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PURNABRAHMA

CHAMBER FOR ADVANCEMENT OF SMALL AND MEDIUM BUSINESSES
CASMB

DIVYZEP

INSPIRATIONAL STORIES

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-Stephen Hawking





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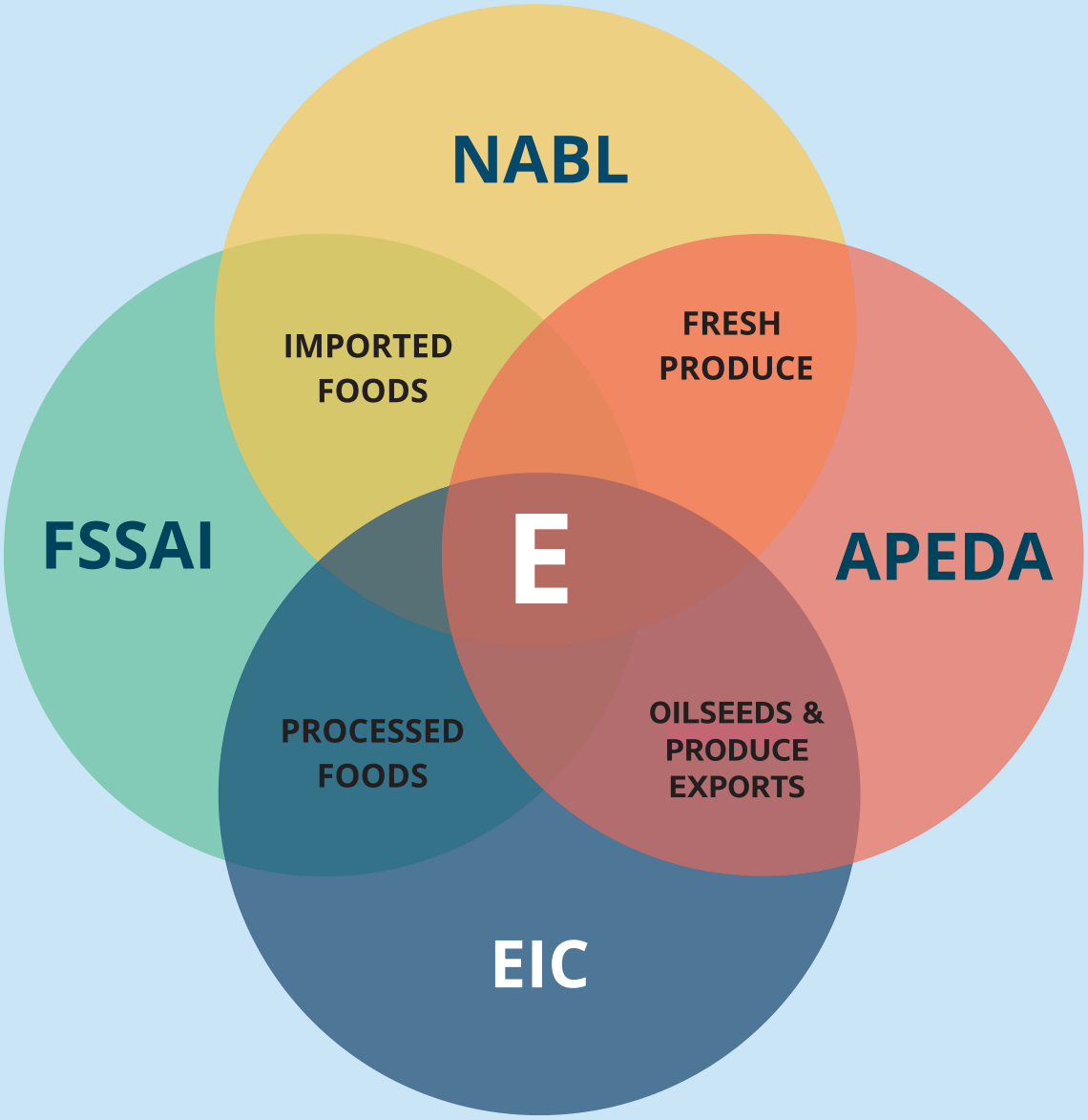

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PURNABRAHMA

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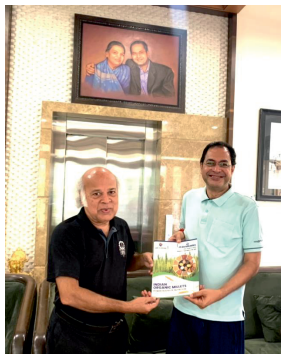

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Ms. Anjali Lokare

Food Consultant (Pune) Farm to Fork Solutions

CASMB ACTIVITIES 2023



Seminar on "Bringing back millets to the table" at ICT,Mumbai

13th Jan 2023



Launch of PurnaBrahma magazine (Year 3, Vol 1) titled "Indian organic millets- a powerhouse of nutrition"

13th Jan 2023



Seminar on "California Ingredients for Food Processing and Snacking"

27th Jan 2023



Inauguration of ANNAKOSH 3.0, Millet-O-mania

29th Jan 2023



Our President Nilesh Lele received an award from Shri Rohit Kumar, IAS, Secretary, Ministry of consumer Affairs Government of India.

17th FEB 2023



Dr. Prabodh S. Halde (Marico Limited) - Chairman of Chamber for Advancement of Small & Medium Businesses is one of the Key Speaker at "Retail Leadership Summit 2023"

22-23th Feb 2023



Mission Millet: Mainstreaming Millets for a Smart, Sustainable Tomorrow.

24-25th Feb 2023



Entrepreneurship Awareness Programme

1st March 2023



Dear Readers,

I want to take a moment to speak to you about the importance of embracing diversity in our society and in the industries we work in. Specifically, I want to talk about individuals with disabilities and the unique contributions they can make to our communities and workplaces.

People with disabilities, or "divyang personalities," as they are sometimes referred to, have faced many challenges and obstacles throughout history. However, they have also made significant contributions to society and industry, and we should celebrate and recognize their achievements.

Whether it's in the arts, sciences, or business, people with disabilities have made significant contributions and have proven that their disabilities do not define their abilities. They bring unique perspectives, innovative solutions, and a tenacity and resilience that can inspire us all.

As members of this organization, it's important that we strive to create an inclusive and welcoming environment for all individuals, including those with disabilities. Let us work together to break down barriers and create opportunities for everyone to contribute to their full potential.

So let us celebrate and recognize the contributions of divyang personalities, and let us commit ourselves to building a more inclusive and diverse society and industry. Together, we can make a positive difference and create a better future for all.

Best regards,

Nilesh Lele

President,

Chamber for Advancement of Small & Medium Businesses (CASMB)

Dr. Prakash Kondekar





Human life is full of various challenges. One who acceptsthe challenges and convert them into opportunities can become successful in life. So positive thinking is the key. This is also the secret of many *Divyangjans*.

Stephen Hawkins was physically challenged person but he is said to be one of the most successful person, in-spite of his many health issues. Hawking was born in Oxford into a family of physicians. In October 1959, at the age of 17, he began his university education at University College, Oxford, where he received a first-class BA degree in physics. In October 1962, he began his graduate work at Trinity Hall at the University of Cambridge where, in March 1966, he obtained his PhD degree in applied mathematics and theoretical physics, specialising in general relativity and cosmology. *In 1963, at age 21, Hawking was diagnosed with an early-onset slow-progressing form of motor neurone disease that gradually, over decades, paralysed him.* After the loss of his speech, he communicated through a speech-generating device initially through the use of a handheld switch and eventually by using a single cheek muscle. Hawking's scientific works on radiation was controversial. By the late 1970s and following the publication of further research, the discovery was widely accepted as a major breakthrough in theoretical physics. Hawking was the first to set out a theory of cosmology which he explained by a union of the general theory of relativity and quantum mechanics. He was a vigorous supporter of the many-worlds interpretation of quantum mechanics.

Padmashri Dr. Arunima Sinha is an Indian mountaineer and sportswoman. She is the world's first female amputee to scale Mount Everest, Mount Kilimanjaro (Tanzania), Mount Elbrus (Russia), Mount Kosciusko (Australia), Mount Aconcagua (South America), Mount Denali (North America) and Mount Vinson. She is also a seven time Indian volleyball player. She was pushed from a running train by robbers in 2011 while she was resisting them, causing in rods pushed into her left leg and multiple fractures of the spinal cord.



Also great personalities like **Karmveer Bhaurao Patil, Padma Vibhushan Dr. Raghunath Mashelkar, and Shri Hanmantrao Gaikwad** had economic stringency since their childhood but were mentally very strong and despite many hurdles, have become successful. Not only that but they are torch bearers for many youngsters.

Austrian Psychiatrist, **Viktor Frankl,** developed a logotherapy and is based on the premise that the primary motivational force of an individual is to find the meaning of life or a significance of living or existence in general. Different people and cultures believe in different aspects for answers to this question. People with motor neurone like disease who slowly get paralysed, slowly tend to get depressed and this is about 70%. The remaining 30% are of positive mind-set having interest in their lives. Such people can be idols of many. There is also another category of people who are not physically challenged but are mentally depressed because of the very difficult economic condition. Here also few of such people are determined to fight with the situations to go ahead in life. Such people are very rare. It is the responsibility of the community to felicitate them and bring them to lime-light as they can become an inspiration for others.

Howdo these people succeed in life? They live on the principle of FLASH. Itis nothing but the Friends, Learning (always try to learn new things), Art(there are more than 72arts) study, Spirituality (Meditation) and Helping others. They also believe that when there is continuous stress one has to take a break. One psychiatrist, in his research in1976, came to the conclusion that if a human brain is busy in doing any sort of activities all the time, whatever may be his or her age they will not have that depressive element in their mind.

In short, stay always positive, fight with the situation and overcome the stress. ■



Stephan Hawking, the cosmetologist, mathematician, physicist, author and professor, at the age of 21 contracted incurable, degenerative neuromuscular disease but he continued to work despite its disabling effects and explained the origin of the universe and the black hole. He beat the challenges and set an example for the world that disability is just a perception: a way of getting some extremities that throws an interesting light



on people. It is ironical that humans recognise the specially abled for their disabilities rather than for their abilities. As a result they go through humiliation and even rejection from the society. Specially abled people need legal protection and societal acceptance not in a sympathetic way but in a normal way.

The word divyang celebrates able gaze of person with disabilities achieving beyond expectations, against all difficulties.

Every year in the month of April we release special issue of Purnabrahma. Last year our special issue SKYWARDS was on successful women from different fields. This year we have come up with Divyang special issue DIVYZEP with inspirational stories of Divyang personalities, stories of foundations who are working for them, stories of parents who left their careers for their specially abled kids to empower them in every possible way and of even few who are empowering others.

We have covered story of Mr. Hanmantrao Gaikwad whose company has given employment to more than 200 divyang people and has set a role model for the society.

Every story is really inspiring, motivating and teaches us lessons of life: "However difficult life may seem, there is always something you can do and succeed at."

It's great message to youth of our country who commit suicide by small failures in their life.

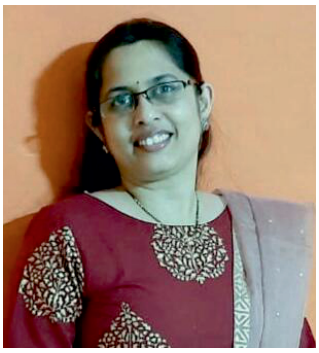
“Life is beautiful, live it to the fullest."

Thank You!



