops. Monika Alcobev, cocktail expert; Dushyant Tanwar share some of the best rum cocktail recipes for this season.

Mango Daiquiri

**What you need:**
- Bush rum mango: 50 ml
- Passion fruit puree/passion fruit liqueur: 25 ml
- Sugar syrup: 15 ml
- Freshly squeezed lime: 15 ml

**How to make:**
- Add all ingredients to a cocktail shaker.
- Add cubed ice into a shaker and shake vigorously.
- Double strain into a martini-style glass.
- Garnish with half a passionfruit and a shot of prosecco (optional)

Passion fruit Rumtini

**What you need:**
- Bush rum passion fruit and guava: 40 ml
- Vanilla syrup: 10 ml
- Brown sugar syrup: 10 ml
- Lemon juice: 10 ml
- Bitters: 3 dashes

**How to make:**
- Pour ingredients into a mixing glass filled 2/3 with ice in the order listed.
- Shake and strain into a chilled coupe glass.
- Garnish with half a passion fruit.

Bossa Nova

**What you need:**
- Ashanti spiced rum: 50 ml
- Hibiscus syrup: 10 ml
- Orange peel
- Lemon bitters

**How to make:**
- Add all the ingredients in a large glass with ice.
- Shake hard for 15 seconds.
- Double strain into a highball glass with ice.
- Garnish with 1 pineapple leaf, half passion fruit, and Viola flower.

Hibiscus fashioned

**What you need:**
- Ashanti spiced rum: 50 ml
- Hibiscus syrup: 10 ml
- Orange peel
- Lemon bitters

**How to make:**
- Add all ingredients you have in a mixing glass.
- Smoke the serving glass with star anis.
- Stir the mixture with 35 turns and serve under a carved ice cube.
- Decorate with squeezed orange peel on the glass.
India’s first ever virgin coconut soy wax candles

Squish Town, a world full of mesmerising fragrances with premium bath and body products. Blended with the finest ingredients, sourced from all over the world, and lovingly packaged to perfection. With the transformative power of unique fragrances and the heavenly pleasure of bath & body care, every Squish Town product celebrates the balance of textures, color palettes, and presentation. The products are infused with the aroma of natural essential oils that soothe, invigorate and captivate your heart and soul. They are vegan, paraben-free formulated, and cruelty-free. They have newly launched India’s first virgin coconut soy wax candles. They are an addition to Squish Town’s ever-expanding portfolio of aromatherapy products made with natural essential oils.

Price: Set of 3: Rs 4,050

Mairaa Fine Jewellery by Ambica Mohta

Mairaa Fine Jewellery is an elevated jewellery for the everyday, designed by Ambica Mohta. It is a stylish, chic jewellery brand which came into birth two decades ago. The brand believes in curating exceptional and exclusive designs which are handcrafted in 18kt gold/rosegold by their artisans with natural diamonds, rosecuts, rubies, emeralds, pearls and all that you fancy.

Price: Rs 1,699.00

Finesse your make-up skills with assorted beauty gear by Milap cosmetics.

Spread cheers this Christmas and surprise your dear ones by gifting a make-up hamper from Milap Cosmetics which includes weightless foundation, Mascara, Matte Lipsticks, 9 to 6 Nail polish, Makeup fixer, and Primer for your everyday glossy look. A perfect present for makeup lovers by Milap cosmetics. So pick up your make-up wands and let the magic of beauty flow this Christmas.

Price: Rs 445

Replenish lost moisture with the soul food body wash by Happier

The Soulfood Body Wash, a natural body wash packed with antioxidants and the goodness of natural ingredients like Grapefruit, Acai Berry, White Tea, Aloe Vera, and Shea Butter. It offers benefits like 24 hours of moisture lock and reduction in fine lines & wrinkles—leaving the skin nourished and smooth as a feather. So, indulge in body care with the soul food body wash and retain the lost moisture.

Price: Rs 445

HP unveils smart tank printers

HP unveiled a new range of Smart Tank printers designed for the everyday printing needs of home users, micro and small businesses. To support emerging entrepreneurs and businesses, HP Smart Tank delivers an enhanced user experience with an intuitive and seamless set-up, smart features, and better connectivity — including self-healing Wi-Fi® and mobility with Smart App and Smart Advance. HP’s new ink tank printers can also print up to 18,000 black pages or up to 6,000 colour pages[v] for uninterrupted printing with a pre-filled ink supply.

Key benefits and features of the new HP Smart Tank Printer range are:

- Pricing and availability
  - HP Smart Tank 580 is available at Rs. 18848
  - HP Smart Tank 520 is available at Rs. 15980
  - HP Smart Tank 210 is available at Rs. 13326
Five risks to be factored in personal finance planning

Financial planning is the key element to ensure that you are financially secure throughout your life. The financial plan is usually designed in a way so that a person can meet their investment goals within the desired timeframe. However, life is unpredictable. One cannot know what the next moment will be like. For example, you may lose your job or receive a significant promotion. All these factors majorly impact your financial plan. According to such factors, you might need to make changes in order to keep your plan relevant and effective. Let’s look at five risks which you might face during planning your personal finance.

