FEMINA

ICONS *of* SOUTH

Foreward

The South Indian landscape is the epitome of diversity. With the Indian Ocean, two vast mountain ranges, dense forests, beautiful coasts, bustling temple cities, commercial towns, historical sites and a sea of warm & welcoming people, South India is truly a unique conglomeration of nature, talent and traditional values. Much like its natural features, the kind of talent that comes from here is also diverse and versatile.

The majestic Southern States of Karnataka, Andhra, Telangana, Tamil Nadu and Kerala have produced some of the greatest minds of our country. Hardworking, innovative trailblazers in various fields who have put India on the global map through their achievements.

At Femina, we have handpicked South Indian business leaders, entrepreneurs, doctors, designers, hoteliers, artists, educationists and philanthropists who have reached greater heights through sheer hard work and braved all odds to emerge successful in their respective fields. Their tales are an inspiration; their struggles are lessons for aspiring young minds and their achievements are benchmark by which the world measures our country!

Every journey begins with a single step. In this debut edition, Femina takes great pride in identifying South India's finest and there are definitely more icons to honour and more issues to look forward to in the future!

Team Femina

FEMINA MOST POWERFUL

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TAMIL NADU

Tamil Nadu is the homeland of one of humanity's living classical civilisations, stretching back uninterrupted for two millennia and very much alive today in the Tamils' language, dance, poetry and forms of Hinduism. It is home to impressive temples and churches, great museums and enthusiastic locals.

Some of the temples here are among India's finest, from the sculpted stonework at Thanjavur (Tanjore) to the sprawling halls at Madurai. Across the state, pulsing urban centres rise like concrete islands amid a landscape of palm and banana plantations, rice fields and rugged sandstone scarps. Among them you'll find renowned yoga and meditation retreats, ancient forts and French-colonial-turned-bohemian B&Bs.

When the hot chaos of Tamil temple towns overwhelms, escape to the southernmost tip of India where three seas mingle; to the splendid mansions sprinkled across arid Chettinadu; or to the cool, forest-clad, wildlife-prowled Western Ghats. It's all packed into a state that remains proudly distinct from the rest of India, while also being among the most welcoming.



PHOTOGRAPH: SHUTTERSTOCK

KERALA

For many travelers, Kerala is South India's most serenely beautiful state. This slender coastal strip is defined by its layered landscape: almost 600km of glorious Arabian Sea coast and beaches; a languid network of glistening backwaters; and the spice- and tea-covered hills of the Western Ghats, dotted with fiercely protected wildlife reserves and cool hill stations such as Munnar. Just setting foot on this swathe of soul-soothing, palm-shaded green will slow your subcontinental stride to a blissed-out amble. Kerala is a world away from the frenzy of the rest of India, its long, fascinating backstory illuminated by historically evocative cities like Kochi (Cochin) and Thiruvananthapuram (Trivandrum).

Besides the famous backwaters, elegant houseboats, ayurvedic treatments and delicately spiced, taste-bud-tingling cuisine, Kerala is home to wild elephants, exotic birds and the odd tiger, while vibrant traditions such as Kathakali, theyyam (a trance-induced ritual), temple festivals and snake-boat races frequently bring even the smallest villages to life.



PHOTOGRAPH: SHUTTERSTOCK

KARNATAKA

A stunning introduction to southern India, Karnataka is a prosperous, compelling state loaded with a winning blend of urban cool, glittering palaces, national parks, ancient ruins, beaches, yoga centres and legendary travellers' hang-outs.

At its nerve centre is the capital, Bengaluru (Bangalore), a progressive cybercity famous for its craft-beer and restaurant scene. Heading out of town you'll encounter the evergreen rolling hills of Kodagu, dotted with spice and coffee plantations, the regal splendour of Mysuru (Mysore), and jungles teeming with monkeys, tigers and Asia's biggest population of elephants.

If that all sounds too mainstream, head to the countercultural enclave of tranquil Hampi, with hammocks, psychedelic sunsets and boulder-strewn ruins. Or the blissful, virtually untouched coastline around Gokarna, blessed with beautiful coves and empty sands. Or leave the tourist trail behind entirely and take a journey to the evocative Islamic ruins of northern Karnataka.



PHOTOGRAPH: SHUTTERSTOCK

ANDHRA PRADESH AND TELANGANA

Hyderabad, one of Islamic India's greatest cities, is reason enough on its own to visit this region. Its skyline is a sight to behold, defined by the great domes and minarets of ancient mosques, mausoleums and palaces of once-mighty dynasties. Delve inside the city's fabled old quarter for fascinating street markets, Sufi shrines, teahouses and biryani restaurants. Meanwhile, Hyderabad's newer districts are awash with the upmarket restaurants of IT-fuelled economic advancement.

The other attractions of these two states (which were one entity until 2014) are less brazen, but there are hidden gems like the wonderful temple sculptures of Ramappa and ancient Buddhist sites at Sankaram and Guntupalli. Coastal Visakhapatnam has a cheery vibe, while joining the pilgrim crowds on the hike up to Tirumala's temple is an unforgettable experience. Recently upgraded airports (at Tirupati, Vijaywada and Visakhapatnam) and increased regional flights have really opened up these captivating states for travellers.



PHOTOGRAPH:SHUTTERSTOCK

TREADING THE PATH **BETWEEN TRADITIONAL AND TRENDY**

ASHA SEBASTIAN MATTATHIL & AKSHAY SEBASTIAN MATTATHIL,
FOUNDERS M.O.D SIGNATURE JEWELLERY

Asha Mattathil's passion for jewellery dates back to 1983 when she was all set to get married. Unsatisfied by the jewellery availablity in stores, she began to search for a customised armlet (vangi) and waist belt for her wedding trousseau. At the end of that process, she found a Kaarigar based out of Cochin and designed her very first piece of jewellery, an armlet. She ended up designing gold jewellery for her wedding.

Today M.O.D. Signature Jewellery, run by Asha and her son Akshay Sebastian Mattathil designs premium bespoke jewellery that is sought out by some of the biggest superstars in South India for its unique design and craftsmanship.

After her marriage, she started designing jewellery for traditional family jewellery store and it wasn't long before, word started spreading about her exquisite designs. Akshay decided to take his mother's designer jewellery forward as a brand which went on to revolutionize the jewellery scene of Kerala.

What differentiates M.O.D Jewellery from the rest, is their attention to detail in every piece of Jewellery. While most jewellers may not experiment beyond traditional gemstones and standard designs, Asha's background in jewellery making and her flair for designing and dedicated traditional kaarigars enable her to produce stunning pieces of jewellery that one can never find in any jewellery shop. She draws inspiration from everywhere from Art Nouveau style to the traditional jewellery styles of India such as Meenakari Jewellery. Her jewels also feature exotic stones such as the watermelon tourmaline, malachites and cornelian apart from the usual ruby, emerald and sapphires. Right now she has her eye set on modernising traditional Kerala jewellery like Kaasu Mala and Nagapadam Mala and create never before seen designs in her signature style.

While Asha is focussed on the creative aspects, Akshay is keen on making the customer experience a lot more memorable and modernising the design and production process at M.O.D. Together this mother-son duo is creating ripples in the South Indian jewellery scene and they definitely have more to offer.

> "Akshay Sebastian Mattathil decided to take his mother's designer jewellery forward as a brand which went on to revolutionize the jewellery scene of Kerala."



A MUSICAL **STORM**

AR RAHMAN,
MUSIC COMPOSER & SINGER

The film music industry in India can be split into two. One, before the arrival of Rahman and the other, after his arrival. From the quality of music production, technicians and musicians to the sheer range of voices used in his songs, Rahman truly is in a league of his own. With every new music album, he sets the bar to only surpass it and set new ones.

Rahman started his career as a musician working as a keyboard player for many composers. His ticket to limelight was Mani Ratnam's Roja in 1992. A movie that made the entire film industry turn back and take a look at the youngster who would rule Indian film music for a very long time. The film won Rahman the Rajat Kamal award for Best Music Director at the National Film Awards. Since then, Rahman has gone on to win the National Award 3 more times, the most ever by any music composer.

Rahman's discography spans across the Indian film industry with over 170 films in the 5 languages - Hindi, English, Malayalam, Tamil and Telugu. His soundtracks had a freshness that resonated with audiences across the country. He continued to prove himself as a versatile composer with his experiments in Western Classical music, Carnatic and folk music. His music for Slumdog Millionaire in 2008, earned him the Best Original Score and Best Original Song at the 81st Academy Awards. Apart from successful soundtracks, he has also received acclaim for his background scores and is considered one of the finest background-score composers in India

His gallery of awards and unmatchable list of achievements are nothing when compared to his heart of gold and humble nature. His often quoted Oscar acceptance speech where he credited his success to his mother and god is a testimony to his grounded and humble nature. Rahman is also involved with a number of charitable causes; his work towards making music accessible to the underprivileged is particularly commendable. In 2009, he founded Sunshine Orchestra with a vision to introduce India's first symphony orchestra where economically and socially deprived children get free music education by his institute, KM Music Conservatory.

AR Rahman is truly a phenomenon. A phenomenal talent and human being who continues to impact generations with his music and actions!

“His gallery of awards and unmatchable list of achievements are nothing when compared to his heart of gold and humble nature.”



EMPOWERING 1000 WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

CK KUMARAVEL & VEENA KUMARAVEL,
FOUNDERS, NATURALS BEAUTY SALON

Across India 680 stores in 80 cities with 7500 working professionals is an extraordinary feat for any business. But the founders CK Kumaravel and Veena Kumaravel are not in it just for the business value. The 400 crore worth company has also empowered hundreds of women entrepreneurs and generated more than 9000 direct jobs.

Coming from a business background CK Kumaravel was always inclined towards becoming a job provider and not a job seeker. But it was wife, Veena, who laid the foundation for Naturals. The lack of quality and affordable salons in Chennai pushed them towards starting a salon that would offer standard beauty services at a reasonable price for people from all walks of life. From procurement of equipment & products to interior design and pricing their services, Kumaravel and Veena learnt everything about the beauty industry, the hard way.

The Beauty Industry in India was huge and had a great potential but most of it was still unorganised and there was a dearth for skilled stylists and beauty professionals. It was a time when working in a beauty salon was still considered a taboo. Naturals found a way to tackle this issue. They initially started offering free training for interested individuals and also offered them employment at Naturals.Today this has grown into the Naturals Academy that offers various courses in beauty, hairstyling, makeup and grooming.

By the end of 3 years, Naturals managed to reach 7 salons in Tamil Nadu but they both knew that it wasn't the big picture they had dreamt of. They developed a franchisee model that became a pioneer in the country and catapulted their business to the big leagues. Naturals became a platform for so many first-generation entrepreneurs and women entrepreneurs with their hassle free franchisee programme that requires a very minimum advertising and marketing spend. More than 400 women who were earlier homemakers have become successful entrepreneurs and Naturals Franchisees.