Mrs Rupa Kanvinde
Chief editor

SUBEDITOR'S DESK



Let's talk about some numbers. Persons with significant disabilities represents 16% of the world's population (WHO report). In India, alone, about 2.41% of male population and 2.01% of its female population reports having a disability.What holds disabled people back? In most cases, it's definitely not their disability. Rather it's the restrictions levied on them by the society as they experience discrimination and face many obstacles to participation in all aspects of society, in accessing education, employment, health care, social recognition and in their entrepreneurial business. As a result, persons with disabilities are at a high risk of poverty than their non-disabled peers, their inclusion in all development activities is essential.

There is a saying, "Disability is just a matter of perception. With self-belief, nothing can stop you!"Nobody would believe that Walt Disney, the founder of the Disney Company and a pioneer of the American animation industry, suffered from dyslexia while growing up. Incredibly, a disabled individual turned into a worldwide phenomenon and is still remembered today. Anybody who dares to dream can work hard and turn those dreams into reality.

The economy of a country is largely driven by entrepreneurs. A greater focus on self-employment can let the differently abled work around their personal needs and limitations, transforming disability into ability.With a diversified marketplace, some of the best business opportunities available for people with disabilities can be launching business from home, franchises and niche start-ups. They can play with their strengths and interests to transformthem into a lucrative business. Access to start-up capital, financial support, proper education, training, government incentives and programs can be some of the potential ways to address the barriers that hinder the growth of entrepreneurs living with disabilities.

Countless differently abled people across India have successfully overcome physical and mental challenges, changing the world's perception of them.These individuals have challenged the odds and turned the tide. They have proven that they can achievetheir goals. From disabled businesspeople, entrepreneurs, academicians, government officers and myriad other fields, there are loads of disabled carving a path.Through the current issue ofPurnabrahma, we celebrate their achievements and in turn serve as a liaison to encourage other disabled peers to become self-dependent, contribute to and make a mark in the society.

These especially abled individuals have gone on to become role models, working and creating opportunities for both the ilk and non-disabled individuals. Thus, physical disability should not be a limitation but the mind-set should be so that anyone can achieve anything!

Happy reading!

Dr. Ritika Joshi
(Sub-Editor)

Thank you!

Live Your Idea and Success Will Be Yours

Hanmantrao R. Gaikwad

Founder, Chairman &
Managing Director,
BVG India Ltd.



Bharat Vikas Group(BVG) India is a trustworthy & largest integrated facility management company in India with over two decades of rich and varied experience. This organization began with facility management when they undertook housekeeping for a reputed company. Over the years, they have broadened their scope of services to become an integrated facility management service provider across the country. **CASMB's Advisor, Dr. Prakash Kondekar,** spoke with **Shreeman Hanmantrao R. Gaikwad, Founder, Chairman & Managing Director, BVG India Ltd.,** who idolizes Swami Vivekanand and Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.

Dr. PK: How was your childhood and your school education?

Shri HRG: I come from a small village Rahimatpur in Pune District where we had our two acres of land. I did my primary schooling there. Thereafter we shifted to Pune in a small (9 x 10 feet) room where I had joined my diploma course. I had to buy bike. When I was in the second year, my father departed to heavenly abode.

Dr. PK: Did you undertake any job before starting this company? And how was that experience?

Shri HRG: In fact I had many small jobs since my college days. Because of those I could manage my expenses and started building confidence. In the meantime, I had created my own company, Bharat Vikas Group. On completion of my engineering, I started working in Telco, Pune. **On 22nd May 1997 we got first house-keeping contact from Indica Company, through BVG India Ltd.**

Dr. PK: Any specific intention for starting this company and what was the initial employee strength of the company.



Shri HRG: It just happened because I wanted to do something for India and that is the reason we have map of Bharat Desh in our emblem. It was designed by me as we could not afford to employ an artist for this work. Since then my close friend, Umesh Mane, our Vice Chairman, alongwith 6 other friends started working for house-keeping contracts. In the first year we had 300 employees. Thereafter we opened our branch in Chennai and Bengaluru and so on. At present we are in 120+cities across 25 states and UT, with corporate office in Hinjewadi, Pune.

Dr. PK: What are the major latest technologies you have been using in your set up & where?

Shri HRG: Immediately after starting the company, after few months we purchased a machine for cleaning worth Rs. 40 lacs for quick completion of one contract and going for the others. This way our business was scaling up. In 2000, I resigned from Telco and started working for BVG India Ltd. on afull-fledged basis.

Dr. PK: What are the facilities your company provides and how you could develop your arena of business?

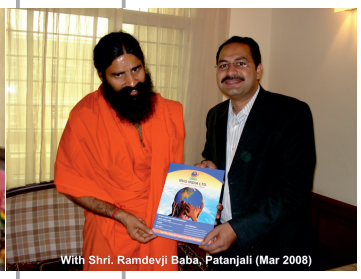
Shri HRG: Attendant services, Airport Maintenance services, Carpet Upholstery services, Production support, Integrated facility Management Services, Technical Services, Temple Maintenance services, Shop floor cleaning services, Pest control Services, Road sweeping and Cleaning Services, Paint Shop Maintenance Services, etc. We do not advertise but satisfactory customers recommends our name for the new service contract. Hospital Cleaning services and AC maintenance including one such of 5000 Tonnes.













Dr. PK: Who are your major clients/customers?

Shri HRG: Our first break was that of the Parliament Library building maintenance in New Delhi of 6 lacs square feet, followed by the main Parliament building, PM's residence and PM's office. Then came the Rashtrapati Bhavan, Finance Ministry Office, Supreme Court, Amritsar Golden Temple, Tirupati, Vithal Rakhumai Mandir Pandharpur, Tulja Bhavani Mandir Solapur, Jejuri, Somanth, Dwarka, Ujjain Mahakal etc. including 24 other temples of India. Washington office is our next assignment.

We also provide emergency medical ambulance services in Maharashtra with around 1000 ambulances having on-duty Doctors, including basic life support and advanced life support systems. This service is operated on behalf of government of Maharashtra, and is free for the people in Maharashtra. Any citizen in medical emergency can avail this free service facility by dialling #108 from anywhere in Maharashtra. So far, 84 lacs of patients have benefitted from this facility. More than 40,000 babies were born in these ambulances.

Dr. PK: What is your mission?

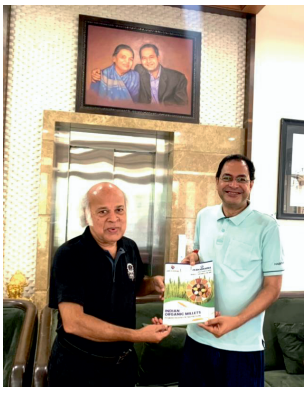
Shri HRG: As one of the most experienced facility management companies in India, BVG India offers various facility management services. While continuing to grow as a service provider, we have always been open to adopt emerging technologies and meeting the evolving facility management needs of public and private organizations. Today, we can handle a vast portfolio of clients within the government and corporate sectors. We provide value added-services with technology based transparency to valued clients.

Our company's services consolidate all public requirements under a single management team thus helping to save costs, reduced vendor management efforts & enjoy effective facility management services. Our vision is to positively impact 10 crore lives by 2030. I believe in my team. Together, we have been able to overcome every challenge and provide consistent service and support to all our clients across various sectors.

Dr. PK: How many physically handicapped people have you employed in BVG or allied companies? What are their levels?

Shri HRG: Bharat Vikas (India's Progress) is at the core of our activities. So we have a special focus on hiring and developing the underserved members of the society. At this point we have over 205 Divyangs and 1299 widows working in our operations. We hire them based on their skills, across various levels. Most of them are working in operations as maintenance staff, housekeepers, etc. At present the total number of employees in our firm stands above 85,000.

We at CASMB, salute the gigantic work done by BVG India under the leadership of Shri Hanmantrao R Gaikwad and his team. We wish him all luck for the future endeavours and assignments. ■



With Shri Hanmantrao at his Pune residence for his interview, 28th Feb 2023.

Veruschka Foundation Changing lives through Empowerment

Dr. Tatyana Dias

1. What is your educational background ?

I am a neurobiologist by profession. I did my BSc in Lifesciences & Biochemistry from St. Xavier's College, Mumbai. Following my graduation, I moved to the United Kingdom to study for my MSc in Biomedical sciences and a Doctorate in



Neurobiology at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. I then did my postdoctoral research in Neurobiology at the Gurdon Institute, University of Cambridge, England. The focus of my scientific career has been understanding the nervous system, what are the consequences when functioning is impaired and what are the strategies for repair.

My sister Veruschka, inspired me to become a neurobiologist as I was always in awe of how her brain worked as opposed to mine.

2. What was the motive to start this foundation ?

Veruschka Dias, my younger sister was the inspiration to start the foundation. She was neuro-diverse, on the autism spectrum and was the light of our lives. She was affectionate, bubbly, a foodie at heart who was adept at kitchen chores. Veruschka unexpectedly passed away at the age of 26 in 2015 and life changed for me and my parents. It was like the sun was taken away and we had to re-establish our identities. With a view to keeping her memory alive, we started the foundation in 2016. My parents, Aloysius and Jennifer Dias are our directors.

Like most children with disabilities, Veruschka attended school till the age of 16 and then due to lack of vocational training options in Mumbai she became home bound. The million dollar question and one that is a constant in the minds of the parents of a person with disability is "What is going to happen to my child after me". The importance for vocational training and independent living comes to the forefront when children with disabilities become adults. As an organisation, we wanted to bridge the gap between childhood and adulthood by providing skill development that could help persons with disabilities live an independent life of dignity.

After three months of market research visiting special schools and sheltered workshops, we realised that the children with disabilities were mostly foodie's like Veruschka and were also being trained to prepare basic food items like sandwiches, chaat, lime juice and instant noodles. The work of the organisations was truly commendable and we felt that we could take it up a notch and provide culinary training keeping in mind vocation and skill development for the future. That's how I started "Culinaris Cookery Course" in 2017 with 9 students, we were featured on the cover page of the Mumbai Mid-Day and the number of our students grew to 22 in the following year with a waitlist of 100. With the growing needs, we soon began to face space limitations and needed to find a solution. With no physical setup of our own and lack of manpower, we were at a disadvantage to scaling our initiatives.

My husband Rohan Dias, an advertising professional made my mission his and gave up his career to start the first of its kind unique "Culinaris Cookery Institute" for persons with disabilities in 2019. In our

first year we impacted 56 students at our institute and ran two parallel programs in Vashi and Thane.

Culinaris, is our flagship programme and our training programs are individualised & family centric. There is no academic criteria like 3rd, 5th or 10th standard passing, ability to read or write that is required to attend our programs. After much effort, we were able to acquire Government of Maharashtra certification for our training programs. We are proud to have empowered 450+ persons with disabilities ranging from the ages of 13+ to 62 years of age and their family members through our offline training programs. We also offer online training programs which we started during COVID and have impacted 850+ persons with disabilities and their family members pan India and overseas.

3. Are the trainings free of charge? How u could arrange funds then to manage culinary art school ?

The training that we offer is chargeable in slabs as per the annual income of the family. The deficit in the fees is what I then fundraise.

It was serendipity that we received a small contribution for our cause which helped us to acquire the rental space and part of the equipment we needed. Rohan designed the culinary institute and the remainder of the money we needed was funded by us, our family and the fees from the students.

4. How or in what way your family supported you in this mission ?

Rohan and me are grateful to our families for supporting us in our mission to be the voice for persons with disabilities. They have guided and mentored us through the ups and downs of the journey we are on. My father, Mr Aloysius Dias was the HR Head of Essar Projects and Construction and my mother Mrs Jennifer Dias was the first lady principal of St Xavier's High School, Fort Mumbai. With their diverse backgrounds, our professional backgrounds and individual experiences we support each other in our roles in the foundation.