ALTERATIONS IN FINANCIAL GOALS

As the age of the person keeps growing, the outlook towards money keeps on changing. You will tend to develop different goals and priorities when you are in different age brackets. For instance, when you are in your late 20s, you may think about saving money for properties and marriage. By the time you grow old, you may consider savings for child upbringing. Moreover, you should also map from the beginning of your earning years till your retirement. Also, it is not just about the investment but it is about the insurance needs too. By buying insurance cover now, you can move forward for the larger family floater health insurance coverage if you are married. Thus, the investment and financial strategies need to be reviewed periodically and updated to reflect the changing goals.

CHANGE IN FINANCIAL CONDITIONS

If you are considering a loan for a large purchase such as a home or property, it is crucial to look after the financial plan. This is because you will be responsible for loan EMIs. In addition, loans bring liability. However, as the EMI begins, it is important for you to revisit your financial plan to determine the length of setting another goal as your financial situation changes as your expenses rise.

VARIATION IN YOUR RISK PROFILE

Changes in risk profile depend upon a combination of factors such as age, income and expenses. Changes in risk profile must be accounted for in the financial plan by the help of a review to make appropriate changes in the asset allocation and investments aligned to every goal. Along with life changes, the risk profile also changes.

INCOME

Income also plays as a key risk in financial planning. Other major events such as promotion, job change, job loss, early retirement, etc. may come your way due to drastic change in income. Many people suffered job loss, mid-career adjustments and other consequences due to pandemic. You should review the financial plan in such tough times too. When your income plummets due to loss of work, the compromise must be made in specific goals. You may need to decrease your investment during the challenging phase. Such instances necessitates a review of the financial plan.

UNPREDICTABLE EVENTS

Events such as unforeseen expenses for which you might be unprepared financially. These could be layoffs, medical emergencies, unexpected expenses such as renovation, car-repair, inheritance, etc.

Therefore, it is really crucial to note that merely creating a financial plan will not give you a helping hand in attaining financial stability. So, you should review your financial periodically which will lead you to reach the desired financial goals and maintain investments.

(The writer, Prashant Sawant is the co-founder of Catalyst Wealth)
**What should be your New Year Resolutions in 2023?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zodiac Sign</th>
<th>Resolution</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Aries</strong></td>
<td>Be good, do good.</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Taurus</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Gemini</strong></td>
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**The year 2023 is here. The dark days of the pandemic have now become a distant memory. The world is now open for business. The New Year presents the perfect opportunity to make new beginnings. Knowingly or unknowingly, every one of us carry within us certain goals which we aspire to turn into reality in the new year. These goals can be as simple as quitting smoking to something once in a lifetime like building a house or getting married. The following are the best resolutions for persons of each zodiac sign to take in the year 2023.**

**Aries** – Be good, do good.

The year 2023 will see Aries natives as highly motivated people with strong opinions. You are more likely to go with your gut than think the situation through. Hurdles and hard times are likely as the year advances. For 2023 to be a successful year for the Aries-born, you need to focus your energy on doing the right thing. You should rise above hate and everything negative, and do what is good for you and those around you.

**Taurus** – Follow your heart

For Taurus people, 2023 denotes life changes. There will be multiple crucial situations where everything hinges on your decision. You may have to go against the people around you during this time. The relaxed routine of your regular life may be turned upside down. The true face of people whom you trusted and respect may be exposed and this may leave you in shock. The important thing is to never give up and to follow your heart.

**Gemini** – Be open to trying new things

For Gemini-borns, 2023 is the time to reshape yourselves. The year will be prosperous, but you will have to be patient and keep duality aside. Embrace the trend. Figure out what is the requirement of time. Do not rely on friends beyond a limit. Believe in yourself. Work on healthy practices – personally, professionally, and financially. Make those modifications that are demanded by the changing world around you. This may require you to venture into areas outside your zone of comfort.

**Cancer** – Self-improvement is the key

Cancer-borns rarely get out of their comfort zones. But in 2023, this won’t suffice. You need to give your passions and your dreams the best shot. With the right attitude and energy, success is within your reach. There may be inner conflict – do you want to be brutally honest or do you want to be diplomatic? It is likely that you will get help to make the decision in the form of a person with experience. All you need is a pinch of advice and belief in yourself. If you are willing to make the needed improvements, good results will be there in no time.

**Leo** – Love yourself

In 2023, the onus is on you to treat yourself better. Your thirst to be the best in everything will drive you to give your everything. In 2023, you need to tone this down a little bit. Not everything requires your undivided attention. Relax and enjoy the gifts of life. Cherish the moments instead of worrying about what is not there. However, be careful with the way you give yourself a treat, as health problems are a possibility in the latter half of the year. Be responsible in your love for yourself.

**Virgo** – Relax, and let them be

As you enter 2023, avoid rushing to conclusions. Hurdles and good times will alternate as the year progresses. Your desire to have control over everything will result in problems. It is better to do things on the fly. Making plans and wanting to stick by them through any means necessary is a bad move. Let things happen as fate deems right. On your part, you need to make the adjustments needed to move on with life as a happy and content person.