Naturals is also gearing up for the post-pandemic world with standard SOPs that prioritise hygiene and safety of the customers. They also recently started offering home services for customers. In the coming years, Naturals hopes to make their brand a household name in the North Indian market too. Through this journey, they also want to empower 1000 women and turn them into successful entrepreneurs.

> “It was a time when working in a beauty salon was still considered a taboo, Naturals found a way to break the norm.”



BADMINTON TO **BOLLYWOOD**

DEEPIKA PADUKONE,
ACTOR

Deepika Padukone walked into our hearts as the beautiful Shanti Priya, the bollywood dream girl in Om Shanti Om. The role might as well have been a prediction of her career trajectory because over the years Padukone has grown into not just the reigning queen of Bollywood but also a global fashion icon and an actor par excellence.

Growing up, Deepika Padukone was all set to follow her father, Prakash Padukone, a celebrated badminton player into the sport. She continued to pursue badminton throughout her school years and participated in national level championships too. But her heart was set on fashion and modelling. So she took her first steps with modelling and it wasn't very long before movie offers came knocking.

Following her breakthrough movie Om Shanti Om, Padukone was cast in a number of movies such as Bachna Ae Haseeno, Love Aaj Kal, Break Ke Baad and Dum Maaro Dum where she exhibited her skills as a seasoned actor. Her performance as the shy and reluctant Naina in the runaway hit Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani won her critical acclaim and the love of the audience. Padukone's career took a steep turn after her collaboration with Sanjay Leela Bhansali. In Goliyon Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela, Bajirao Mastani and Padmaavat, she takes her acting skills a notch higher and proves herself as a seasoned actor. Padukone's choice of films have always been intriguing. Be it Tamasha where she anchors the movie as Tara, Piku where she stands her ground even while sharing screen space with the stalwart Amitabh Bachchan or the much recent Chhapaak in which she starred as an acid attack survivor (based on Laxmi Agarwal), Padukone's performances are always a revelation.

Her rise to stardom was definitely not a cakewalk. From her modelling assignments to climbing the Bollywood ladder, she earned every opportunity through sheer hard work. Padukone has also been very outspoken about her struggles with depression. In 2015, she formed a foundation to create awareness on mental health in India, named The Live Love Laugh Foundation. Deepika Padukone has always been vocal about social issues and lended support to the CAA protests which is a rarity in mainstream Bollywood actors. Deepika Padukone positions herself as a true role model with her acting and social endeavours and that journey is just beginning.

“Deepika Padukone has always been vocal about social issues and lended support which is a rarity in mainstream Bollywood actors.”



PHOTOGRAPH: ERRIKOS ANDREOU (DEU: CREATIVE MANAGEMENT)/FEMINA

TRANSFORMING LIVES **THROUGH DANCE**

GAYATHRI CHANDRASHEKAR,
FOUNDER, NRUTYA SCHOOL OF ART

To Gayathri Chandrashekar, dance is not just an art form, it's a way of life! Through her dance school, Nrutya School of art, Gayathri is touching the lives of so many students. She also offers financial help to underprivileged kids who are passionate about dance but can't afford dance classes

Chandrashekar started learning Bharatanatyam at the age of 6. She went on to do her Arangetram at the age of 12, under the guidance of Guru Kalaimamani Smt. K.J. Sarasa. Since then, she has performed in various stages and sabhas across Tamilnadu. Apart from India, she has performed in several other countries such as the UK, USA, Singapore, Canada etc.

She is also an 'A' grade artiste of Chennai Doordarshan and has performed in all prestigious sabhas winning the Academy's 'Spirit of youth award' and MGR award for the best Bharatanatyam dancer.

Post-marriage, Chandrashekar could not continue her passion. But when she wanted to get back to dancing, it was not just about getting up on the stage again. She wanted to impart her knowledge to the next generation and train budding dancers. She started the Nrutya School of Art in 2009 with a vision of teaching the Vazhuvoor Bani of Bharatanatyam which is considered one of the original styles of Bharatanatyam.

While most dance schools in the country focus just on teaching Bharatanatyam, at Nrutya School of Art, students get to learn more than just the classical art form. Chandrashekar ensures that all students receive a holistic education that includes discipline, team spirit and life lessons. As a life coach and mentor, Gayathri Chandrashekar helps people overcome their inhibitions and express themselves through dance. Dance is also an excellent brain development activity since it requires a good hand-eye coordination and memory.

In the coming years, Chandrashekar hopes to expand further and transform people through dance. She strongly believes age is just a number when it comes to learning Bharatanatyam. Through Nrutya School of Art, she wants to take the art form to everyone irrespective of age and empower them through the joy of creative expression.

“She strongly believes age is just a number while learning Bharatanatyam. Through Nrutya School of Art, she wants to take the art form to everyone irrespective of age”



BUILDING A SPA & SALON EMPIRE

RAJESH KUMAR K,
MANAGING DIRECTOR, STUDIE'O7

The salon industry in India has witnessed great strides in terms of techniques, technology and services. As grooming moves from luxury towards necessity, the spa & salon industry is also growing rapidly in the smaller towns and cities of South India. Rajesh Kumar K, the Managing Director of Studie'o7 is leading this growth with his one of a kind luxury salon that offers a world-class salon & spa experience for customers.

The Studie'o7 salon has 30+ branches in 25+ locations such as Coimbatore, Tirupur, Erode, Tirunelveli, Vellore, Madurai and Dindigul. The brand offers 3 different platforms — The Studie'o7 Signature Lounge, Studie'o7 Salon & Spa and Studie'o7 Woman (An exclusive studio for women). At every branch, customers can experience a range of services including hair care, skin care and body care/spa.

Every bride wishes to look her best on the wedding day. At Studie'o7, professional makeup artists with years of bridal experience create the perfect bridal look for clients with latest techniques such as airbrushing and superior products such as MAC & Kryolan. Clients can also access a trial makeup session before the big day to get the look and feel of the service beforehand.

In the salon & spa industry, where trends change very quickly, Studie'o7 enables its technicians and staff to update their skills to stay on par with the unfolding trends & advancements in the industry. Since its inception in 2018, the brand has grown to become the go-to salon for customers and stands tall with an adept team of more than 200 experts. Every stylist that joins the team is offered extensive service skill training and 'Step by Step services & Technical Procedures' guide to keep up the quality standards. Studie'o7 was also awarded the Best Skin & Beauty Salon in Tamil Nadu at Indian Excellence Awards 2019.

All Studie'o7 franchises have a standard interior style and a set of world-renowned & certified salon products that ensures that the brand remains consistent in all the locations. Rajesh Kumar ensures that franchisees get all-round guidance and support from setup to staff training, marketing & sales.

With his successful franchisee model and world-class facilities, Rajesh Kumar is taking quality grooming and beauty services to all the cities where they are located and has plans to expand and reach more cities of South India in the near future.

"Studie'o7 enables its technicians and staff to update their skills to stay on par with the unfolding trends & advancements in the industry."



MULTIFACETED FASHIONISTA

KAJOL BHATIA,
MRS ASIA INTERNATIONAL 2018, FASHION CONSULTANT

Kajol Bhatia is an entrepreneur and a fashion consultant by passion. Her journey from homemaker to model and winning

The Mrs. Asia International - Charming 2018 title is definitely an inspirational tale for mothers and homemakers in the country. Over the years Kajol has been conferred with many awards including the prestigious Sindhu Shree Award and Times Power Woman 2019. The seeds for this were sown very early on. As a child, Kajol was very creative and enthusiastic about everything she set out to do; she married at a very young age and took over the family responsibilities. As a homemaker Kajol was adept at multitasking; She also actively participated in the activities of an NGO - Ladies Circle India, took vital leadership roles ; received love and respect pan India Kajol was also instrumental in facilitating countless social initiatives directed towards women and children.

Driven by her passion for fashion, Kajol Bhatia participated in the Mrs India pageant - 2018 edition. With her dynamic personality and eclectic style , she won accolades and bagged the titles of Mrs. India Karnataka, Best Diva, and Mrs. India 2018. Hence, she got the opportunity to represent India at the Mrs Asia International 2018 pageant, which took place in Thailand, and won the title of Mrs Asia International Charming 2018. Kajol has also created a name for herself in the world of Fashion, by designing exclusive bespoke garments for her clientele, And being a style icon, herself.

Kashika events, which is the brainchild of Kajol is now one of the few fastest growing 'unique event curating' companies in India. In 2019, they organized the Asia Woman of Substance Awards to honor the amazing women who have made significant contributions in the fields of Business administration, defence, arts, technology, sports, law, and philanthropy. More recently, the company organised "Master Home Chefs" – a cooking competition for home cooks in partnership with Taj Vivanta. In the coming years Kajol is hoping to expand and grow in all her varied areas of interests With Kashika Events, she wants to transform it into a bigger platform for women and children to express their talents. The Master Home Chefs has become one of their annual events. As a fashion consultant, she hopes to curate looks for weddings and other special occasions. With her grooming skills, she continues to help young girls and aspiring participants of pageants, with suitable make over On the modeling front, she has endorsed many reputed brands and continues to amaze everyone with her gorgeous looks and style.

> "In a span of 8 months with her dynamic personality and eclectic style she went on to win Mrs. India Karnataka 2018, Best Diva 2018. Followed by Mrs India 2018 and Mrs Asia International Charming 2018"


CLASSIC MRS. ASIA INTERNATIONAL 2018
CLASSIC MRS. MOST CHARMING

POWERHOUSE OF TALENT

KAMAL HAASAN,
ACTOR, DIRECTOR, HOST, PRODUCER, SCREEN WRITER, SINGER, LYRICIST

Kamal Haasan is one of the most celebrated actors anywhere in India irrespective of language or cultural differences. His acting calibre is a benchmark for both amateur actors and seasoned actors.The sheer variety of roles he has played on screen and the efforts he puts to get into the skin of every role is always awe-inspiring. From direction to singing, he has donned many caps in the film industry. He recently completed 61 years in Indian CInema and is definitely hungry for more!

Kamal Haasan made his debut as child artiste in the 1959 tamil movie, Kalathoor Kannamma where he acted alongside Gemini Ganesan and Savitri. In a career that has spanned more than 6 decades, he has acted in more than 200 films in various Indian languages. He has won four national awards and 19 filmfare awards. He was awarded the Padma Bhushan for his contribution to Indian Cinema.

Years after his debut as a child artiste, Kamal Haasan's big breakthrough film was Balachander's Apoorva Ragangal which was incidentally, Rajinikanth's debut movie too. Previously Kamal Haasan had acted and worked as a choreography assistant in several movies. He ruled the roost in Tamil Cinema for decades with his powerful screen presence, exceptional acting skills and charming looks that earned him a huge fan following. His passion for cinema was evident from his interest towards the other departments of filmmaking such as music, makeup and dance apart from acting.