5. What difficulties you faced ?

The biggest challenge for us then and now has been garnering support for what we do. Skill development with professional certification for persons with developmental disabilities is one we are trying to bring to the foray in our society. Persons with disabilities are a group of individuals worth investing in, they are unutilised workforce for which there is a return on investment if you give them an opportunity to learn, earn and live a life of dignity. For all the degrees I have to my name, my trainees can make a better cuppa than me!

6. What actions you took?

Our mission is to provide persons with disabilities, the opportunities to live independent lives of dignity. Culinaris Cookery Institute serves as a platform to showcase the abilities and training of our students to the F & B industry, hospitality sector and the society at large.

To ensure employment opportunities and successful placements including job retention, we included functional learning as part of our culinary training programs. We focus on communication, self-esteem, team work and overall independence. We also take our trainees for industry field trips, provide the necessary exposure at public engagements like stalls, catering services for customers and being part of awareness events. In the case of the trainees who are placed, we work with the families through our parent program to ensure that they understand the job role, requirements and how best they can support their child.

7. What is your most satisfying moment in your life?

It has been rewarding and fulfilling to train persons with disabilities and see them progress from never having held a knife to being able to cook an entire dish themselves with some assistance. In most cases, the family members are understandably overprotective of their children and don't let them use a knife, operate the gas or use an oven. But with the right training and when give a chance our trainees transcend all expectations even their own to cook for themselves and their families, travel independently and become contributing members of their families. Personally, I feel I am training many like my sister and that's more than I could have asked for.

8. What are your future plans?

We would like to scale our initiatives in Mumbai by

training and providing placement assistance for the hearing impaired, speech impaired and other disabilities besides developmental disabilities. Through our online training programs, we are planning to create a digital platform and scale our programs to Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities pan India.

9. Can u share few achievements of your students?

Dhriti Pandit, trained with us and has been working with us at our institute for the last 4 years as an Assistant Chef. She works full time and is also Maharashtra's Table Tennis Champion who has been putting her best efforts to be selected for the Special Olympics in Berlin this year.

Ghulam Rangrez, trained with us and then we placed him at Chef Sanjeev Kapoor's studio kitchen as a kitchen assistant. He became an integral part of the team and worked there till the pandemic. He then started working at our institute as Assistant Chef and has been with us for the last 2 years.

Sarita Sonawane, one of our trainees started a tea stall selling hot beverages and snacks at an ST stand close to her village just outside of Pune.

10. Do u want to give any message to next generation

You never know what life has in store for you but everyone has a purpose and more often than not serendipity kicks in to help us achieve it. So always have your glass half full, write your own destiny whilst travelling to where life wants to take you. ■



Culinaris Cookery Institute Students 2019-20

The impact assessment study was independently conducted by ImpactreeData Technologies Pvt Ltd. All findings are factual and represent the unbiased and truthful testimony of the respondents.



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Multiple Disabilities - One Dignified Platform: Terrasinne, F.C Road Pune.

Terrasinne is a restaurant which was launched in Sept 2021 on the Fergusson College road, Pune. It has a young staff comprising farmer's children from villages of Maharashtra and Karnataka. There are 7 types of disabilities like Cerebral palsy, Visually impaired, Hearing Impaired, autism, and other learning and developmental disorders working at Terrasinne with dignity and confidence.

Dr Sonam Kapse, cancer genetics specialist turned restaurateur and Founder said during her interview that the name Terrasinne was given to this restaurant because 'Terra' means earth and sinne means 'food' as it's a farm-to-table concept. The idea is to promote local produce and serve global cuisine while at the same time giving livelihood to 100+ farmers by sourcing millets directly from them.

Terrasinne, is entirely managed by a team of people with several disabilities, and broke even six months of its inception. When question was asked to Dr. Sonam "Why you did not think of making this company as NGO"? She smiled and replied these Divyang kids don't want pity, they want to be empowered and stand on their feet. This restaurant is opened to promote inclusivity and create an equal platform for them. The



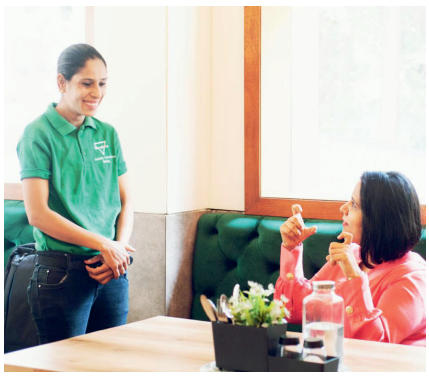
focus being only on their strengths and not their weaknesses.

Dr. Kapse has followed an innovative scientific training program based on Behavioural aspects, the physical attributes, and emotional well-being. Before training the youth, Dr. Kapse spent five years understanding how she can help the physically and specially challenged to live an enriched life. Thus the idea of opening first such restaurant in Pune. ***Terrasinne's*** management takes care of their staff from making arrangements of their stay to educating parents. They feel homely and interact with each other like friends. Every six months, they are given promotions not just to inspire them but to make them more responsible.

Special feature of this restaurant is in its menu card with specific signs (palm gestures) at the top and pointers at recipes on each page with numbers so that the diners can easily communicate with the special staff of our restaurant.

There are almost 114 restaurants already on FC Road, Pune but ***Terrasinne*** being new has made a mark for itself. A big credit and appreciation goes to its specially-abled team!







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Towards a Happy Camper Future for Our Special Children

Pratima Hindlekar

Mother of a 19 years old differently abled daughter.

Autism has been a pervasive disorder but is less understood. According to statistics, 1 in every 68 children in India is affected by autism leading to millions of children and as many families contending with this lifelong dependency. Depending on the severity of the condition and therapeutic interventions the affected children can only be trained to cope with the disability.



Autism Research Centre (ARC) is a registered charitable trust created to make a difference in the lives of families living with autism. We, a group of 24 like-minded parents have come together to build a residential institution for our children at a scenic location in Purandar district about 40 km from Pune city. The sole purpose of this is to address the question “what after us?” which haunts every parent.

ARC is a collaboration between parent group, Support all abled Differently(SaaD) - an established charitable trust and Rotary Club of Khadki (RCK), all deeply committed to the cause.

The aim of ARC is to create a top class residential and developmental facilities and to provide lifelong services to the individuals with autism so they can live independently in a respectful, caring and safe environment.



Our journey started with SaaD, an established charitable trust working in the area of special education since 2001. Mrs. Sunita Lele who's the founder, principal trustee and a mother of a differently abled son has vast experience in training differently abled children, their parents, caregivers and teachers. The concept of “Home school” was developed by SaaD to empower parents to work with their children to make them independent in daily living skills and becoming contributing members of the society. The home schools are run by the parents with the help from special educators, professionals and volunteers.

SaaD has undertaken following activities:

- Imparting trainings to differently abled individuals, parents, caregivers
- Imparting vocational skills to the differently abled individuals
- Social awareness programs like World autism Awareness Day
- Other cultural programs

The children are being trained to make various products like paper bags, decorative items, *diya*, *toran*, table mats, folders, pen stands. These products are displayed and sold at various exhibitions and special events.

RCK with three decades of social work experience in the area of health, has always believed and supported programs undertaken by SaaD. The support and encouragement from RCK has led to realise the dream of parent group to create a residential facility with complete care for children with autism. The constant support and assistance from RCK, vast experience and

knowledge of SaaD and determination of parents make a unique combination and strong foundation for ARC.



The parent group pooled in resources and purchased 3 acres of land and have donated part of it to the institute. Almost 80% construction of the institute and residential facility has been completed till date. The fully equipped residential facility for 24 individuals with full time caregivers and dedicated staff on site will be operational by the end of year 2023. We parents with the belief in active parental involvement have decided to live in close proximity to the facility so that we can oversee the functioning of professionally managed centre.

All the necessary customised programs including therapies like physiotherapy, sensory integration, behaviour management therapy and vocational trainings will be implemented in the institute. This will help the children achieve independence in daily living ultimately leading a healthy, happy and dignified life.

Our children are currently being trained at the city arm of ARC in Pune to prepare them to transition into the residential program later this year. This journey towards our goal has not been easy but we are committed to make it happen with continued efforts and perseverance for the brightest future of our children.

For more information please check out following website:

http://autismrtc.org ■



ARC

Never Give Up Because *Yeh* Life *Mange* More!

Mrs. Archana Suresh Patil

DMLT Pathologist (non-practicing)
Parent Councellor



I am Mrs. Archana Suresh Patil, blessed mother of two special children. As all kids are special to their parents my children are special in some different way. My elder daughter is impaired of hearing whereas my younger son is autistic. As a mother, I found out the special abilities in my children and nurtured them to achieve their goals.

Life has never been kind to us but the 'Never Give Up' slogan has helped us stand strong in all the adversities that came our away and yes it would never have been without our togetherness. I am non-practicing pathologist, my husband is a Lawyer, my daughter is a national Level Bharatanatyam dancer, yoga instructor, a makeup artist an aspiring model and art teacher along with this she owns her online handmade jewelry and chocolate business whereas my son is focused to reach his goals of completing his PhD in Mathematics. At present he is studying in BITS Pilani, Goa campus, Goa.

My daughter was around 6 months old when we discovered that she was hard of hearing so she had to undergo many tests. At 1.8 years, she started to wear hearing aids, and underwent speech therapy special training when her schooling started. Meanwhile my son was born. He used to respond to sounds but did not respond to any commands or when somebody used to call out his name. So we became frightened about this situation. Following many tests, my son was diagnosed with autism.

My daughter took pre-school training from The Central School for the Deaf. When she was just 3.5 yrs old her schooling started. So for her special training we had to travel daily for 4 hours up and down. Later when my son was diagnosed, I used to travel with both the kids to Mumbai for the special training. To reach to our



destination we had to change two trains and then travel by bus or taxi. This journey continued for 2 years. After the preschool training I got both children admitted to a regular school. My daughter who had learnt lip reading used to sit on the first bench and used to lip read her teacher while teaching that helped her to cope up in her school life. Simultaneously my son was slowly and steadily adjusting to the school life. My son who was non-verbal till the age of 4, later on started speaking and excelled in academics.1Along with their regular schooling, my daughter who had a passion for dancing was admitted to Bharatanatyam classes whereas my son became friendlier towards books.

Both children have faced many health issues since childhood. My daughter from the age of 1 year has been suffering from severe migraine attacks and used to get admitted to the hospital and later on when she was 12yrs old started facing issues with low BP. On the other hand, my son, at the age of 7, was first detected with celiac disease. After biopsy, he was diagnosed with an early stage of intestinal cancer. Immediately, treatments started and after six months my son recovered from his issues but till date has to follow a strict diet. Facing different issues had taught us to never to give up. These difficulties in life made us stronger than before.