**Libra** – Bring order into life

Harmony is the key to a successful life. This is the same for Libra-borns as well. A bit of introspection, understanding what is missing and making changes accordingly is something you will need in 2023. But that alone won’t be enough to achieve success. Avoid being egotistical and seek help where it is necessary. Luck, opportunities, and great times are waiting for you. But to reach them, you have to be utterly clear and positive. Get rid of everything that is causing clutter in your mind and bring order into life.

**Scorpio** – Look ahead, let bygones be bygones

As a Scorpio-born you need to love being on your own. The year 2023 will be a great chance for you to clarify some things in your life. There will be changes in your perception in multiple ways. Some beliefs you had about life and some people will be drastically altered as the year progresses. Things will start falling into the right place and much of the toxicity will be gone from your life. Do not hold on to past grudges. It will only help in ruining your life. Adopt patience and perseverance. Keep the process slow and steady. 2023 will be an eye-opening year for you.

**Sagittarius** – Start saving

For Sagittarius people, 2023 is the year for understanding. There may be some great accomplishments. Things will seem easy and nice. You will distance yourself from any wrong company you had been keeping. Don’t fly too high if things work your way repetitively. Stay away from risky ways to have a great life. Some twists could be there, which may push you to make amendments and life changes. If you have nothing in reserve, then such periods can become hard on you. Therefore it is important for you to save from your good times to sail smoothly when the tide turns against your favour.

**Capricorn** – Bet on yourself

Capricorns, do not give up, especially in 2023. Stand by your ethics and principles and you will do well. This will get you success and fullfill unfinished business from the previous year. Express yourself right and manage all the areas of your life with a positive attitude and mindfulness. Do not turn to shortcuts as that would drag you to the other side of the road in no time. So long as you stick to your nobility and follow your heart, take a bet on yourself and initiate something on your own in 2023. This is the best time for it as the planets will protect you from multiple adversities.

**Aquarius** – Be creative

For Aquarius-borns, the year 2023 will be the time wherein you can enjoy some me-time and work on yourself to achieve better things. It would be great for you if you put all your efforts in the right place, but do not ignore warnings that hold you back from performing something. Things that had been running off-track will be fixed in 2023. You have to bet at your best when opportunities come your way. Even if the situation looks hard, stick to the right things. Not everything will work the way you want. Do not try to bend the situation, instead, be creative and try to adjust yourself.

**Pisces** – Assert yourself

For Pisces-borns, the year 2023 will allow you to spread happiness and attract the same in your life. There is a high chance of you running into pessimism and a dual mind now and then. Where you once thought the worst is over, more will be coming with renewed rush and strength. Stand steadfast on what you think is right, regardless of what others might think. This will help you face challenges and mend scatters. Learn from your mistakes and figure out on your own different ways to overcome hindrances in life. Stick to your decision, this will make life happy and content.
**GLOBE TROT**

Christopher Nolan creates actual nuclear bomb for Oppenheimer

Christopher Nolan’s upcoming film *Oppenheimer* is based on nuclear physicist J Robert Oppenheimer, who was responsible for developing the first atomic bomb for the U.S. government. The filmmaker is known for pushing boundaries in order to achieve realistic action sequences. Post the announcement of the film, fans had a ball making memes as to how Nolan would create an actual nuclear bomb abandoning the CGI process to achieve realism. Well! Things just got real! In a recent interview, the filmmaker admitted that he created the Trinity test from scratch. The Interstellar filmmaker gave the entire credit to his visual effects supervisor Andrew Jackson and his crew for making the test possible.

Having worked on several films that deal with a convoluted plot, the auteur went to the extent of saying Oppenheimer is his most challenging film to date. Oppenheimer stars Cillian Murphy in the leading role while Robert Downey Jr, Emily Blunt, Matt Damon, Gary Oldman play other important characters.

**Man wins biggest ever lottery in 30 year history of UAE’s big ticket draw**

Can you imagine winning prize money worth AED 30 million (7 million pounds) and not getting worked up about it? Kathar Hussain who is a car wash manager won the biggest ever lottery in the 30 year history of UAE’s big ticket draw. The winner’s reaction disappointed millions of viewers as he made a trip to visit his family back in India. What’s more disappointing is that his phone was switched off. The organisers had to track down the man to the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu. Speaking to the local media, Kathar Hussain said, “I was watching the show and was in India at my friend’s home when I realised I was the winner. I earn AED 1,500 every month (€330). Even if I worked every day and spent nothing, I would still never earn so much as I’ve just one in a lifetime.”

**Pune-based chef makes ‘Shringar Cake’**

Pune-based chef Prachi Dhabal Deb baked a masterpiece cake named “Shringar Cake.” When Prachi was asked to make something by her international counterparts that reflects Indian cultural fashion, she took the inspiration from the saree that was gifted to her by her mother. She took the colour of the saree and its border for the look of the cake. The master baker previously created a cake replica of Italy’s Grand Milan Cathedral. The 32 inch cake is shaped like “Kumkum Dibbi”, a vermilion box. The cake is now on display at Deb’s cake studio.