Kamal Haasan might as well be called the master of disguise because he takes a keen interest in preparing for every role to achieve the right look through fitness and prosthetic makeup. The roles in Aboorva Sagotharargal, Avvai Shanmugi, Dasavatharam and Indian, where he had to sit through hours of makeup everyday, are a testimony to his dedication. He is also known for his intriguing choice of movies that are experimental in nature and away from mainstream cinema,

Despite his sky-high achievements in the field of Cinema, Kamal Haasan considers himself a student, who is yet to explore more in films and social work.It is this unique trait that has made him an actor par excellence and an iconic figure in Indian Cinema now and forever!

“His passion for cinema was evident from his interest towards the other departments of filmmaking such as music, makeup and dance apart from acting.”



PHOTOGRAPH:A.PRATHAP/BCCL

POWER COUPLE IN HEALTH SECTOR

DR. KEERTHI PATEL & DR. SANGEETHA PATEL,
FOUNDERS¸ INXS ANTI-AGING & OBESITY CLINIQUE

Globalisation and the changing lifestyle habits of Indians have turned us all into a sedentary, stressed, junk food eating generation. This happens to be the sole reason for India's obesity epidemic.

Both the doctor duo began their career as Medical Officers in Sri Jaydeva Institute of Cardiology in the year 2001 ,thats when they realised the ill effects of obesity and how it was a major causative factor for Diabetes and Cardiological Diseases.Hence they wanted to start a clinique that would offer professional medical treatment and guidance to patients suffering from obesity and other lifestyle disorders. That is when INXS Anti-Ageing & Anti-Obesity Clinique in Bangalore had its formal beginning.

After finishing their diploma in Practical Dermatology from Cardiff (UK) and undergoing training in Mesotherapy in Paris (France), they became the pioneers of mesotherapy in India. A treatment that helps reduce subcutaneous fat cells superficially and activate fat loss receptors. At INXS, it is called the Bikini Body Program because it helps patients lose fat all over the body resulting in weight and inch loss.

Their comprehensive training in the field of obesity management & anti-aging helped them introduce .them introduce Carboxytherapy (2007), Cryolipolysis treatment (Fat Freezing) in 2008, Ultrasound based fat destruction treatment (2009) in INXS and in India too. Both of them travel extensively to countries such as Monaco, Paris, Russia, Canada and the USA to update themselves about the latest treatments and advanced technologies.

Over the years, INXS has grown to become the go-to place for people with lifestyle disorders and cosmetic treatments. INXS also offers anti-aging procedures and has one best face rejuvenation, non-surgical face lift (stem cell and laser based) and skin tightening treatment programs. INXS has treated over 10,000 cases that include models, actors and celebrities from various fields too. They have also been chosen as the makeover center for Femina Miss Diva for consecutive years.

Cosmetic Dermatology in India has gone beyond botox injections, lasers and skin peels. Dr Keerthi and Dr Sangeetha Patel are pioneering holistic programs that educate people about hormonal issues and create awareness about the importance of inculcating an active lifestyle along with worldclass treatments. At its core, INXS is always about improving a patient's quality of life and instilling a new sense of confidence in them through excellent patient care and treatments.

> “In the last 20 years Inxs has pioneered in the field of cosmeto dermatology & Dr Patels are constantly updating with latest in the field till date”


Bangalore University
PACAAM 2008
ECAA 2007

PIONEERING THE INDIAN **BIOTECHNOLOGY SECTOR**

KIRAN MAZUMDAR SHAW,
CHAIRPERSON OF BIOCON

Kiran Mazumdar Shaw was all set to follow in her father's footsteps into the brewing industry after obtaining a graduate degree from Melbourne. But companies in India were reluctant to offer a woman a job in brewing. Mazumdar-Shaw returned to Europe and a chance meeting with Leslie Auchincloss, founder of the biotechnology company Biocon Biochemicals, changed her direction completely.

She became the managing director of Biocon India in 1978 and raised that company from its first home (her garage) to become the country's leading biotechnology enterprise In 1994, she started another company- Syngene, a contract research company, which has now a market value of over Rs 22,000 crore. Syngene today works for world's biggest drug companies like Glaxo Smith Kline Beecham, Bristol Myers Squibb and Astra Zeneca on research projects.

In 2001 Biocon became the first Indian company to gain the approval of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the manufacture of a cholesterol-lowering molecule. The company expanded and profits skyrocketed. Mazumdar-Shaw who had nearly 40-percent stake in the company, became the richest woman in India. Over the years, Biocon has consistently been a trailblazer in the field of pharmaceuticals and even developed the world's first orally consumed insulin product.

Today the company is India's largest producer of Insulin and has pioneered the world's only Pichia-based recombinant human insulin, which is now available in over 40 countries. Her vision and relentless work in the field of biotechnology has garnered global attention both for the Indian industry and Biocon.

Her vision to achieve affordable healthcare led to philanthropic initiatives such as establishing primary healthcare centers, telemedicine facilities, health awareness programs, sanitation facilities and preventive screening camps for marginalized communities. The Mazumdar- Shaw Medical Center in Bengaluru offers affordable world-class cancer care services to patients from all walks of life.

Mazumdar-Shaw was most recently named the EY World Entrepreneur of the Year 2020. In 2005 she received the Padma Bhushan Award, one of India's highest civilian honours, for her pioneering work in industrial biotechnology. She was also featured in 2010 on the Forbes "100 Most Powerful Women" list and Time magazine's "100 Most Influential People in the World" list.

"Her vision to achieve affordable healthcare led to philanthropic initiatives such as establishing primary healthcare centers, health awareness programs."



PHOTOGRAPHS: ANKIT SHARMA/FEMINA

THE CELESTIAL SINGER

DR. KJ YESUDAS
SINGER

50,000 songs is no ordinary feat. With his mellifluous voice that transcends across boundaries, Dr. KJ Yesudas is definitely in a league of his own. Very few singers and musicians in India have come close to his achievements.

Fondly referred to as Gaana Gandharvan (Celestial Singer) or Dasettan, this gifted singer was born in God's own country, Kerala. Yesudas started learning music from his father who was a classical musician too. As a classically trained musician, he debuted with the popular malayalam song, Jaathi Bhedam Matha Dwesham in 1961. The song was written by one of his revered gurus, Sree Narayana Guru, a well-respected saint, poet and social reformer from Kerala.

Though he started his singing career by singing in Malayalam movies, he eventually started singing for Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Hindi movies too. He has also sung in Arabic, English, Latin and Russian. He once recorded 16 songs in four languages. His first song in Tamil was Neeyum Bommai Naanum Bommai in the film Bommai (1963). In his illustrious career, he has sung for all the stalwarts of South India, worked with legendary music composers and sung alongside generations of male and female singers.

Over the decades, Dr. KJ Yesudas's voice has become an integral part of every music lover's life. His natural ability to emote through the song and do justice to the lyrics through his clear pronunciation is simply unmatched in the Indian singing fraternity.His songs in various languages are a testimony to his singing prowess and dedication. He has won 8 national awards and been conferred the highest civilian awards in the country such as the Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan and Padma Vibhushan. While inherent talent plays a significant role in his success, his years of classical training and practising his craft has made him one of the greatest singers the country has ever seen.

His amazing work ethic and discipline towards music has continued despite his staggering list of achievements. He still wakes up at 5 AM everyday to practise music. While Yesudas has rendered many soulful songs in his extensive career, his most memorable devotional song is the divine rendition of Harivarasanam, which is played at the Sabarimala temple everyday.

The music industry has transformed at a rapid pace, but Yesudas's resplendent voice remains the same irrespective of any technological changes. And that is indeed the mark of a true legend.

“The music industry has transformed at a rapid pace, but Yesudas's resplendent voice remains the same”



PHOTOGRAPH: THE TIMES OF INDIA GROUP.
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CORONAVIRUS WARRIOR

KK SHAILAJA,
HEALTH MINISTER, KERALA

The global pandemic situation has turned all our systems to chaos and confined us to our homes but it has also shown us who the true heroes of the nation are. And in those trying times, a glimmer of hope rose from God's own country, Kerala. KK Shailaja, an exemplary leader, who has shown the way for the country and the world through her efforts to fight the coronavirus pandemic in her state.

Shailaja is the Minister of Health and Social Welfare of Kerala but she is affectionately known as Shailaja teacher or Teacher Amma which is a reference to her teaching background and her down-to-earth nature. She was recently honoured by the United Nations for the early intervention strategies adopted by the state to curb COVID-19 transmission and flatten the curve.

Shailaja's battle against the Coronavirus began months ahead of the country when the spread was still restricted to Wuhan. The state government estimated that about 6 lakh people would return to Kerala from abroad. Hence stringent measures were undertaken at airports and strict quarantine was enforced on all individuals returning from other nations.

Kerala's experience with the Nipah virus outbreak in 2018 helped her prepare for a containment strategy even before the first cases appeared in India. And those early intervention measures have helped Kerala maintain a low mortality rate of 0.35% when compared to the national rate at 1.6% and the global rate at 3 %.

Even as a college student, Shailaja was interested in activism and that led her to join the CPM full time. Her oratory and administrative skills helped Shailaja rise up in the ranks of the party quickly. In 1996, she successfully contested from the Koothuparamba constituency and became Member of Legislative Assembly. Under her tenure as Health Care minister in the Pinarayi Vijayan led government, the state has completely revamped its healthcare facilities and technology from the grassroots level.

Female leaders across the world have demonstrated their administrative prowess during the Global Pandemic and KK Shailaja stands tall among them as someone who leads by example, making way for a generation of women leaders in health care, administration and politics.

“Shailaja's battle against the Coronavirus began months ahead of the country when the spread was still restricted to Wuhan, China.”



PHOTOGRAPH: SATHEESHANKARUGULAVCCL

THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

KHUSHBU SUNDAR,
ACTOR,PRODUCER & POLITICIAN

Khushbu Sundar has always been a show stopper. As an actress, she has acted with some of the biggest names in the industry and gathered a fan following that would go to the extent of building temples for her. And as a politician too, she has always been someone who spoke her mind irrespective of the party she belongs to.

Khushbu Sundar was born as Nakhat Khan in Mumbai and started her film career as a child artist in Hindi films. It was only in her later teens that she started making appearances in Tamil and Telugu cinema. She went on to act in more than 150 films in all the South Indian languages with the likes of actors such as Mammootty, Mohan Lal, Rajinikanth, Kamal Hassan, Prabhu, Karthik and Sathyaraj. Everywhere Khushbu went, her cult status followed her. Her fans went crazy whenever her movies were released. Chinna Thambi which happens to be Khushbu's biggest hit catapulted her to fame and gave her a place in the hearts of the people forever.