As days passed by, my daughter completed her 12th. Later on, she pursued diploma in Nrityayog Sutra, completed her art teacher training. She has been conducting different workshops of art in the special need Children school. She has also completed her advance course in Bharatanatyam and has performed in more than 45 stage shows for which, she has received many awards. She has stood first in India in an online dance competition organized by *Le Rhythm* affiliated to Ministry of Culture, India. Apart from this, she has done modelling for Tribes India a government brand and also owns her handmade jewelry business since 8 years. Her journey with her jewelry making, dance shows, modelling assignments will continue. She needs everyone's good wishes. Recently during deaf awareness week, she was invited by Google India

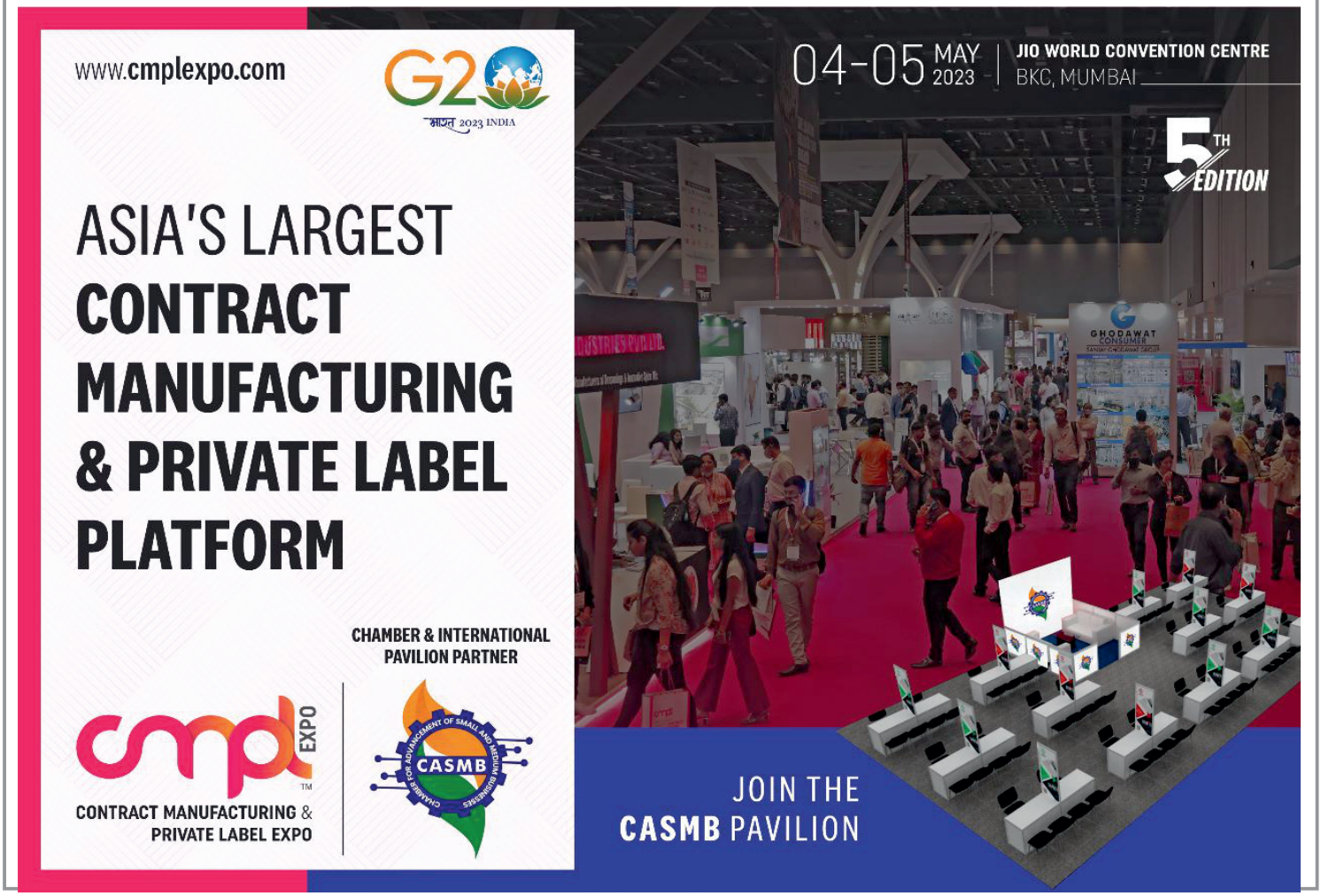


to share her experience and views.

In spite of being autistic, my son is good in academics who has bagged different scholarships till date. To mention, he is an NTS scholarship holder, he has topped India in the KVPY scholarship, his JEE rank is 16 (PWD). At present he has completed masters in Mathematics; and now pursuing his PhD. He was staying independent and managing all his expenses on his own through his fellowships.



The 'Never Give Up' slogan of our family has helped us to stand strong always. ■



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The Sky's the Limit





WG CDR Shantanu
Indian Air Force

Sriram Narayanamurthy Iyer : Namaskaram Shantanu Ji! It is an absolute pleasure to have you here. Please tell us about yourself.

Shantanu Ji : Hello! I am Shantanu, a Retired Wing Commander in the Indian Air Force. In January 2017, I met with an accident while I was posted in Hasimara and it impacted my spinal cord. After that, I went through a series of medical treatments and rehabilitation and finally I was able to gain physical stability. After that, I took swimming as a competitive sport and won several medals in various championships. I also represented India in Asian Para Rowing Championship in South Korea in October 2019 and 2021 Asia/Oceania Continental Rowing Qualification and Paralympic Rowing Qualification Regatta in Tokyo, Japan.

Sriram Narayanamurthy Iyer : Wow that is truly inspiring. What are the secret mantras for the youngsters reading this, for them to deal with their struggles in life?

Shantanu Ji : I believe that determination, resilience and courage are the most important mantras to help young people get through their struggles in life. It's easy to become overwhelmed, but if you stay focused on the goal and push yourself to keep going no matter what, you'll eventually get there.

Sriram : Sir, what are some of your key achievements in swimming till date?



Shantanu Ji : Well, I have achieved a lot in swimming. In June 2018, I had won two Gold Medals at the Maharashtra State Level Swimming Championship, organized by the Paralympic Swimming Association of Maharashtra. I was also selected for the National Para Swimming Championship XXI and XXII held in Udaipur and Guwahati respectively. In both championships, I won two Gold medals and three Gold Medals respectively, with five new National records.

Sriram Narayanamurthy Iyer : Welcome Shantanu Ji, it is great to have you here. We are so excited to talk to you about your incredible journey from the accident to becoming a Paralympic athlete! Can you tell us a bit about how you found the courage and motivation to take on this journey?

Shantanu Ji : I was fortunate to get a lot of support from the Air Force, my family, and most importantly my wife Sujata. After the accident, I was in a very vulnerable state and my mental health was impacted. My wife was the one who convinced me to take on this challenge and gave me the strength to keep going.

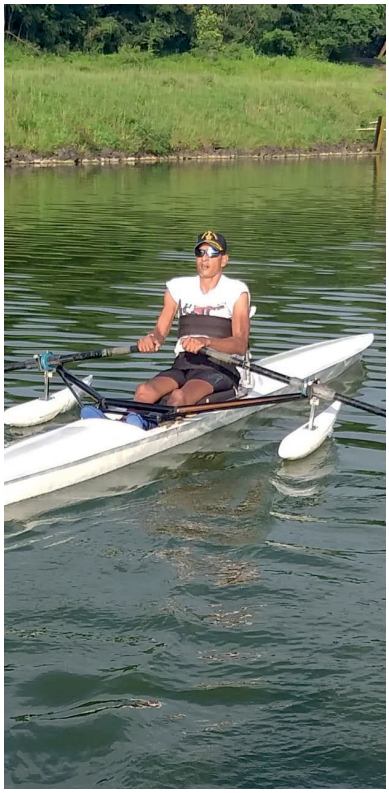
Sriram Narayanamurthy Iyer : That's amazing! What other sports did you explore after swimming?



Shantanu Ji : After swimming, I took up rowing and I was selected to represent India in the Asian Para Rowing Championship held in South Korea in October 2019. I was also nominated to participate in the 2021 Asia/Oceania Continental Rowing Qualification and Paralympic Rowing Qualification Regatta in Tokyo, Japan.

Sriram Narayanamurthy Iyer : Wing Commander Shantanu Ji, you have had a remarkable journey from the time of your accident. Could you tell us a bit about the support you received from the Air Force and the Army?

Shantanu Ji : Absolutely. The Indian Air Force and the Indian Army have been like a family to me. They provided me with the resources, support and encouragement I needed to recover and thrive despite my physical constraints. I am deeply grateful to them for their unconditional support.



Sriram Narayanamurthy Iyer : It's truly inspiring to see how you have reinvented yourself after the accident. It sounds like you have followed a mantra of 'fighting as if you are already dead' to achieve your goals. Could you tell us more about this?

Shantanu Ji : Yes, I believe that the only way to win a battle is to fight as if you are already dead. This means that you have to push yourself beyond your limits and give your all to the cause. There can be no fear of failure, because even if you fail, you have already achieved something extraordinary by making the effort. This is something that I have kept in mind since my accident. ■



Belief in the face of challenges

Surashree Rahane



A girl who was challenged by life.

Challenged physically. Challenged emotionally.

Challenged by situations that break your hopes.

Challenged by circumstances that stop even the best of dreamers.

Imagine this with me.

- Born in a small village
- Physically challenged
- Surgery at 15 days old

This physically challenged girl from a small village who could be every thing she wanted to be, breaking the stereo typical shackles and goes on to become the founder and CEO of India's number one year book company.

Here's where it started.

I was born and raised in a family of freedom fighters. In a small village named Bhagur, which happens to be the birth place of *Swatantraveer Sawarkar*. Apart from this fact, Bhagur is just like any other small village we think of when we think of 'village'. Friendly people around, serene, lush green, and peaceful place!

The thing is, villages have their own down sides. Mine had the challenge of accessibility. For I had to travel for hours for quality education in public transport. So my day usually began at 5 am, every day. This wasn't the hardest part, as life unfolded.

My ?rst surgery happened when I was 15 days old. Not years, days. I have undergone over 25 surgeries since then.



One in particular happened when I was in the 4th standard. I had to undergo a procedure called 'Ilizarov surgery' which required my legs to be pierced with thin rods, and of course, support it as frames.

I want you to know that I never feared surgeries. What I feared the most was missing my school and other activities, a like of a typical school going kid. This time, the doctor informed me I wouldn't be able to attend school for at least a year.

A whole year!

I was heartbroken. More than that, I was angry at myself, at everyone around me. I have not chosen this. How could something that I have not chosen in?uence major decisions of my life. The stubborn kid in me had been the driving force to push hard. Every day, I would struggle getting up. But I would still get up, try walking with the help of my family and friends. The pain was beyond explanation.



But I was as stubborn as a stone. And it was worth it. My legs gained major strength in the first three months itself. I did not miss the school the remaining year. Thank you to the 9 year old in me for believing

in fighting back. My belief created my reality.



I was a bright student. We had decided that there wouldn't be any more surgeries for me. As I was in class10th, this was the time to shine. But things don't go as planned.

My father had a major paralys is attack. With only 72 hours left as told by the doctor, it was a major set back and disheartening to know this, as a daughter.

He even asked us to call our relatives. But my father is a warrior. He survived, day after day. I was naturally disturbed and would rush to the hospital every day after school to meet him. But whenever I would enquire as to how he was feeling, he would always say, "Great!" He would even enquire about my studies, singing and swimming activities. I didn't realize, but I was being motivated by him, bit by bit, every single day.

The day arrived when he was shifted to a bigger hospital in another city and I could meet my parents once in a couple of weeks. But looking at my dad, becoming his own champion, and not a victim, I too decided to become my own champion.

Just 3 months before the exam, I started studying hard. Not only did I stood 1st in my school, but also in the town. I had realized, how important it is to become your super hero, rather than becoming the victim of situations and own-self. I was awarded as the outstanding student of India and was also given a scholarship to go abroad to pursue higher studies. It was a lifetime achievement. But I already had a dream college, and by now I some what knew that I followed up on my dreams. And that is how I landed in COEP, Pune.

I want you to know this…

You are a product of your decisions, your thoughts, and your actions.

COEP gave me in numerable treasure of mentors, mentors that taught me to do more, not just related to my studies, but about life. Being motivated and inspired by each one one of them, I participated in business competitions, was selected as a part of MIT media lab's 1st workshop in India, was leading the business incubation center as the student head and had won the leader of the year award in the graduating year. My academics were not all that bad either. So, you would think, it was easy for me to get a job, right?

WRONG!

For every final stage interview, I was questioned on how I would be able to travel, and commute. And even after trying hard to crack the interviews, I was without a job. It felt as if the more I tried the odds would rise more. But in the final days, I was offered one of the most interesting managerial profile by a startup. It was not a fancy paying job. But being a startup, I got to learn a lot of things and I was able to see how business functions. My interest in learning how to run a business grew, and I opted to go for higher studies. By then, my mission was clear, to learn from the best, be the best resource to the industry and give back to the society what the society had given me in a meaning fulway.

Meanwhile, life at a front has taken unexpected but beautiful turns. My collegemate, and a great friend proposed to me and we decided to get married. We were fortunate enough to be the season's finale couple on an international television show, mentored by the designer Sabyasachi. See, I told you, I always had great mentors.

During my MBA, the rebel inside me was very much on fire. I worked on a short film on LGBTQ community because I wanted to take their unheard story to as many



people as possible, won a wards for the same, but also



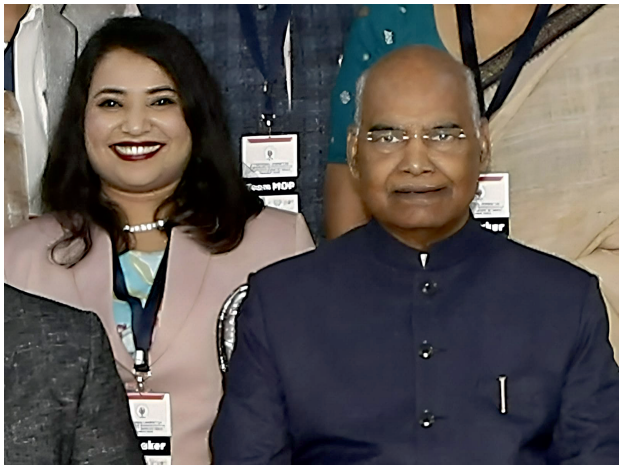
received threats for taking this sensitive topic. But most of the things I was interested in by that time, ranging from scuba diving to making such films, involved serious repercussions, so I stood up for what I believed in, even if it meant scaring the be jesus out of me.

When all of this was happening, I got the pre-placement offer from a reputed consumer goods firm, which made mecry with joy, but there too I was asked if I would prefer a desk job, to which my answer was a stern no. And I don't know what it was, my confidence or my stubbornness, they gave me the field job in sales. And with the sole purpose of rocking the job, I kept on going, and won sales manager of the month award 4 times in12 months. Oh what a journey!

After leading the education product category for an IT giant and becoming an angel investor for Startups, having been on and off actor and the ambassador of a women empowerment group consisting of 200+ successful female entrepreneurs.... I am now on to another great journey.

As a founder and CEO of India's number one yearbook company, I now solve bigger problems for educational institutes. Trying to help students and alumni find a better way to connect. This is my journey.

What I am saying is that once you achieve your dreams, you move on and start a new story. My latest thirst is all



about understanding the universe, around us, within us. To move one step closer to becoming a superhuman. It's your life. You deserve to know it and enjoy it too.

But to lead it in a purposeful way, the first thing I suggest is to be your own cheer leader. Because if you won't believe in yourself, who else would? These condis to have mentors, people you can talk to, read about, get inspired by. Their life navigation will show you the paths available, they will teach you from their mistakes, and how they stuck around. Third is to believe in the collective unity of intelligence. Wherever I am today, whoever I am, it wouldn't have been possible without the support of my family, friends and the society. And the last one is to have and expressing gratitude. Because feeling gratitude and not expressing it, is like wrapping a gift, but not giving it.

Sometimes you will have 100 reasons to not follow your dreams, and one reason to follow it-choose that one reason.

So, what do you think, if I can have it all, can't you have it too? ■

DECLARATION

PURNABRAHMA

- The contents of this issue is referred and compiled from various sources and Purnabrahma doesn't claim it's authenticity.
- The contents given in the article are the views of the respective authors.

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A Rewarding Life beyond All Odds

Shri Prashant Vidhate

Women & Child Development Officer, Wardha, Maharashtra



Greetings to all the aspiring readers!

I, Prashant Devidas Vidhate, am currently working as the District Women and Child Development Officer (Class-1) in Women and Child Development Department at Wardha, Maharashtra. Even though I am working in this position today, the journey was not easy at all.

I was born in a simple family in a small village in the Yavatmal district, which is often in news for farmer suicides in Maharashtra. Farming was the bread and butter for my family. I was active and joyous child until the age of one when I suddenly contracted polio. As a consequence, my right leg got incapacitated and left me crippled eventually, even before I could have learnt to walk properly as a toddler! Unaware of this fact of my life, at such a tender age, I could hardly predict what challenges were in queue! As I grew older, I started to realise that life wouldn't be easier which left me disheartened and dejected at times.Frustrations would follow knowing that I wouldn't be able to do things which other people of my age take for granted.

But somewhere back in my mind, I was grateful for what I can do because I could be lot worse off; for at least I can walk unaided and can do things for myself.With this confidence I completed my primary and secondary education from the same village. Everything was running smooth, but life had taken a different turn for me when, unfortunately, my father died due to illness when I was 9 years old during my school life, and the journey of survival became more difficult.Thereafter, my beloved grandfather became our whole and sole. The funds generated from farming were so low that it became difficult for all of us to make both ends meet.

I was good in studies. Not worrying about the financial condition, and not thinking much, my grandfather immediately took a firm decision of sending me to the taluka place for pursuing 11th, and that too with science branch. For me, this was the first breakthrough in my life of getting admitted to taluka level school and pursuing education in science. Thanks to my grandfather, for his blessings and he who supported and stood by me during the most adverse situations, realised my capabilities and without a twitch encouraged me to take up higher studies.

For me, education in science became tougher, because upto 10th grade, the medium of education was Marathi. But a sudden change of teaching medium to English left me jittery. My lack of confidence and apprehensions, difficulty in coping with the new environment, on top of my physical disability, hit me hard as a result of which I failed in my 12th exams. But my family and especially my grandfather did not lose hope and so did I. They believed in me and I passed the 12thexam with flying colours. During the early 21st century, when there was no internet or social media boom, even the mobile phones could not be afforded by all, I wondered what next after 12th exams? Since, no one in the same household had studied above the 7th grade, backed by my family I took a decision on the advice of a friend and got admitted to B.Sc (Biotech) and completed my graduation.

After my graduation, I took admission in Nagpur University for pursuing my masters in chemistry subject. After coming to Nagpur, I was really introduced to the outside world. Other career options are known. Being interested in teaching, after masters,Ipursued B.Ed.and immediately got an opportunity to work as a Post Graduate Teacher at Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV), Solapur on contract basis and thereaftermy life changed. While in JNV, the dream of going into administrative service took root in my mind. Because many of my students in this school were working as officers and that's where I decided that administrative service is a great opportunity to do something for the society. I decided to move to Pune so that I can get that environment of learning, of growing, of competing and preparing for the different public services exams. But after coming to Pune, I realized that becoming an officer through the competitive exam is not aseasy as it seems in the world of intense competition.

After stepping into the world of competitive exams in Pune, I realized that thousands of student's like me, obsessed with becoming an officer, study for competitive exams day and night. But with a firm determination in my heart, I started studying vigorously and with full energy. Meanwhile, my struggle was going on at many different levels. But with the support and trust of family and very close friends, I was able to survive the storms. In the first two years, I failed many times in different exams. But this situation did not persist thereafter and I finally got selected into government service as District Women and Child Development Officer through Maharashtra Public Service Commission (MPSC). It was a very happy and proud moment for me and for those who have helped me time and again, stood by me.

I consider myself lucky that I got selected in Women and Child Development Department. A very high population of our country is constituted by women and children. These two groups of individuals in the society face various health and nutritional problems and I have very closely witnessed malnutrition among children and its impact on their health and life.Therefore, an opportunity to bring a change in the lives of women and children, my first posting as Child Development Project Officer (CDPO) thrilled me to bits. Through CDPO, mainly Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), numerous schemes and projects related to nutrition and health of children and women is being implemented at the taluka and national level. So I think it is important to give a brief information about ICDS scheme.

The ICDS scheme is implemented under the control of the Department of Women and Child Development in urban, rural and tribal divisions. This scheme is mainly implemented to improve the nutritional and health



Figure: Various activities initiated and conducted by the Women and Child Development Department at Wardha, Maharashtra under Mr. Prashant Vidhate.

status of children and to reduce the rate of child mortality and malnutrition. It provides 6 different types of services. In my taluka, we have done a lot of work on malnutrition. So I am happy that we have been able to lift many children out of malnutrition. After working as CDPO for four years, I was promoted as District Women and Child Development Officer last year, in 2022. This wing of Women and Child Development Department is mainly working on various laws related to women and children. A lot of work was done during this period for the children who have lost their mother or father or both during Corona period, some being adopted by couples from Sweden! The women widowed due to the Covid pandemic were given the benefit of various schemes of the government. While working in my current position, I am facing new challenges every day and I am trying to solve them to the best of my ability because my goal is to ensure that the common people are benefitted to the maximum from these schemes.

Life can throw a lot of different hurdles in one's path, but it is only to make us stronger and braver than before, only if we do not get paralysed by the situations. Thus, I chose to live in the best way possible, and offer the best what I can. I chose not to fall prey to my own physical limitations and the apprehensions that it brings but to face challenges with grit and patience because life can be very rewarding if one is determined to achieve their goals and turn their dreams into a reality!

Reap success, achieve your goals, give lots of love and be happy.

Counting on my blessings and being grateful to all the passengers on my train of journey! ■

PURNABRAHMA

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The Story of Triumph of Will

Dr. Ujwala Bairagi



Born in a small village in Maharashtra, in the family of primary teachers, I was always taught about the importance of education and independence.

When I was 9 months old, I had just started to take my first few steps as a child. But my mother noticed that I was unable to stand and balance myself on my tiny feet. My mother got worried and took me to the doctor where I was diagnosed with polio in the right leg.

My parents were devastated knowing this, but somewhere kept trying all possible ways for my recovery. They tried doing whatever they could with the available limited finance they had. Parents who were wishing to see their daughter walk, now started all types of therapies just to make her stand.

Being teachers, m parents had a lot of faith on the almighty and with all their efforts, their daughter now started to stand and walk but with limping. This came as a ray of hope to them that I could now walk independently. This is how the struggle of the toddler started from the juvenile age of 9 months. A special child, with a strong will with "a not to give up attitude" I started my schooling in the same village.

I was a bright student. My parents always inculcated in me that education is everything which can help anyone to progress in life. Going to school became a daunting task for me as I had to walk all the way up to 5 km. I was always fascinated by books and the stories which encouraged me to walk with a smiling face. In the village, there were no vehicles to travel. Looking at the struggle, my father taught me cycling so that I could at least use it to my benefit. As my right leg was crippled by polio, I used to cycle with my left leg. The journey of cycling which seems easy for everyone, seemed an achievement when I started using bicycle in my fifth standard. During those days, the villagers used to criticize my father saying, "Are you planning to damage her second leg too?"





My father had this vision to make me independent. In few days, I started to cycle but with some limitations. This was in late eighties to early 90's where information was not easily accessible.

I used to spend my time in the library a lot. Reading books made me stronger mentally. Eventually, I developed keen interest in deep diving good books and motivational auto biographies. In my teen's I started to participate in various competitions (elocution, drawing, etc.), and scholarship exams and won many awards. This boosted my confidence a lot.

In village, girls hardly get opportunities to drive vehicle. At the age of 12, my father taught me how to drive a two-wheeler and this is how the journey from bicycle to a two-wheeler started. I could not balance the vehicle from right side, but subsequently overcome that with confidence and some tricks to adjust major balance on my left leg. This struggle was fun but it was making me stronger day by day. I was always taught to try new things rather than giving excuses of polio. This helped me later in my life too.