From Khushbu idlies to Khushbu sarees, her name adorns many popular items till today, even years after she stopped acting as the lead heroine. Khushbu also became a household name with her popular TV show Jackpot which audiences watched exclusively for her elaborate looks and showmanship. Now and then, she continues to make small appearances in films but she never stops acting in television serials and hosting TV shows even amidst her political career.

In 2010, Khushbu joined the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), in the presence of the then party chief and Chief Minister, the late M Karunanidhi. This marked her entry in formal politics. Khushbu was hailed for her progressive thoughts on women empowerment and was vocal about several issues in her press meets and on social media. In 2014, she exited from DMK and joined the Congress party. She was the star campaigner of the Congress in the 2014 Lok Sabha polls and the 2016 Assembly polls as well. Much recently she quit from her post as the national spokesperson and member of the Congress party and joined hands with BJP to work for the betterment of the party and the nation.

“From Khushbu idlies to Khushbu sarees, her name adorns many popular items even years after she stopped acting as heroine”



PHOTOGRAPH: THE TIMES OF INDIA GROUP
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THE TRACTOR QUEEN

MALLIKA SRINIVASAN,
MANAGING DIRECTOR AND CHAIRMAN OF TAFE

A stalwart in her industry, Mallika Srinivasan is the Managing Director and Chairman of TAFE (Tractors and Farm Equipment Limited) played a crucial role in the growth of the organisation and the Indian agriculture machinery business.

Srinivasan was always a brilliant student who excelled in studies. Later, she took a keen interest in business studies and chose to pursue a MBA degree from Wharton School Business, University of Pennsylvania. On returning back to India, she joined the family business and worked under her father, A. Sivasailam at TAFE. TAFE was incorporated in 1960 by the Amalgamations Group founded by her grandfather.

In 25 years, Srinivasan's contribution to the growth of TAFE has been immense. Her efforts to make cost effective tractors suited for small farmers has increased profits significantly. Today, Tractors and Farm Equipment Limited is the second-largest in India and 3rd largest tractor manufacturer in the world in terms of volume. The company has branches in 82 countries.

One of her milestones in this journey was the Eicher Motors take over in 2005 that catapulted TAFE to the top of the farm equipment industry. This was particularly significant because of the bad patch that TAFE went through in the early 2000's. Srinivasan played a huge role in handling the crisis and turning setbacks into opportunities. While tractors happen to be TAFE's principal product, they also diversified into other products such as engineering plastics, hydraulic pumps, panel instruments and other farm equipment.

Mallika Srinivasan supports several healthcare and educational institutions in her ancestral hometown of Tirunelveli. She also donates generously to the Shankar Nethralaya and Cancer Institute in Chennai.

As a woman in a male dominated environment, Mallika Srinivasan's journey from general manager to Chairman and Managing Director of TAFE is definitely an inspiration to women entrepreneurs. She received the 'Business Woman of the Year' award in India from the BBC in 1999. She won the Forbes India 'Women Leader of the Year Award' in 2012. In 2014, she was awarded the Padma Shri in the Trade and Industry category for her contribution to the Indian agriculture sector by developing farm equipment relevant to Indian farmers.

"Mallika Srinivasan's journey from general manager to Chairman and Managing Director of TAFE is definitely an inspiration to women entrepreneurs."



PHOTOGRAPH:L R SHANKAR/BCCL

SPREADING THE LIGHT OF EDUCATION

DR. MANIMEKALAI MOHAN,
FOUNDER, MANAGING TRUSTEE & CORRESPONDENT, SSVM INSTITUTIONS, METTUPALAYAM & COIMBATORE

Dr. Manimekalai Mohan, the Founder & Managing Trustee of SSVM Institutions, is a leader with a vision to provide accessible quality education for all. Over the years, the SSVM group of schools that includes the Shree Sarasswathi Vidhyaah Mandheer (CBSE & Matriculation), SSVM World School and SSVM School of Excellence have become synonymous for world-class educational infrastructure and holistic excellence. SSVM PREPVERSITY, an innovative wing widens the professional placements and provides career guidance for learners. SSVM INSTITUTIONS has 'Athma Seva', a Charitable Unit for the Differently-abled Children. The Open Schooling (NIOS) facility has also been extended at SSVM.

Dr. Manimekalai Mohan's educational journey has solicitously envisioned providing students with a lively learning atmosphere with strong values and Indian ethos. Students get to devour on every single opportunity to progress in their various endeavours and become the right citizen cum leader of our Nation. The different arrays of academic and extra-curricular facilities ensure that learners surpass in all pursuits of life. SSVM believes that education must help children to excel holistically in Academics, Sports, Arts, and Co-Curricular pursuits, while ensuring their safety and well- being.

As a proficient educator, Dr. Mohan understood that the future of education lies in teaching the learners' core skills such as problem-solving, decision making, analytical skills and creating space for innovation. The schools have a host of interdisciplinary programs that provide learners with leadership opportunities to boost self-esteem in a nurturing and positive environment. Students of SSVM have proven their merit everywhere they go and continue bringing laurels to their alma mater.

Dr. Mohan understood very early that good teachers were instrumental in shaping the future generation. SSVM ensures that all teachers are provided with the best resources, skills and environment to perform to the best of their capacity and help maintain a caring, supportive and positive milieu for the learners and parents. The teachers are also encouraged to consistently upgrade themselves to prepare learners for the 21st-century world.

Entrepreneurship came naturally to Dr. Manimekalai Mohan, but her journey as an edupreneur was born out of necessity. Through those initial hurdles and setbacks, she understood her true passion in the field of education and learned to enjoy the learning curve. In 2020, SSVM celebrates 22 years of excellence in education and Dr. Manimekalai Mohan's dream of taking quality education to the rural regions and suburbs of Coimbatore. SSVM will have its Campus equipped for Cambridge Assessment International Education - Cambridge Primary for the academic year 2021 - 22 and classes drive up to A level.

> "Through those initial hurdles and setbacks, she understood her true passion and enjoyed the learning curve."



MASTER FILMMAKER

MANI RATNAM,
FILM DIRECTOR, SCREENPLAY WRITER AND PRODUCER

Mani Ratnam is a man of few words. His characters on screen are also very limited when it comes to speech. But the stories he weaves and the impact it leaves on the audience is immense. The characters and their storylines live with us long after we have left the cinema hall. From Pallavi Anu Pallavi to the much recent Chekka Chivantha Vaanam, Mani Ratnam always touches a rare mix of commercial and artistic cinema that a very few filmmakers have managed to accomplish in the entire history of Indian cinema

Mani Ratnam's first film was Pallavi Anu Pallavi in Kannada, a film that spoke about the relationship between an older woman and a young man. Then came Mouna Raagam, Mani Ratnam's cult classic romance saga that is still one of the best romantic films in Tamil cinema. He aimed higher with Pagal NIlavu but it was Nayagan that really announced the arrival of a master filmmaker who had perfected his craft. Nayagan was heavily inspired from Francis Ford Coppola's The Godfather but the movie is considered a landmark for its screenplay and cult characters. With Agni Nakshatram, Gitanjali and Anjali, Mani Ratnam labelled himself as a solid filmmaker that the audience could depend on. The story, casting and music in his films were always on point.

Ratnam's movies started exploring social issues in the 1990s. This was also when Rahman joined hands with Mani Ratnam for the first time. His film Roja which spoke about extremism in Kashmir, Bombay that depicted the Hindu-Muslim riots and Kannathil Muthamittal that talks about the Srilankan issue were all runaway hits. With every movie of his, Mani Ratnam keeps setting the bar high for filmmakers in the industry. Be it Aayutha Ezhuthu, the political social drama, Guru that was based on Dhirubhai Ambani, Ravaan which is the modern day retelling of Ramayana, OK Kanmani which talks in detail about new-gen relationships, Kaatru Veliyidai that speaks about the tumultuous relationship between an airforce officer and a doctor or the latest gangster family drama, Chekka Chivantha Vaanam, every movie is miles apart from the last one.

He is currently helming the magnum opus epic Ponniyin Selvan with a star-studded cast and definitely has more films up his sleeve for the world to rejoice.

> “Mani Ratnam always touches a rare mix of commercial and artistic cinema that a very few filmmakers have managed to accomplish”



A COMEBACK TO **REMEMBER**

MANJU WARRIER,
ACTOR

When Manju Warrier made her debut in 1995 with Sakhyam, at a tender age of 16, she had the audience in rapt attention with her endearing performance as the Malayali girl next door. She was also one of those rare actors who could stand her ground even while sharing screen space with iconic actors such as Mohanlal, Thilakan and Suresh Gopi.

Almost 20 years later, after a 14-year break from acting, when she made her comeback in 2014 with Roshan Andrew's How old are you, she still manages to get the same love and adoration from the audience. Manju Warrier is truly the unofficial female superstar of the Malayalam film industry.

After her debut in 1995, Manju has been a part of several commercially successful films, including Ee Puzhayum Kadannu and Aaram Thampuran till her exit in 1999. In a span of just 4 years, she also proved her mettle as a solid performer. Manju won the State award in 1996 for the film Ee Puzhayum Kadannu in which she was paired opposite Dileep. She also won special mention of the national jury for her role as a daughter avenging the murder of her parents in Kannezuthi Pottum Thottu.

Manju Warrier's comeback film How Old are you is the tale of a woman in her late-thirties who tries to reclaim her life. The movie went on to become one of the biggest hits of that year.

With her comeback, Manju made a strong statement about her renewed sense of purpose in cinema and that she is here to stay. Since then, Manju has been a part of several movies such as Jo and the Boy (2015), Udaharanam Sujatha (2017) and C/o Saira Bano (2017), Aami (2018), Lucifer (2019) and inspired a wave of women-oriented movies in the Malayalam industry. Her debut in Tamil as the critically acclaimed Pachaiyamma in Asuran, opposite Dhanush, proved her ability to connect with the audience across languages. Not many people can turn around their career after a long break. But with her memorable roles and resilient spirit, Manju Warrier has definitely won the hearts of everyone.

“Manju Warrier's comeback film How Old are you is the tale of a woman in her late-thirties who tries to reclaim her life.”



PHOTOGRAPH: ASHISH K VINCENT/BCCL

THE FASHION WAY FORWARD

MARGARET VARGHESE MOOLAN AND KASHMEERA VIJAY,
DIRECTORS, VARGHESE MOOLANS LIFESTYLE AND KAATHPUTLI

Sarees bring out the pride, beauty and culture of a woman like no other attire. Almost every part of India has its own saree that symbolises their regional culture. Kaathputli run by Margaret Varghese and Kashmeera Vijay is now a haven for saree lovers by becoming the one-stop destination for traditional weaves from across the country.

This mother-in-law and daughter-in-law duo come from the illustrious Varghese Moolans Group of Companies family, which now spans over five continents and has a presence in various sectors. Margaret has been the emotional backbone of Dr. Varghese Moolan in all the ventures of the Varghese Moolans Group right from its establishment in 1985. In 2015, Kashmeera joined the family and has been a director of the Varghese Moolans Group of companies ever since.