In 10th standard, I could achieve good merit rank. My next challenge was to shift to other town to pursue 11th science as there was no school in my village and travelling on a day-to-day basis through state transport buses was not easy for me. My admission got secured in school & hostel in Loni, Pravara nagar for 11th and 12th standard. This was the first time I was staying away from parents and doing all my day-to-day activities independently. In two years, I became adept with different interpersonal skills, decision making and became emotionally stronger.



Life was not easy but when we want to achieve something we need to stay focused and keep trying.

After my 12th grade, I got admitted into engineering college, in Pune, for pursuing B.E. Computer. This was real test now as villager turned small town girl had to shift to Pune in a totally new environment. The hostel was far away from campus. It was crowd everywhere, sky-scraper buildings, and new people all-around. The first semester was very tough for me to get adjusted to the new settings. I had to walk long from one building to another as lectures and practical where planned at different departments. This seemed very challenging for a polio survivor. But without losing heart, I did not give up on the struggle. In fact these struggles made me stronger. I was living her life like any other normal person but with more efforts due to polio. The mindset developed in childhood helped me to overcome all the challenges. Subsequently, I completed my engineering and started working with leading IT firm as a software engineer.

Walking in company's big campuses is something which I found challenging, else I was doing the assigned work well and in time. I used to be a top performer. I worked in the IT sector for 2 years and decided to go for MBA in Finance from Pune University. A master degree in business administration has given me confidence to switch my domain from IT to Finance and to start my career in Investment Banking, Capital market domain. I was always a passionate learner and a go getter. The clarity of thought made me choose my life the way I wanted to live. I worked in Academics as training was in my DNA! I was working as Professor at MBA College since 13 years. During that phase I created successful managers and passed on my positive vibes to many students who were facing a problem in their personal and professional life. Being NLP certified, I didn't stop at MBA and completed my PhD in Behavioral Finance which turned into a life changing game for me.

I had developed interest in money management and wealth creation during my post-graduation days that directed me towards the share market. Now I work as a trader and trainer, and a financial consultant for personal Finance with a mission of financial literacy in women and youngsters.

Now I have started my own firm in Pune which deals in personal Finance consulting and training. I am now handling my business successfully and growing it exponentially. A girl from small town has now become a successful entrepreneur. With the blessings of almighty, I have enjoyed the struggles in the journey so far and could achieve much beyond imagination. God tests the patience of one who has the capability to handle stress. In the year 2011, unfortunately I met with an accident and was on wheelchair for almost 10 months. My right



leg and right hand was badly damaged. This meant that I had to depend on people around me for my daily chores. So to stay motivated, I kept reading the books. After this accident recovery, in due course of time, I even learnt how to drive a four wheeler.

Currently I am a trainer and motivational speaker. I have won many accolades including best teacher, valuable contributor in education by Hindustan Times, and many more. I had an opportunity to travel abroad for study and leisure purpose in countries like United Kingdom, Singapore, and Thailand all by myself.

So without regretting about the physical barrier, I never lost hope. "In the silence the universe answers. *In our hearts we find the bravery to go where it is telling us to go.* "We chart our own destiny. It is my firmest conviction that luck will favour those who have the drive and the tenacity to win. This is the story of Dr Ujwala Bairagi from Pune who believes "When there is a will, there is a way or there are excuses". ■

Swayamsiddha

Ankita Arvikar



Ankita Arvikar, 2nd year student of MA, was born as a special child. In her childhood, she was not able to crawl or walk. She had undergone many surgeries at a very young age. Her mother Mrs. Anjali Arvikar who was a practising lawyer decided to give all attention to her daughter. Today, Ankita is a gold medallist in swimming competitions at district, state and national levels, having a record of winning 24 medals!



Ankita, a 28 year girl, is an entrepreneur who started soap making 5 years ago and developed her hobby into a serious business. Now she has her own brand '*The Natural*' in which you can get more than 150 herbal skin and hair care products. But the journey was not so easy.

It was noticed that Ankita's developmental stages were very slow and then she was diagnosed with cerebral palsy at the age of one. From here started her journey of facing challenges. She was taken to the swimming pool when she was just one and half years old. It took almost 15 years for her limbs to allow her swim. Her journey of victory started from here. She won 27 medals in state and national level para swimming competition. She also participated in various ramp walks and won the titles of 'Self-confident' (in Bangalore), Business perfectionist in the corporate walk held by UGAAM and Dynamic duo in Biz queen.

Meanwhile she learnt about soap making and eagerly started doing it for which she has received wonderful responses. She also taught soap making to various especially abled persons and their moms. Some of them have started their own business successfully and some of them are supporting us in the process of production. Ankita has also conducted workshops for soap making for some organisations like ARAMBH, Chatrapati Sambhaji Nagar (a centre for autistic children), Women of Pimpri-Chinchwad dental association etc.

Recently she was awarded with '***Swayamsiddha***' award for her journey.

Ankita is a very good human being winning hearts of people with her innocent smile.

Her mother says, "Ankita refuses to give up. She always keeps trying till she gets success. She learnt swimming as a part of a physical therapy and got motivated by her coach, Mr. Abhijit Tambe to participate in the competition, where she failed. However her determination to succeed made her win a Gold medal in the next swimming competition. Her happiness knew no bounds. This was the turning point in her life and she never looked back."

Ankita did not only become an expert in swimming but she is very active in various curricular activities like fashion shows, acting, singing, trekking etc. She liked trying and learning new things from time to time. It's important to stay happy in all situations. Meanwhile she





came across soap making course and started making soaps as a hobby. While doing so, her mother encouraged her to translate her hobby into business. And they both founded "***Ankita Creations***" a soap making company where she added her creativity such as creating soap bouquet, which are highly in demand.

She believes to follow her heart and her perception of living life includes giving joy to others. She always felt that handicapped people must become financially independent and hence she conducted workshops for them to teach soap making, LED lamps, torch making etc.

Ankita and her mother have been felicitated with many awards, recognitions and have some plans to continue their work for the society. The sapling nurtured with all hardships, sacrifice of her mother has turned out to be a beautiful tree. We deeply appreciate their determination, work and way of living a fulfilled life by overcoming all physical and mental hurdles. This is how Ankita has found her happy vibes by way of making others happy. So in true sense she is *Swayamsiddha*.



Fight and Win

Maya Chauhan

Assistant Professor, B. Design Department at Maniben Nanavati Women's College, Mumbai



I am a wife and mother of a 4 year old boy. I was born normally but within four months, I contracted polio resulting in a physical disability in my left leg up to 45%. Back then, during school days, I was a regular student. I completed my SSC and HSC from the Maharashtra state board. After completing my HSC I got admission to the Textile Engineering Diploma in V.J.T.I. College, Matunga, I finished my Diploma in the year 2006. After that, I took admission in B.Tech (Fashion Technology)from D.K.T.E.S Engineering College, Ichalkaranji, Kolhapur. In spite of my physical disability, I was a very active student who participated in all competitions, fashion shows, paper and poster presentations. I cleared my examinations with distinction. I had always aimed to get admission into a university in the USA. Our college had collaboration with Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, MI, U.S.A. In 2009, I was selected as the best student from my college to pursue my masters in "Apparel Textile, and Merchandising" Ypsilanti, MI, USA. This was possible only after I cleared my GRE, and IELTS exam as per the requirements.

The day arrived, when I had to fly for the first time in my life and experienced an all-new world on 9th September 2010. This was a dream come true for me. I got a graduate assistantship, which was to assist my professor who helped me learnand earn. I never borrowed money from my father. In 2013, after my graduation, though I had a job in hand, I was fortunate enough to get my visa sponsored by the company. But my husband was unable to get a sponsored job and visa, and so we decided to return to India. I had started looking for a job in Mumbai. My old college V.J.T.I. hired me as an Assistant Professor. Eventually due to family issues, I had to quit this job and continued as a part-time job at Designer Institute College as an Assistant professor. In August 2020, I got an offer from Maniben Nanavati Women's College, Mumbai, on an hourly basis Assistant professor in the Fashion Design department. Today, I am the head of the department of the B. Design. The journey has been a difficult one as life does not show any mercy even if you are physically disabled.

Today, my job is the bread and butter for my family. My husband suffered from depression when we moved from the USA to India and still he gets panic attacks. I have noticed that life always surprises you like a mystery box, you never know what will unfold before you! But one thing is for sure, we should stand strong, rock solid to face all challenges in life without expecting about the results!

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Never Give up "Thy Name is Prof. Anala"

Prof. (Mrs.) Anala Anirudha Pandit, is a retired professor of VJTI Mumbai. She has a great fighting spirit in her life which has not only inspired her family but also inspired her students and people around. Recently she was awarded in ICT Alumni Function in Matunga in the presence of Prof. M. M. Sharma, Dr. R. A. Mashelkar, Prof. G. D. Yadav, Prof. J. B. Joshi and Prof. A. B. Pandit. Dr. Prakash Kondekar, Advisor, CASMB, spoke with Prof. (Mrs.) Anala Pandit.

Dr. PK: How was your childhood and your schooling Prof. Anala?

Prof. AAP: My father was working with BMC as an engineer and my mother was a Sanskritteacher. My primary schooling was from Hemraj School, Borivali, Mumbai.

Dr. PK: How about your higher education?

Prof. AAP: I did my B.Sc. from SIES College in 1981 in Physics. Later, I joined University Department of Physics with specialization in Electronics which I completed in 1983. After my graduation in Physics, I got admission with full assistantship at University of Louisville for MS in Physics. After a year, I got transferred to Electronics Engineering department, finished my M.S. in EE in 1985 and returned to India, immediately,

Dr. PK: Which was your first job?

Prof. AAP: In October 1985, I joined Watumull institute to teach B.Sc. Tech program.

I joined Crompton Greaves in Computer division as a Junior Executive in Software Support.

Dr. PK: When did you get married?

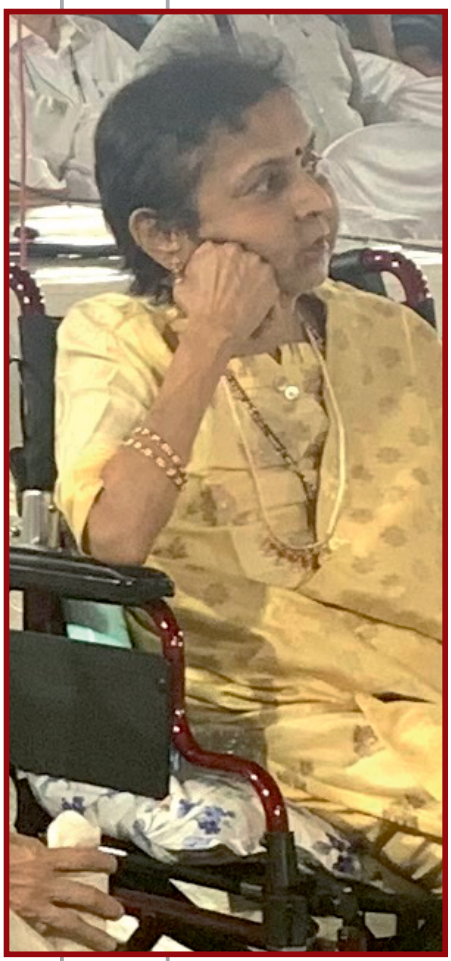
Prof. AAP: On 11th August 1990, I married Prof Anirudha Pandit and I became Mrs. Anala Pandit from Miss. Anala Kulkarni. After my daughter was born in 1992 January, I resigned from Crompton to take care of my daughter.

Dr. PK: When did you take your next job?

Prof. AAP: I started working as a visiting faculty in the MCA department at VJTI. I joined there full time from March 2000. Teaching has been my passion and so I continued teaching there. In 2008, I was selected as an Associate Professor in the same department.

Dr. PK: When did you finish your PhD?

Prof. AAP: To complete my PhD, in 2010 at the age of 50, I again went to University of Louisville, Kentucky USA. Since my MS was in EE I was asked to do additional course work. This led me to get my third Master's degree in Computer Science. I completed my MS and PhD in Computer Science and Engineering in three and half years and returned to India. I could not have achieved this without the full support of my father-in-law, Prof. B. R. Pandit, my parents, Aniruddha and Sphoorti, my daughter. I came back and joined VJTI again.



Dr. PK: When did your health problem start?

Prof. AAP: My illness started in 2016, where the initial diagnosis was Lung fibrosis. After a year of steroids, I took a second opinion. The doctor said that there was no Fibrosis and I was weaned off steroids. I had vomiting and loose motions and continued to lose weight. All possible tests were conducted to find the cause but there was nothing conclusive.

Since I was not able to eat and retain any food my protein levels dropped more than 50% below the minimum requirement. I had lost about 50 kilos. In-spite of this, I continued to work at VJTI and climbed up three floors to reach my department. I always wanted to teach and set an example for others. My mottos in life are, **"Never Give up"** and **"Where there is a will you will find a way, else there are excuses galore".**

Dr. PK: So what next?

Prof. AAP: I was superannuated in Nov 2021. I fell down in July 2022 and in Dec 2022 resulting in femur bone fracture and multiple vertebrae compression fracture respectively. So I have been in bed almost since then. It is only on 15th March, 2023 that I started to walk. During this period I got great support from my family.

Dr. PK: Any hobbies youhave Prof. Anala?

Prof. AAP: Yes. My hobbies include tribal art, reading and most importantly cooking. Due to my health condition, I have been experimenting with variety of food



grains and dishes to improve my protein levels and have come up with various new dishes.

Dr. PK: Any other information would you like to add?

Prof. AAP: I am extremely blessed to have had wonderful teachers like Dr. Arvind Kumar, Dr. Rangwala, Dr. Gupta, Dr. Narsale, Ms. Maya, Prof. Subramanium, Prof. Shhi Yu Wu and Prof. Sam.

List of awardsand achievements of Prof. Anala:

- ACM Honorable mention award at Asia Pacific Regional Finals
- Faculty Mentor for Teams at ACM Asia Pacific Regional finals for over 10 years
- IBM, Drona Award: 2008, 2009, 2010
- Faculty mentor IBM remote mentoring projects 2008, 2015
- IBM, Faculty Innovation Award: 2009



- IEEE Outstanding CECS Student Award, Department of CECS, Univ. of Louisville (USA), 2011
- Dean's Appreciation Award, Peer mentoring program, Univ. of Louisville (USA), April 2012
- Univ. of Louisville (USA), CECS Doctoral Award, April 2014

Membership of professional bodies:

- Life Member - Computer Society of India
- Life Member - IWSA, India
- Advisor - Shroff Institute of Chemical Technology, Ankaleshwar

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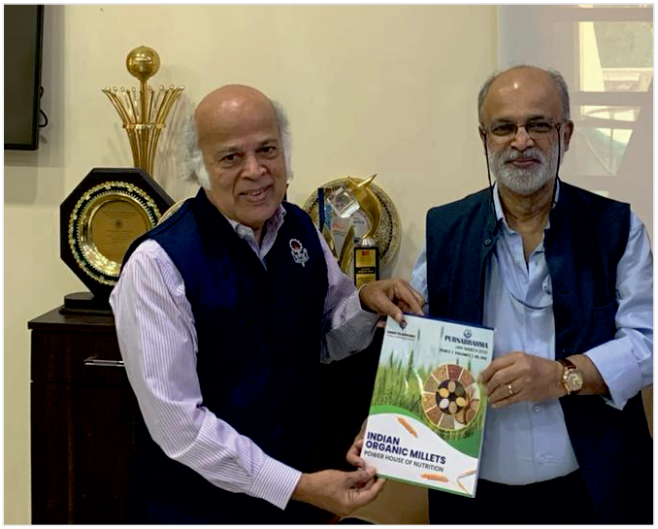
- Optimization Techniques / Computer Optimization Models and so many.



Prof. Anala on wheel chair



Prof. Anirudha Pandit & Dr. Prakash Kondekar

"From Adversity to Success: The Inspirational Journey of Vitthal Chapke"



Vitthal Vamanrao Chapke (age 32) of *Kaleshwar (Poorna)* chose the path of business after overcoming the disability of both legs at birth. He lost his father at a very young age.

Vitthal Chapke's native village, has three acres of dry agricultural land inherited by the Chapke family. It is given to other farmers on contract basis. With the farmers he cultivated mushrooms.From 6 to 8 am and from 5 to 8 pm, this disabled youth sold food on a three-wheeler. Vitthal did not give up and came to Bhagwan Mahavir Vikas Mahamandal, Jaipur, from where he brought three cycles of Divyanga and started a business of mushrooms, *papads* and spices on Usanwari. He started selling button mushrooms.

As there is a demand for button mushroom from consumers in Parbhani city, the purchase of button mushroom from Latur, Aurangabad, Nagpur, Akola, Amravati districts has started. At present, mushrooms are purchased from Aurangabad or Nagpur at a rate of Rs 175 to 200 per kg per day. He completed training on mushroom production and marketing from the District Industries Centre. With the help of his wife Parvati, he prepared mushrooms at home as well as mushrooms biscuits, *papads*, homemade spices, *kharodya* etc.

As mushroom needs a storage temperature of 10-20



ºC, he came up with the concept of an ice box on a bicycle. So the temperature of the mushroom was controlled and good profit was started from its sale. There is a huge demand for button mushrooms in cities.

He has been seen carrying boxes of mushrooms and sachets of home-made products. Housewives who came to walk in the morning and evening compulsorily bought his products. At the same time, Vitthal ran his business by setting up his stall on a bicycle in a corner of the SantSavata agricultural goods market, which was started under the *Atma* Project of the Department of Agriculture. His business is called Chaitanya Mushroom Wholesale.

Even in such a situation Vitthal decided to deal with the situation without giving up and chose the business of mushroom marketing. On a three-wheeled bicycle. The business of selling mushrooms and spices on the go has been a great help to both the husband and wife to make a living.

Vitthal Chapke's story is a true testament to the power of perseverance and determination. Despite being born with a congenital deformity that affected his legs, he refused to let this hold him back from pursuing his dreams. Vithal had always been interested in agriculture, and in particular, the potential of mushrooms as a sustainable crop.

Mushrooms are an incredibly versatile food that can be used in a variety of dishes, from soups and stews to stir-fries and salads. They are low in calories, high in protein, and contain a wide range of vitamins and minerals. In addition to their nutritional benefits, mushrooms have also been shown to have numerous health benefits. They are high in antioxidants, which can help to protect against cancer and other diseases, and contain beta-glucans, which can boost the immune system.

With these benefits in mind, Vitthal started selling mushrooms. He worked tirelessly, day and night, trying out different techniques and methods of marketing. It was a challenging process, but Vitthal refused to give up.

Eventually, Vitthal's hard work paid off. He was able to sell large quantities of high-quality mushrooms, which he began selling door to door in his local community. People were impressed by the quality of his product and the passion that he brought to his work. Many began to see Vitthal as an inspiration, a symbol of what can be achieved with hard work and determination.

But for Vithal, it was never just about making a profit. He had always wanted to be self-reliant, to create something of his own that he could be proud of. And in this, he had succeeded. He had created a sustainable business that was not only profitable but also beneficial to the environment.

Mushroom cultivation is a particularly sustainable form of agriculture. Unlike other crops, mushrooms can be grown using waste products such as straw, sawdust, and agricultural by-products. This means that they require very little land and can be grown in areas where other crops would not be viable.

In addition, mushrooms have a very low carbon



footprint. They do not require the use of pesticides or fertilizers, and the process of growing them does not produce significant amounts of greenhouse gases. This makes mushroom cultivation an attractive option for those looking to reduce their impact on the environment.

Today, Vitthal is a respected member of his community. He has become something of a local celebrity, known throughout the region for his expertise in mushroom cultivation. But more than that, he has become an inspiration to others, showing them that anything is possible if you believe in yourself and work hard.

Vitthal continues to sell his mushrooms door to door, and his business continues to thrive. He has expanded his product line to include a range of mushroom-based products, from pickles to *chutneys* to snacks. And he continues to give talks and seminars on sustainable agriculture and mushroom cultivation, spreading the word about the benefits of this versatile crop.

For Vitthal, the journey has not always been easy. There have been times when he felt like giving up, when the challenges seemed too great. But he persevered, and in doing so, he has created something truly remarkable. He has shown that with hard work and determination, anything is possible.

In conclusion, Vitthal Chapke's story is a true inspiration. Despite being born with a disability, he refused to let this hold him back from pursuing his dreams. He saw the potential of mushrooms as a sustainable crop and worked tirelessly to make his vision a reality. Today, he is a respected member of his community, known for his expertise in mushroom cultivation and his commitment to sustainable agriculture. His story is a testament to the power of determination and perseverance.

~ An inspiring story covered by Anjali Lokare (CASMB Team).

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शहर प्रतिनिधी / १४ मार्च

परभणी : हारण्याची पर्वा कधी केली नाही, जिंकण्याचा मोह केला नाही, पण नशिबात असेल तर मिळेल म्हणून ही अपेक्षा न बाळगता प्रयत्न आणि मेहनत करणे सोडले नाही. याच मंत्राची गाठ बांधून बेरोजगारीवर मात करीत विठ्ठलने उभारला मशरुम व्यवसाय

वडिलांचे छत्र लहानपणीच हरवले. चार भाऊ व एक बहीण असा परिवार आहे.जन्मापासूनच दोन्ही पायांनी दिव्यांग असलेल्या विठ्ठल चापके याने स्वतःच्या कर्तृत्वावर विद्यापीठ गेट जवळ सकाळी ५.३० ते ९ व सायंकाळी ५ ते ९ या वेळेत तर बुधवारी कृषि विभागाच्या आत्मा प्रकल्पांतर्गत सुरू करण्यात आलेल्या संत सावता शेतीमाल बाजारात सकाळी ७ ते दुपारी १२ वाजेपर्यंत तीनचाकी सायकलवर मशरूम, पापड, मसाले यांचा स्टॉल, चैतन्य मशरूम होलसेल या नावाने व्यवसाय करतात. या व्यवसायातून महिन्याकाठी ८ ते १० हजार रुपये उत्पन्न मिळते. पूर्णा तालुक्यातील कातनेश्वर येथील जेमतेम दोन एकर शेती असलेला विठ्ठल दोन्ही पायाने दिव्यांग आहे.हलाकीच्या परिस्थीती मुळे जेमतेम ८ व्या वर्गापर्यंत



शिक्षण घेतले. २०१५ रोजी विठ्ठलचे पार्वतीशी लग्न झाले .पार्वती दिव्यांग आहे. त्यातच घरी खुर्चीवरून पडल्याने आजारी झाली. तिच्या आजारासाठी शिर्डी येथे एक महिनाभर रुग्णालयात राहावे लागले. त्यानंतर महिन्या दोन महिन्याला चक्कर मारीत सात ते आठ महिने दवाखान्यात गेले.हा कालावधी व त्यात गेलेला काही पैसा यामुळे परिस्थिती बिकट झाली. परभणी येथे येवून त्यांनी ऑनलाइन फॉर्म भरणे, रिचार्ज, झेरॉक्स हा व्यवसाय कर्ज घेवून सूरू केला होता. पत्नीचे

कर्जातून व्यवसायास सुरुवात

सन २०१४ मध्ये विठ्ठल ने अपंग विकास महामंडळ कडून ५० हजार कर्ज झेरॉक्स व्यवसाय करण्याकरिता घेतले. त्यानंतर सन २०१७ मध्ये बँक ऑफ इंडियाचे २ लाख रुपये कर्ज व्यवसाय वाढविण्यासाठी घेतले. या व्यवसायातून दुकानाचे भाडे घर भाडे त्यानंतर पत्नीचा आजारपणाचा खर्च यामध्ये गेलेले आठ ते नऊ महिने या कलांमध्ये व्यवसायाकडे दुर्लक्ष झाल्यामुळे व्यवसायावर परिणाम झाला व कर्ज फेडणे कठीण झाले.