Kashmeera was always inclined towards fashion and soon she started supervising Moolans Boutique and Moolans textiles, the textile division of Varghese Moolans Group along with her mother-in-law, Margaret Varghese.

Kashmeera's stint with Moolan textiles helped her learn the intricacies of the retail sector such as procurement, managing inventory and understanding customer's shopping trends. This experience proved useful when she wanted to start Kaathputli, to cater to the growing number of online shoppers in the country.

With a vision to reinvent the ancient fabrics and weaving, printing and embroidery techniques of India, Kaathputli works closely with weavers and artisans to create stunning sarees that are emblematic of our rich tradition.

Apart from sarees, Kaathputli also offers statement saree blouses and accessories such as scarfs. They also have big plans to make Kaathputli the go-to online fashion destination by adding more clothing categories to their portfolio.

Margaret and Kashmeera are a dynamic combo in the workplace. Whether it's marketing ideas or experimenting with a new range of clothes, they converse, brainstorm, ideate and decide what's best for the business together. With the pandemic, all sectors have been forced to take their businesses online. Guided by two strong women at the forefront, Kaathputli is all set to take the love for sarees to more people and revive our traditional arts as well!

“Margaret and Kashmeera are a dynamic combo. Be it marketing ideas or experimenting with a range of clothes, they brainstorm, ideate and decide what's best for the business together.”



AN HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT

MARGARET S. GOUDAR (TEGUR),
CHAIRMAN, SAMUEL MEMORIAL SCHOOL & COLLEGE, MUDHOL

As the Chairperson of Samuel Memorial School & College, Mrs. Margaret Goudar leads by example. Her dedication towards the institution, her students and the education sector is evident from the motto of the school, " Gubernatio Pro Cras" which translates to " Leaders of Tomorrow in Latin.

Right from a young age, Margaret Goudar was always drawn towards the teaching profession. During her teaching stint at the Rotary School (Mudhol), her innovative teaching and learning strategies were much talked about. In 2005, she started the school in memory of her husband Late. Samuel Tegur with just 45 students in a rented building. In a span of 15 years, Samuel Memorial School & College has transformed into one of the best educational institutions in Karnataka, serving more than 1000 students and setting the standard for academic excellence in the state.

At Samuel Memorial, the students are provided a conducive environment to grow, learn and lead. The teachers at Samuel's address both the academic and psychological needs of a child to accomplish holistic development. Hence through an active partnership between Children, Teachers, Parents and Management, the students grow into creative, disciplined, dynamic leaders and global citizens who will also lead by example.

The infrastructure at Samuel's includes vast assembly areas, well-equipped laboratories, libraries, spacious playgrounds, classrooms, latest sports equipment and facilities for various extracurricular activities set in a tranquil campus. Apart from academic excellence, the institution also encourages extracurricular activities such as arts, crafts, dramatics, music and dance. Students from Samuel's have won accolades in state level sports events, International Olympiads and literary competitions.

Margaret Goudar and Samuel Memorial Institutions stand tall in the education sector of Karnataka with their excellent infrastructure and holistic approach towards education. She was the achiever of Karnataka honored by Vijay Karnataka, received from Present Central Minister of Karnataka Shri. Hon.Sadanand Gowda and Shri.Priyanka Kharge. She was received 'Bharat Ratna Dr.Abdul Kalam Excellence Gold Award-2019' awarded by All India Acheivers and Research Academy Their vision - "Give us a child, take back a leader" is definitely an aspirational statement to all students, parents and teachers.

> "In a span of 15 years, Samuel Memorial School & College has transformed into one of the best educational institutions in Karnataka"



Mrs. Margaret Goudar Tegur (Chairman, Samuel Memorial School & College, Mudhol) with Daughter - Joyce . S . Tegur (Director, Samuel Memorial School & College, Mudhol) and Son - Vicky .S. Tegur (Director, Samuel Memorial School & College, Mudhol)

AN EDUCATOR WITH A DIFFERENCE

DR. MARIAZEENA JOHNSON,
CHANCELLOR SATHYABAMA INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

"The Indian education system is much like the perennial Ganges river that continues to produce fertile minds to the nation consistently", says Dr. Mariazeena Johnson, the Managing Director of Sathyabama University, an educator and leader, following the footsteps of her father, Colonel Dr. Jeppiaar in taking the flag of Sathyabama University higher and providing quality education for all.

With the support of her husband Dr. Marie Johnson, Dr. Johnson has been instrumental in transforming Sathyabama University into one of the top institutions of the country in terms of academic excellence, technological infrastructure and scientific innovation. Dr. Johnson played an active role in the launch of the first Successful Student Satellite 'SATHYABAMASAT' which was developed and designed by the staff & students of Sathyabama. It was launched by ISRO along with other 19 satellites in June 2016.

Dr. Mariazeena Johnson has always been a strong advocate of women empowerment. Her doctoral research was on the recent developments in women entrepreneurship and the various challenges faced by women entrepreneurs. She was instrumental in setting up a Women Empowerment Bureau which conducts several Programme that aid the economic empowerment and social upliftment of underprivileged women.

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

As an educator, Dr. Mariazeena Johnson understands the importance of providing educational facilities from the grassroot level. In association with World Vision, the "Support my School" project has adopted 21 Panchayat schools and 7 Villages for all-round development by providing the basic needs and infrastructure facilities needed. "My Saturday University" initiative, a fun loving educational programme that offers skill development courses for Government school children is one of her many initiatives to empower underprivileged children. She has also introduced free vocational courses for school dropouts and rural youth.

Dr. Mariazeena Johnson is a true change-maker in the field of education. Her sphere of work expands beyond the walls of the educational institution, into the society by contributing actively to the economic and social development of the nation through their initiatives, programmes and inclusive policies

"Her sphere of work expands beyond the walls of the educational institution, by contributing to development of the nation"



FROM DINDIGUL TO THE WORLD

NAGASAMY DHANABALAN & DEEPIKA NAGASAMY,
THALAPPAKATTI HOTELS PVT LTD

Today the name Dindigul Thalappakatti is synonymous with flavourful seeraga samba biriyani; the brand is an identity of the Tamil Nadu food scene. While his grandfather, Mr. Nagasamy Naidu, (The restaurant is named Thalappakatti in memory of his iconic head turban or thalapa) was instrumental in creating the signature seeraga samba biriyani and Dalcha, his grandson Nagasamy Dhanabalan has now become the face of the brand by taking it out of Dindigul and taking Thalappakatti Seeraga Samba biriyani to the world.

Dhanabalan mentions that his stint in the UK helped him realise the potential of their hotel and how it could become a pan-national brand like KFC or McDonalds. So when he came back to India after his studies to manage their hotel, he started drafting a bigger game plan for the brand. The first step was bringing their regional brand to the capital city, Chennai. The city was dominated by biriyani outlets that served Basmati rice biriyani and many discouraged Dhanabalan from setting up shop in Chennai because the people were unfamiliar with the taste of seeraga samba biryani. They also faced issues with hotels that duplicated their brand name but they took every obstacle as a challenge and soon gained a strong foothold in Chennai and eventually Tamil Nadu.

Nagasamy's better half, Deepika Nagasamy has her hands full with directorial responsibilities at Dindigul Thalappakatti, being the creative brain behind Thalappakatti's thriving social media presence and a doting mother of two kids. From never having heard about seeraga samba biriyani to charting out marketing plans for the iconic brand, Deepika has really proved her mettle as a creative person. Her mix of traditional and new-age marketing ideas have worked wonderfully for the brand identity in India & abroad.

Thalappakatti is also making the best of the pandemic situation by providing quality food consistently and ensuring the safety of customers at all times. They have stringent SOPs in place to ensure sanitation and hygiene everywhere from the dining area to the kitchen.

With strong marketing ideas and a delicious menu that strikes gold in every market, the power couple are looking to create a strong presence in Karnataka, Andhra, Telangana and Kerala. They are also hoping to touch 100 branches by the end of the financial year from the current 75+ branches.

“With strong marketing ideas and a delicious menu that strikes gold in every market, the power couple are looking to create a strong presence in Karnataka, Andhra, Telangana and Kerala.”



90 YEARS OF SILK TRADITION

DR. NALLI KUPPUSAMI CHETTI,
FOUNDER NALLI SILKS

Generations of South Indian women have purchased silk sarees for their wedding trousseau at Nalli. Nalli is one of those iconic brands of Tamil Nadu that has maintained its position in the market despite the emergence of new players. Nalli Silks was established in 1928 in T-Nagar by Dr. Nalli Chinnasami Chettl with a vision to make it the go-to destination for sarees.

After more than 30 years, the business baton was passed on to Dr. Nalli Kuppuswami Chetti who has driven Nalli to become synonymous with quality and customer satisfaction. His son Ramanath K. Nalli took the brand further to create a presence in all the major cities of India such as Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Kochi, Ahmedabad, Kolkata and Hyderabad. He was also instrumental in taking Nalli abroad to countries such as the US, Singapore, Canada and UK. Ms. Lavaya and Mr. Niranth Nalli are taking it further

It was Dr. Nalli Kuppuswami's radical decision that led to the brand stopping discount sales. In an age where every other brand lures buyers with sales and discount offers, he made a conscious decision to focus on operational excellence and optimal cost structures to bring high-quality products to the consumers at affordable prices. Their unrivalled quality and competitive pricing has earned them a loyal customer base that just keeps growing.

Nalli has also been a pioneer in employing technology at their storefront. They were the first textile retailers to use barcodes and computerized billing systems in the 1980s .They also introduced their online portal to cater to saree lovers across the globe and diversified into the jewellery sector by launching Nalli Jewellery so that the brand can become the one-stop destination for wedding shopping.

Dr. Nalli Kuppuswami is an active member of several industry forums and a generous patron of the arts community. The brand is actively involved in providing a better quality of life to traditional weavers who weave their signature silk sarees. He was conferred the Kalaimamani Award by the Government of Tamil Nadu in 2013 for his patronage towards the traditional arts. He also received the Padma Shri award in 2003 for his contribution in the field of textiles and commerce.

“Nalli is actively involved in providing a better quality of life to traditional weavers who weave their signature silk sarees.”



AIMING FOR THE SKIES

NAYANTHARA,
ACTOR

Nayanthara is a phenomenon. Phenomenal actor no doubt, but the name Nayanthara is enough for her hordes of fans to go crazy. She can carry entire movies on her shoulders, amaze the audience even while sharing screen space with the industry greats and even glimpses of her personal life on social media go viral. She is absent from social media and popular social circles, but her fan following just keeps growing. But the journey towards this position was definitely a long and challenging one.

Following her debut with the Malayalam film, Manassinakkare in 2003, Nayanthara was catapulted into fame and soon discovered by the Tamil film industry too. She entered Tamil cinema with Sarath Kumar starrer Ayya. The very same year, she was cast opposite Superstar Rajinikanth in Chandramukhi. The movie turned out to be the biggest blockbuster of the year and Tamil cinema itself.

In her subsequent films, such as Ghajini (2005), Vallavan (2006), Billa (2007), Yaaradi Nee Mohini (2008), and Aadhavan (2009), she played an array of conventional love interest roles and roles that broke stereotypes too. In 2011, she won the Filmfare Award for Best Actress in Telugu for her performance as Sita in Sri Rama Rajyam.

Nayanthara's personal life and relationships have always been in the public eye. While she has always been upfront and dignified about it, Nayanthara also had to face the brunt of the excessive media spotlight and social media trolling. After a brief hiatus of about 2 years, Nayanthara was back to tinsel town with Raja Rani, a movie that kick-started her second innings.

Since then, Nayanthara has revamped her career graph with a wave of female-oriented roles such as the single mother in Maya, a hearing-impaired girl in Naanum Rowdy Dhaan, a district collector taking on political biggies in Aramm and a drug smuggler in Kolamavu Kokila. She has also been a part of several commercial blockbusters such as Thani Oruvan, Velaikkaran, Viswasam and Bigil.

Nayanthara's career has been nothing short of a rollercoaster. But from creating her own brand of movies to having fan-fare filled movie openings, that used to be reserved only for leading male actors, she has definitely earned the name Lady Superstar.

“Nayanthara revamped her career graph with a wave of female-oriented roles, creating her own brand of movies to having fan-fare filled movie openings, that used to be reserved only for male actors.”



PHOTOGRAPH: THE TIMES OF INDIA GROUP.
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THE VOICE OF CHANGE

PARVATHY THIRUVOTHU,
ACTOR

13 years ago, When Parvathy made her debut with the Malayalam movie Out of Syllabus, nobody could have predicted her career graph that now spans across Bollywood, Kollywood and her home ground, Mollywood. Today she is in a league of her own, a rare breed of actresses who refused to be stereotyped as arm candy, who speak against patriarchy and actually put the “act” in actress.

After her debut, she starred in the critically acclaimed Notebook (Malayalam), a coming of age teen drama and Milana (Kannada) opposite Puneet Rajkumar, that went on to become a huge commercial success. Her portrayal of Maari, a lovelorn young woman, set in rural southern Tamilnadu, won her accolades and helped prove her mettle as a seasoned actor.

Off-screen and on-screen, Parvathy has always been the voice of reason, questioning casting couch, supporting the Me Too movement or choosing female-oriented scripts that stand true to their cause.

After a couple of movies that missed the mark, Parvathy was back with a bang in Maryan, where she played Panimalar, a spunky young girl in a coastal village. Malayalam movies such as Ennu Ninte Moideen, Bangalore Days and Charlie are a testimony to her serious acting skills and intelligent choice of movies too. She made her Bollywood debut opposite Irrfan Khan in Qarib Qarib Single in 2017.

In recent years, Parvathy has cemented her position as a dependable actor that can get into the skin of any role. In Take off (Malayalam), where she plays a pregnant nurse stuck in Iraq, Uyare (Malayalam), where she plays the acid attack victim or Virus (Malayalam), where she plays a medical officer in the Nipah Rapid Response team, Parvathy is always a revelation as an actor.

Apart from her film career, Parvathy has also created a name for herself as a contemporary feminist icon who isn’t afraid to speak about women rights in the in film industries that are still patriarchal in nature. She is one of the founding members of Women in Cinema Collective, the organization for the welfare of women workers of the Malayalam movie industry. She has also faced severe Internet backlash, every time she questioned misogynistic dialogues and characters in popular movies, but her unwavering voice and clarity of thought have definitely earned her a loyal following and cult status that many others in the industry can only dream of.

> “Parvathy Thiruvothu is in a league of her own, a rare breed of actresses who refused to be stereotyped as arm candy”



PHOTOGRAPH: JEES JOHN

THE SHINING HOPE OF BADMINTON

PV SINDHU, BADMINTON PLAYER
PULLELA GOPICHAND, COACH

Coming from a family of volleyball players, it was no wonder that Sindhu took to sports from an early age but her area of interest was different. She picked up the badminton racquet at a young age of 8 and soon started training at the highly acclaimed Pullela Gopichand Badminton Academy. Her dedication towards the sport was evident even as a child. She would always report to coaching on time despite having to travel 56kms daily to reach the academy.

Pullela Gopichand is a former badminton player who founded a badminton academy after his retirement to identify talented players across the country. The academy has produced some of the best badminton players such as Saina Nehwal, P.V. Sindhu, Parupalli Kashyap and Srikanth Kidambi. Gopichand served as the official Indian Olympic Badminton Team coach at the 2016 Brazil's Rio Olympics. Right now he is the chief national coach for the Indian badminton team.

Under his mentorship, Sindhu touched greater heights and won a host of sub-junior titles. She made her international debut in 2009 at the age of 14. In 2009, PV Sindhu won the bronze medal in the sub-junior Asian Badminton Championships and a year later, she bagged singles silver in the International Badminton Challenge in Iran. PV Sindhu won the Asian Junior Championships in 2012, won silver and gold medals at the Commonwealth games in 2014 and her biggest achievement till date, the silver medal at the Rio Olympics 2016. With that she became the first Indian badminton player to reach a final at the Olympics.

After a few setbacks in her form, she won the world championship much recently in 2019 and has her eyes set on the Tokyo Olympics happening in 2021. She is the recipient of the sports honour Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna, and India's fourth highest civilian award, the Padma Shri. She was also honoured with Padma Bhushan, the third highest civilian award in India, in January 2020.

From humble beginnings to the grand Olympic Podium, Sindhu's journey is an inspiration to young girls all over India who want to pursue a sporting career.

> "From humble beginnings to the grand Olympic Podium, PV Sindhu's sporting journey is an inspiration to young girls"



PHOTOGRAPHS: ANKIT SHARMA/FEMINA

THE WALL OF INDIAN CRICKET

RAHUL DRAVID,
FORMER INDIAN CRICKETER

Rahul Sharad Dravid, popularly known as Rahul Dravid or The Wall, is certainly one of the finest batsmen this country has ever produced. Right now he is the overseas batting consultant for the Indian team and the head coach for the Under-19 team, training young players to better their game.

Rahul Dravid's father was a cricket lover who regularly took his sons to watch cricket matches. Soon Dravid started developing a passion for cricket too. Dravid started training professionally and represented the Karnataka team in various tournaments. He made his Ranji debut in 1991. Dravid's nickname comes from his ability to face any kind of ball at the crease. He had a world-class defence and played excellent strokes that were simply a delight to watch. Dravid's most memorable knock came in the 'Final Frontier' test match against Australia at the Eden Gardens.In his ODI career, he amassed a total 10,889 runs in 344 matches at an average of 39.17. It included 12 hundred and 83 fifties. He is the 3rd highest run-getter in ODIs for India.

In 164 tests, he accumulated 13288 runs at an average of 52.31. He scored 36 hundred and 63 fifties in his Test career. He is also the 2nd highest run-getter for India in Tests. He was Vice Captain during the 2003 World cup where India reached the final. Dravid was the captain during the 2007 cricket world cup, when the Indian team exited the tournament in the preliminary games.

Teammates and opponents fondly remember his poised, gentleman style game and stylish shots. Off the pitch too, he was a person who ate and breathed only cricket. Rahul was never one to be bothered about brands, clothes, gadgets or any other material goods. But he would instantly notice if his bat was off by a gram. In March 2012, he announced his formal retirement from International and First Class cricket.

Years after his retirement, fans still remember the humble person who touched such highs in the field of cricket but always remained grounded. Post his retirement, Rahul preferred working with young talent and chose to coach the U-19 team so that he could mould them to become better cricketers for the nation. Rahul Dravid continues to be an inspiration for many crickets both on an off the field!

“His teammates and opponents fondly remember his poised and stylish shots. Off the field too, he was a person who ate and breathed cricket.”



PHOTOGRAPH: SYED ASIF/BCCL

PRIDE OF TAMILNADU

RAVICHANDRAN ASHWIN,
CRICKETER

The Indian Premier League, since it's first installment, has helped identify raw cricketing talent across the country like never before. Ravichandran Ashwin or Ash, as he is fondly referred to by his teammates, has truly been one of the greatest finds of the premier league. Chennai-born and raised Ashwin harboured cricket dreams like any average Indian kid but it was his change of direction from batting to spin bowling that landed him a place in the Indian team and went on to make him one of the most celebrated spin bowlers of all time.

Ashwin made his first-class debut for Tamil Nadu in 2006 and even captained the team, but his bowling career picked up only after he was picked up by the Chennai Super Kings team in 2010. His consistent performance in that season landed him a spot in the Indian squad that won the 2011 Cricket World cup even though he made it to the playing eleven only for 2 games. 2011 also marked Ashwin's Test debut against West Indies. He proved his mettle with the ball and bat by taking two five-wicket hauls and scoring. a century. He won the player of the series award for that stellar performance.

Ashwin's test streak continued in 2013 when he was selected for the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. He picked up 29 wickets in the series and became the third Indian bowler to pick up more than 25 wickets in a single series. He was the recipient of the Arjuna Award in 2014.

Over the years. Ashwin has also developed his signature carrom ball style bowling that bamboozles batsmen because it requires the bowler to hold the ball between his thumb and the index fingers to generate an extra turn. It is very difficult for batsmen to judge the delivery hence makes it one of the most effective wicket-taking balls.

In 2016, he became the only Indian after Rahul Dravid & Sachin Tendulkar to win the ICC Cricketer of the Year award. He also became the ICC Test Cricketer of the year in December, 2016. In 2018, Ashwin was dropped by the Chennai Super Kings team in the auction and went on to captain Kings XI Punjab team. Currently he represented the Delhi Capitals.

“In 2016, he became the only Indian after Rahul Dravid & Sachin Tendulkar to win the ICC Cricketer of the Year award.”



PHOTOGRAPHS: B A RAJU/BCCL

SOCIAL CHANGEMAKER

ROHINI NILEKANI,
AUTHOR AND PHILANTHROPIST

The word 'Arghyam' literally translates to offering in Sanskrit. It is only fitting that Rohini Nilekani started the organisation with her own personal endowment in 2001. Arghyam is a grant making foundation that takes a data-driven approach to sanitation and water. It has been working with a vision of providing safe, sustainable water for all and has built a presence in 22 states to address the issue of water security for vulnerable communities.

Arghyam has two flagship programs: the India Water Portal (IWP) and the Participatory Groundwater Management program (PGWM). The former serves as a knowledge database for all things pertaining to water. The latter focuses on supporting small communities to manage depleting water resources.