आजरपणामुळे होणारा खर्च, घर, दुकान किराया या परिस्थीतीत व्यवसायाकडे झालेले दुर्लक्ष यामुळे व्यवसाय डबघाईस आला. तरीही विठ्ठलने हार न मानता भगवान महावीर विकास महामंडळ जयपुर येथून दिव्यांग ची तीन सायकल आणली व उसनवारीवर मशरूम, पापड, मसाले याचा व्यवसाय सुरू केला. मशुरमसाठी लातुर, मुंबई, अकोला, नागपुर या ठिकाणवरून बटन मशरुम तर पुणे येथून घरगुती बनविलेला मसाला आणल्या जातो. या व्यवसायातून त्यांना जेमतेम कमाई होते. यामधून केवळ उदरनिर्वाह होतो.



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The best way out is always through



Hello Everyone!

My name is Ms. Mayuri Mehta. I am a fashion designer by profession who runs a store named STYLISM DESIGN STUDIO.

From my childhood, I was very creative who used to participate in several drawing and art competitions which won me many awards and prizes. Eventually, I chose this dainty and creative field of fashion designing and thought of creating a lucrative business by playing with my creative strengths and artistic brain. My first business was in a partnership. But after six years, the business turned the tides downward as my partner had cheated. It was a great set back to me at that time. I suffered financial loss, was discouraged and I had lost confidence in my abilities.

But I gathered myself and with budding hopes and dreams, soon after six months, I launched my small store, wholly and solely. However there were certain challenges that were coming my way. I had no knowledge about digital marketing. So I learnt the art of digital marketing and soon saw that my business had taken a steady leap. Usually my working days are from Tuesday's to Sunday's and timings 12 noon to 2 pm and then again from 05:30 to 08:30 pm. On Monday's the store is generally closed.I do not supply my designed outfits to any brand. I take customised orders from customers and create unique, individual designs suitingtheir requirements. Everything is made to order. It's a single pc design as per the client's size,taste and style.

Being an entrepreneur helps me organize my career goals my way.It helps me to strike a perfect balance between my work and personal life.It also helps me encourage new budding talents, by giving them the designated job at my boutique.

One of my NRI client who came on very short notice to India,put her complete trust on my work and talent.She was completely satisfied as soon as she saw her dreams turning into reality via our customized outfits.

I suffer from scoliosis bybirth. Scoliosis is an abnormal lateral curvature of the spine. About 4-5 years ago, due to this conditionmy lungs could not function properly to their full potential and I had difficulty in breathing. Even the doctors had recommended 24×7 oxygen support.

It was at this time that this physical limitation and its after effects came as a big blow to me. I had lot of apprehensions whether I will be able to come back on track and pursue my career ahead efficiently or not.As a female, it is not at all easy to manage family and other household chores along with my profession. Most difficult was to cope with my health condition.But with God's grace, with the support of family and with a heart full of desires to achieve my goals, without giving up, I came back with a bang and is running my business successfully. My brother was a great support to me to overcome any obstacles that came my way to run this business.

I always focussed on the solutions rather than the problems. I have given many years in my designing profession. I have very well understood that discouragement and failure are two of the surest stepping stones to success.I now wish to encourage and motivate upcoming talent of our city, state & country so that they can come out of their cocoon &shine bright like a diamond. If I can be of any use to them, it would be my pleasure to help them in any small or big way. For all those budding entrepreneurs, "Keep the little fire burning; however small; however hidden!"

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Me and my hearing impaired- Shri Udayan Manohar Joshi



My parents are Mr. Manohar Joshi and Mrs. Manjiri Joshi. I am very fortunate to be born with the legacy of my grandfather Yashwant Gopal Joshi. When I think back over time, I wonder how my parents managed to raise their children and manage the Prasad publication at the same time. Because my sister and I were born with partially impaired hearing loss, my parents must have been sad but they never gave up. We are proud of our parents. Even though we think that parents are like God, our parents proved it to be true. We always feel and will continue to feel so.

My father worked for almost 40 years as the Chief Trustee of Devdeveshwar Sansthan, Parvati, Mrityunjayeshwar, Dashabhuja Ganapati, and Sarasbagh. As the first Ganesha idol was broken at Sarasbagh, the idol was replaced with the new idol by my parents. I am very proud of it. An incident of that time was recently told to me by my sister. Hearing it, I realized once again that they had attained spiritual heights. It happened during the puja of the idol. My sister and I were standing behind my parents. I was in 8th and my sister was in 10th standard. We were young. So my father said to my mother, 'This is the greatest moment of our life. What better to ask for?' The mother replied that 'Hey, what is left to ask for now? Even if our life ends here at this moment.' I was stunned. This was his strong faith in Lord Ganesha. It must be said that having such capable parents, it was not difficult for us to overcome impaired hearing loss.

Our childhood was very happy. My father was always happy and loved to travel. He visited many places. We were also taken along and did not care about our deafness.

Moreover, the surrounding people never overprotected us because of hearing loss. I went to a school of ordinary children. That is why today I can go anywhere without taking anyone's help. Not being able to hear doesn't affect us. This ability instilled in us by our parents is their greatest gift to us. He always encouraged us to mingle with ordinary people and never insisted on being with us to help us. Because they knew, when we grow up, we have to make our own way in the world. And that's why they were working to make it happen. When someone is born with a handicap, That one needs to be nurtured for growth and our siblings are very proud that we got it out of our luck.

Language is learned by listening and speaking. We, deaf people, can read but cannot hear. So my Marathi language is a bit weak. So education is not easy for all deaf people, not just me. Our parents have to sacrifice to raise us. They do it happily. But still, it caused a lot of trouble at times in life. Education is an asceticism for us. The positive involvement of parents, teachers, and mentors is important. Only then can education be complete. I made great progress in maths and science because it is not a language of words, but a Pictorial language of numbers, diagrams, and designs used to understand them. As it is easy to understand, I understood it quickly. That is why I entered the field of engineering. I completed my Diploma in Mechanical Engineering and also completed my Bachelor of Engineering.

From the time I was a baby, my mother was very focused on teaching me to study and my career until I was 20 years old. She had taken special training for that purpose. Some of those memories are funny to me today. I was quite a naughty boy and for studies sitting in one place became my life. Then it was time for me to get beaten. Once I even told her to take off her bangles first or they will break when she beats me. She smiled and said don't you feel ashamed? Study well. I kept silent. My mother always followed me in my studies and met my teachers at my school. So, I completed my education successfully.

All the colleges were firmly convinced that a deaf-mute student would not be able to learn. So, no college will admit me for engineering even with good marks. Initially, admission to the school was fought with schools. By doing the same, I finally got into MIT. I became an engineer. So, I could stand up for myself in my life. My mother handled my studies and our publishing house simultaneously with great skill in serving breakfast, tea, and coffee and maintaining good relations with people who came from far and wide. Juggling her special needs child's studies and meeting people at the same time was not easy.

Now in my life, I am fond of some memories of my father and mother who took care of me constantly. One day, when I was doing a submission while studying at MIT College, a professor rudely told me that why I

submitted my project so late. But at the same time, the submission of my friend who came with me was taken. I was frozen by his rudeness and not understanding his speech, I did not understand what happened and why the professor was angry with me. Not knowing this too, I politely asked her what was wrong with me. She did not answer. I had arguments with her. I was irritated because I could not communicate with her and could not understand what he wanted. Finally, I hurriedly went to the telephone booth outside the college and called Baba. Without me saying a word my father understood it and came to my college. My dad hung up the phone without responding because I am deaf. I didn't realize that maybe my father didn't realize that the telephone wasn't working. I was waiting for him at the main gate of our college. I was shocked and very happy as my father came on time. My father told me inquired about the situation and I explained it to him. He took me to meet Mr. Vishwanath Karad (President of MIT College). I explained everything to them. Finally, Mr. Karad sir called Madam to attend. Madam was silent. He asked Madam what is Udayan Joshi's point. Madam did not answer. I showed them the submission paper with the date and time. And I had brought my friend along with his submission paper. Why Madam accepted my friend's submission then? Mr. Karad was furious with her. He told madam that Udayan Joshi should never treat him like that in front of other students in this manner and you should explain to him in writing or by slow voice reading. Madam remained silent and nodded. I wanted her to admit that she was wrong. However, my father supported me through the whole process.

Hearing impairment is often taken advantage of. But those who behave are not even aware that they are failing somewhere at such times. Having a hearing impairment does not mean that the person with it is stupid or dumb. It does not mean that he or she is retarded. It only means that the person falls short in communication. Now technology has advanced so much that deaf people around the world can easily communicate with each other due to social media. Today deaf people from all over the world are friends with each other. There is no flaw in their joy of living and no edge of sorrow. Now we are lucky. Because this technology has completely filled our communication gap. Because it makes us comfortable and gives us visibility to communicate.

Another similar memory is when I was 18 years old, at that time the RTO was not allowed to issue a driving license to the hearing impaired. I wanted to drive a car. My father agreed to teach me to drive. So I learned how to drive one. Then I took a car to Diveagar, Mumbai, and Konkan. Baba always supported me. Further, we all Mukbadheer Mandals (our support group) together got licenses from RTO.

I was originally very fond of driving cars. One of my friends and I used to get along a lot. He had constructed the tunnels in the Ghats on the Khandala railway line so that he could go there by rail. I liked both. I once went to Pune station with him. Many train drivers were known to him through his work. A train was going to Khandala, which needed to be fitted with engine shunting. My Uncle took me to the engine to show it to me admiringly. That driver also liked me probably. He asked me, 'What? Will you do shunt?' I happily said a resounding yes and actually connected the train by properly shunting the engine. Mama and the driver got attention. But they were amazed that I could do it easily. And this made my parents very happy and that was my greatest reward. My parents had a different vision and direction in life. There is no comparison.

Hearing-impaired persons feel difficulty in communication and hearing on the phone. This is my major weakness so I faced problems in my job for the first time in my life. But my parents helped and explained to the interviewer and my boss to understand. And slowly, I learned the language by observation and improved it. I studied in the software industry and got a job in CMC Company and later at TCS Company. But because of the communication or difficulty, I could not get a promotion.

Although there has been a lot of increase in responsibility, which I have been successfully carrying out, there has been little increase in salary, but today I am satisfied that I am well-fed and fully on my feet.

Although there has been a lot of responsibility on my shoulders, which I have been successfully carrying out, and I saw little increase in salary, today I am satisfied that I am well-fed and fully on my feet.

This is very important for choosing a career. Avoid mistakes in the career you want. Areas with minimal communication are well-suited for the deaf. There must be compatibility between your work and education and your deafness and job. That's why I think the banking sector and government jobs are best for them.

I have many deaf friends in school, college, and groups. I have participated in many plays and activities from school and clubs and am living my life happily. I also like the investment sector and I am always studying and learning from it. I traveled abroad many times for business and made many foreign friends. I always think that no one's life is easy. I am no exception. But how we live it matters. And I am happy and satisfied in my life. And this is the greatest gift my parents have given me.

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