The IWP website provides access to working papers, reports, data, articles, news, events, and discussions on water. A team of 20 people spread across India identify local water stories and solutions for the website. Each person focuses on a particular region of the country, producing stories and doing outreach with local press, journalists, and changemakers.

The PGWM program focused on recharging regional aquifers, geological mapping, testing water quality, and developing usage protocols for drinking and irrigation to improve groundwater levels.

Rohini Nilekani started her charity work almost 2 decades ago by financially supporting young girls. Over the years, her charity and social work has spread across the sectors of education, environment and community development. The Akshara foundation which is also founded by Nilekani, aids government run primary schools and helps education reach everybody.

Her literary works include a medical thriller called 'Stillborn', a non- fiction book called 'Uncommon Ground' and several books for young children including the most popular 'Annual Haircut Day'. All her children's books were published by Pratham Books, a non-profit children's publisher founded by Nilekani herself.

Nilekani's idea about philanthropy is deep rooted in the Indian scenario with solutions to solve our indigenous problems instead of just standing on the sidelines. Her transformation from homemaker to changemaker is something that all young social entrepreneurs can learn from. But with respect to her goals for her philanthropy, she still believes there is a long way to go.

"Over the years, Rohini Nilekani's charity and social work has spread across the sectors of education, environment and community development."



PHOTOGRAPH: N NARASIMHA MURTHY/BCCL

SHUTTLING AWAY TO GLORY

SAINA NEHWAL,
BADMINTON PLAYER

As the first Indian badminton player to win an Olympic medal and the first female player to achieve the feat of World No 1 ranking in the BWF, Saina Nehwal set the precedent for badminton players in our country. But her journey to the top has not been an easy one.

Saina Nehwal was born in Haryana and began to pursue badminton from a very small age because both her parents were district level badminton champions in Haryana. Soon after they moved to Hyderabad, Nehwal began training professionally. Nehwal's day would start in the wee hours of the morning where she had to travel almost 25kms to reach her training facility.

Nehwal's breakthrough came when she won the junior badminton championship back to back in 2004 and 2005. In 2006, Nehwal won the Asian Satellite Badminton Tournament and became a known name in the badminton circuit. She became the first Indian shuttler to qualify in the quarterfinals of the Olympics in 2008. Her firsts didn't stop there. She was also the first Indian to win an Olympic medal in Badminton at the 2012 London Olympics and the first badminton player to win a super series tournament.

Nehwal is also the only Indian to have won at least one medal in every BWF major - the World Championships, the World Junior Championships - and that most precious bronze medal at the Olympics. She gradually rose in rankings and became the world's number one badminton player in April 2015. She was honoured with the Arjuna award and Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award for her achievements in the field of badminton.

From harbouring the dream of one day representing the country and barely having the money to travel to matches and tournaments, Saina Nehwal has taken a very disciplined and focussed path towards success. Her sacrifices in personal life and hard work on the court have resulted in medals and victories. The Olympic gold still eludes her but the champion is all set to focus on her game and preparing to qualify for the Tokyo Olympics in 2021.

“Her sacrifices in personal life and hard work on the court have resulted in medals and victories”



PHOTOGRAPH: ASHISH RAJE/BCCL

A DECADE OF **STARDOM**

SAMANTHA AKKINENI,
ACTOR

It's been a decade since Samantha debuted as the beautiful Jessie in Ye Maaya Chesave opposite Naga Chaitanya. A decade dotted by blockbusters, memorable roles and Akkineni's rise to prominence as one of the most sought after actresses in the South Indian film industry.

Even as a college student, Akkineni started taking part-time modelling assignments and soon she was discovered by cinematographer Ravi Varman and cast in his movie Moscowin Kavery. But Akkineni's ticket to fame was Ye Maaya Chesaave in Telugu and a small but memorable cameo role she played in the tamil version, Vinnai Thaandi Varuvaaya. She won all the debut awards in Telugu for her alluring performance as Jessie. Akkineni's next big hit was Naan Ee (Eega in Telugu) where she played a bereaved lover. Then came the Gautham Menon bilingual Neethane en Ponvasantham (Yeto Vellipoyindhi Manasu in Telugu) where she played the female lead in both languages. Akkineni perfectly fit the bill as the teenager, college student and a woman in her late 20s. She received critical acclaim for her poignant performance in the movie.

Akkineni soon emerged as a leading actress and continued her streak in Tamil and Telugu cinema with movies such as Attarintiki Daredi, Manam, S/O Satyamurthy, Kaththi, Thangamagan, Theri, A Aa, Mersal, Janatha Garage, Rangasthalam, Mahanati, U Turn, Super Deluxe, Oh Baby and much recently Jaanu.

Akkineni is also actively involved in philanthropic activities. She is a founding member of Pratyusha Foundation, an NGO that provides medical support to underprivileged children and women. She recently launched her own clothing brand called Saaki with a motto to make fashion affordable and accessible to everyone.

Samantha Akkineni's roles have ranged from girl next door ones in movies like Kaththi, Theri and Neethane en Ponvasantham to daring experimental roles in U Turn and Rangasthalam. The trademark charm and spunkiness that she exudes online through her social media posts reflects in her roles too. Her 13 million followers on Instagram will definitely vouch for that. Be it on social media, or her acting career, Akkineni always keeps it real.

“Samantha Akkineni's roles have ranged from girl next door to daring experimental roles”



PHOTOGRAPH: KIRAN SA

A TRAILBLAZER IN **WOMEN'S TENNIS**

SANIA MIRZA,
TENNIS PLAYER

Sania Mirza was India's first female tennis superstar. There may have been female sporting icons but this Hyderabad born tennis pro's records and achievements are definitely one for the books. With six grand slam winners' medals in her trophy cabinet, she is the world number one in WTA doubles ranking and also the first woman to break into the top 30 in WTA singles

Mirza began playing tennis at a very young age but she got her big break when she partnered with Leander Paes for mixed doubles in 2002. But a few years down the lane, after facing off against Serena Williams at the Australian Open and becoming the first Indian female tennis player to win a WTA title, Mirza's singles career hit a roadblock. She quickly reassessed her career and switched her focus to becoming a confident doubles player. She won her maiden mixed doubles Grand Slam title at the Australian Open in 2009. Even as injuries continued to derail her career, she returned every time with a renewed purpose. Her partnership with Swiss player Martina Hingis, went on to become one of the most successful women's double teams in recent times.

The three-time Olympian and Commonwealth games silver medallist proved her mettle on the court time and again to become the sports role model for a generation of young girls who picked up tennis racquets and pursued sporting careers. Mirza was named one of the '50 Heroes of Asia' by Time in 2005. She was also named in Time Magazine's 2016 list of the 100 most influential people in the world. The Government of India has honoured her with the Arjuna Award (2004), Padma Shri (2006), Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna (2015) and Padma Bhushan (2016). Following an injury and her subsequent pregnancy, Sania Mirza had been away from action for a couple of years but she quickly lost weight, got back into form and made a comeback at the beginning of this year by winning the WTA Hobart International. Injuries and media controversies have followed Mirza in her long and illustrious sporting career, but if this comeback is any proof, she still has lots of titles to win and a long way to go as a tennis player.

“Following an injury and her subsequent pregnancy, Sania Mirza quickly got back into form and made a comeback”



PHOTOGRAPH: PRUDHVI RAJA ADDALA AND VAMSI KRISHNA VARMA SANIYA

LOCAL IS THE NEW GLOBAL

SANJAY KUMAR REDDY MULA,
FOUNDER, SIRISHA REDDY GARMENT WORKS

Sanjay Reddy who is the business brain at Sirisha Reddy Garment Works is way more than just a fashion entrepreneur. His efforts towards creating employment opportunities for the underprivileged, preserving Indian handloom and supporting local artisans have made him a pioneer in the fashion industry and taken Indian fashion to the global arena.

The journey started in 2016 with the unique bespoke creations of his sister, Sirisha Reddy. Together, they ensure that every creation from the label is a perfect blend of tradition and trend, made exclusively using premium quality fabric and completely handmade from scratch to end. Their fashion line is also one of the very few eco-friendly labels in the country that completely eliminate the use of chemicals and polyester threads.

Their production unit at their home town, Kurnool and retail outlet at Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad cater to the fashion needs of clients by producing quality designer outfits depending on the occasion and their traditional values. Curating signature wedding wardrobes is one of their specialties. The wardrobe includes matching outfits for bride and groom, outfits for bridesmaids, groomsmen and important members of the family.

Sanjay has been instrumental in turning their passion into a very successful fashion label that is looking at a multi-stage, pan-India expansion in the near future. But what sets the brand apart from the rest is their commitment to employee welfare. To tackle alcoholism among their labourers, they have formulated a unique pay model where the salary is sent directly to the families. They provide a comprehensive employee insurance coverage in case of accidents and mishaps. Sirisha Reddy is also one of very few designer fashion brands in India to pay full salaries and offer financial assistance to their employees during the COVID-19 pandemic.

On the business front, Sanjay and Sirisha have plans to set up in metropolitan cities like Chennai and Bengaluru and expand to countries with a huge Indian diaspora such as USA, UK and Dubai. In the near future, they are also looking at broadening their territory by entering the high-end gifting market, floral and food & beverage industry. The brand is all set to unveil an extensive range of customisable products that includes edible printing on all sorts of edible items including roses and chocolates.

> “The vision of Sanjay Reddy is to carry the legacy of Indian tradition across the global arena like UK and USA”



FLAVOURS AND CREATIVE IDEAS

SHWETA RAVI,
DIRECTOR OF NANDHANA GROUP OF RESTAURANTS

The right blend of innovation and practical knowledge holds the key to making entrepreneurship a legacy. Shweta Ravi, a second generation entrepreneur and Director of Nandhana Group of restaurants stands as a testimony to this statement with her work ethic and innovative ideas.

Nandhana restaurants were the brainchild of her father Dr. Ravichandar who started the first outlet of Nandhana in 1989. Now the restaurant group comprises more than 21 branches (15 outlets and 6 hotels) and has grown to become the largest Andhra chain of restaurants in Bengaluru. Nandhana is also one of the celebrated woman-led enterprises and the first set of Andhra restaurants in Bengaluru.

The signature recipes at Nandhana such as Nati Chicken Biryani, Guntur Chicken, Amaravathi Chicken Dry, Bamboo chicken boneless and Andhra Chilly Chicken bring the authentic regional flavours of Andhra to Bengaluru. Shweta always ensured her brand of creativity at the restaurant with her innovative marketing strategies such as the Biryani Thaali, a five in one package of unique biryanis. This was a huge hit with food lovers in Bengaluru.

Shweta Ravi's knack for creativity was also evident in the way she handled the meal packaging dilemma at Nandhana. On receiving many complaints about items going missing and getting mixed while packed for delivery, Ravi designed a new and customized package design where every item would go into a dedicated compartment. This simplified the job for the staff and made way for customer satisfaction. This patented meals package goes with a banana leaf, giving the customer almost 90 percent of the in-restaurant dining experience right at home.

To handle the pandemic situation and the uncertainty it brings, the management team at Nandhana, put into effect a holistic cost-saving strategy to curtail expenses in order to stay afloat and provide financial security to the employees. Ravi follows an agile approach by ensuring maximum revenue generation from the existing outlets rather than opening newer ones at the moment. Nandhana Group of restaurants seek to sustain and thrive without compromising on marketing, hygiene, safety, taste, quality, and creativity.

In the near future, Ravi envisions expanding into more cities and states to take forward the legacy of premium taste and hospitality. Her story certainly is an inspiration to creative young women who want to dive into the sea of entrepreneurship.

“Her story certainly is an inspiration to creative young women who want to dive into the sea of entrepreneurship”



PIONEERS OF TECHNOLOGY IN INDIA

SUDHA MURTHY - NARAYANA MURTHY,
INFOSYS

Sudha Murthy is the perfect role model for everybody who wants to learn the balancing act between an ambitious career and a productive life. A gold medallist, graduating at the top of her class at IISc, Bengaluru, Sudha Murthy's career took a turn when she saw a job notice for graduate engineers, put up by Tata Motors. A notice that specifically mentioned that lady candidates weren't allowed.

Sudha Murthy put her doctorate plans on the back burner and decided to take up this issue with JRD Tata himself. She wrote a postcard addressing this injustice towards female candidates. It immediately struck a chord with the stalwart. She was called for an interview in Pune and soon joined the organisation as a development engineer too. That is how Sudha Murthy became the first female engineer at Tata Motors, where she met her husband Narayana Murthy and later built one of India's most famous software firms - Infosys.

Narayana Murthy conceptualized, articulated and implemented the Global Delivery Model (GDM) which has become the backbone of the Indian software industry. GDM is based on collaborative distributed software development principles and has resulted in the delivery of superior quality software to global customers on time and within budget. Today Infosys became the leader in innovation in software technology, quality, productivity, customer focus, employee satisfaction, physical and technological infrastructure.

In 1996, Sudha Murthy became one of the first trustees of the Infosys Foundation , the company's non-profit arm which has been instrumental in building hospitals, schools, orphanages, rehabilitation centres, as well as more than 14,000 toilets and over 60,000 libraries for the underprivileged sections of the society. Over the years, she has helped rehabilitate over 3000 sex workers.

As a writer, philanthropist and teacher, her social work is spread across healthcare, education, women empowerment, public hygiene and poverty alleviation. She is also a prolific writer who has published extensively in Kannada and English. Her books reflect the ethos of the Indian culture, touch upon social issues and reinstate her philosophies for life through fictional narratives. Sudha Murthy is a recipient of Padma Shri award, the Attimabbe Award from the Government of Karnataka for excellence in Kannada literature, the Lifetime Achievement Award from Crossword Books, and the R.K. Narayan Award for Literature

“Today Infosys became the leader in innovation in software technology, quality, productivity, customer focus, employee satisfaction, physical and technological infrastructure.”



PHOTOGRAPH: SYED ASIF/BCCL

THE ETERNAL **DIVA**

TRISHA KRISHNAN,
ACTOR

From being crowned Miss Chennai in 1999 to being the reigning queen of the South Indian film industry for almost two decades, Trisha Krishnan is the quintessential girl next door in South Indian cinema. As Dhanalakshmi, Abhi, Jessie or Jaanu, Krishnan continues to be the audience's favourite in every role she plays.

After a blink and miss role in Prashanth starrer Jodi, her first movie as a lead was Priyadarshan's Leysa Leysa. But Ameer's Mounam Pesiyathe, in which she starred opposite Suriya was the first film to hit the screens. Movies such as Enakku 20 Unaku 18 and Saamy further cemented her position in the Tamil film industry. 2004 can be considered a milestone year in Krishnan's career because she became an overnight sensation with Varsham, her Telugu debut and also gives the biggest commercial of her career, Ghilli. . The film was the highest-grossing movie of that year and is Krishnan's biggest commercial success so far. With movies such as Nuvvostanante Nennoddantana, Aadavari Matalaku Arthale Verule, she became a household name in the Telugu industry too.

With a career graph that has spanned almost 20 years, it's safe to say that nobody treads the path between commercial successes and performance-oriented roles as Krishnan does. On one hand, you find her in a horror-comedy like Aranmanai 2 and on the other, she is acting roles with a negative shade in Dhanush starrer Kodi. She has also acted with the who's who of the Tamil and Telugu industry. She briefly forayed into Bollywood but the South Indian film industry continues to remain her home ground.

Krishnan's most iconic role is, however, Jessie in the Gautham Menon film, Vinnai Thaandi Varuvaaya. The movie went on to become a commercial and critical success. If there is a hall of fame for iconic women characters, Jessie definitely gets a place there. Years after Jessie waltzed into the audience's hearts, Krishnan returns with another iconic performance as the long lost girlfriend Jaanu, in Vijay Sethupathi starrer 96 and has the audience swooning again.

With her iconic looks and roles, Trisha Krishnan continues to be a trendsetter, a performer par excellence and the eternal sweetheart in the hearts of the audience. A generation of female actors must be thankful to Trisha for breaking the myth that an actress's career is always short-lived. Trisha Krishnan is definitely here to stay, slay and rule!

“With her iconic looks and roles, Trisha Krishnan continues to be a trendsetter, a performer par excellence”



PHOTOGRAPH: KIRAN SA

TRANSFORMING SPACES HROUGH DESIGN

VINITA CHAITANYA,
INTERIOR DESIGNER

This 53 year old, Bengaluru based interior designer, who runs her own design firm, Prism, is definitely a force to reckon with. She is a familiar face in all the popular architecture magazines. Her Instagram page is a haven for design & architecture aficionados. She travels the world in search of inspiration. Her interior ideas are always a class apart. So much so that some of the top corporate, fashion, movie and sports people have had their homes designed by Vinita Chaitanya.

Today her clientele includes the likes of Vijay Mallya, Prakash Padukone, Deepika Padukone, V.G. Siddhartha, Kiran Mazumdar Shaw, Narayana Murthy and Jitu Virwani. But the seeds for this were sown 20 years ago, when she began working with the Oberoi group in the design department. One of her first projects was designing Vijay Mallya's Mc Dowells office on Cunningham road, Bengaluru. And there has been no looking back ever since.

Chaitanya travels regularly to Milan, Paris, London and New York to stay ahead of the latest trends in interior design, furniture and other home accessories. Her innate sense of style reflects in all her work. She enjoys bringing Indian motifs and artifacts into contemporary setups and gives a contemporary yet classic flavour to the space.

Replete with paintings, vintage artefacts, hardwood floors, carved mirrors and printed wallpapers, her resplendent studio located in Bengaluru is a testament to her signature style. Chaitanya is also not one to shy away from challenges. As soon as she had finished working on Deepika Padukone's fabulous home in Mumbai, she asked Vinita to do her vanity van. Chaitanya quickly buckled up for the challenge of designing an aesthetic yet convenient vanity van that could be Chaitanya's home away from home.

Chaitanya's love for empty spaces and unique sense of style lends her the ability to transform any space into an aesthetic and ergonomic haven. Being cooped up in her Coorg home for the lockdown, having a busy day at the buzzing Bengaluru studio or soaking up the culture in a workcation abroad , Vinita Chaitanya does keep the creativity flowing.

“She enjoys bringing Indian motifs and artifacts into contemporary setups and gives a contemporary yet classic flavour to the space.”



PHOTOGRAPH: RATHEESH SUNDARAM/BCCL

FASHION, THE ROYAL WAY

VINITA PITTIE
FASHION DESIGNER

Vinita Pitties's business is tucked away in one of the narrow lanes in Begum Bazar but her iconic designer clothes put Hyderabad on the fashion map way back in the 80's. She still runs her business from the 250 year old ancestral home, Raja Bahadur Motilal Haveli, the legacy of her forefathers who were financiers to the Nizams.

Pittie got married very early at the age of 16; Back then a lot of people would also make fun of her fashion sense. But with the constant encouragement of her husband and family, she took her first steps into the fashion industry. Her first exhibition in Kolkata was a superhit. The signature mull khada dupattas sold out within no time and there has been no looking back since then. After her success in Kolkata, they tried to enter the fashion capital of the country, Mumbai. Even without advertising all her clothes would sell out instantly. People would wait on the pavements until the store was opened. Within a short span of time, Vinita Pittie had become a fashion sensation all over the country.

Pittie's fashion sense is a mix of classic and contemporary styles. She incorporates traditional fabrics such as Andhra Khadi Banaras and pure muslin and traditional prints such as Uppada, Ikat and Pochampally regularly in her outfits. She designs her pieces in such a way that people can mix and match to derive the maximum outcome from a certain outfit. Customers can wear the dupatta with a different outfit or the blouse with another saree. When she first set up shop in Hyderabad, the city had very limited resources for designers and for every little thing she had to make trips to Mumbai. But as the city grew, Hyderabad became a sought-after place for designers and today it houses some of the best fabrics in the country. Pittie showcases her collections in exhibitions across the country such as Mumbai, Delhi and Kolkata. She has also worked for various Miss India shows in the '80s and '90s.

While the fashion field has gotten extremely competitive with boutiques and designers cropping up in every corner of the country, Vinita Pittie is comfortable in her success, only designing outfits that she would buy herself. And that is the advice she gives to budding fashion designers too.

> "Vinita Pittie designs her pieces in such a way that one can mix & match to derive maximum outcome from a certain outfit."



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SKIN CARE SOLUTION UNDER ONE ROOF

CHAITANYA KENCHAMMANAHOSKOTE,
FOUNDER, MAYA MEDI SPA

An aesthetics medical spa specialising in micro treatments, Maya Medi Spa founded by Chaitanya Kenchammanahoskote, offers a whole new take on beauty routines. Bengaluru girl Kenchammanahoskote has always been passionate about skincare and is the name of recon within the aesthetics dermatology industry. With a decade of expertise in this field, she laid the foundation of Maya Medi Spa in the US which is known for the most advanced cosmetic and medical procedures that includes skincare and leading-edge medical spa services.



Maya is one of the most successful stand-alone medical spas in the US offering scientifically advanced skin treatments, procedures, and products that deliver age-defying results, It is a hybrid skincare bar that specializes in micro treatments and CoolSculpting along with a bouquet of sessions to address all woes of anti-ageing, body sculpting and glowing skin.After receiving phenomenal success in the US, Maya Medi Spa debuted in Bengaluru last year. After years of thorough research, Kenchammanahoskote put together treatments that address the woes of Indian skin and body type.

Maya has won the trust of customers in just one year since the launch, with most of her customer base from the southern states like Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. A brainchild of Chaitanya Kenchammanahoskote, Maya Medi Spa Bengaluru is the go-to-skin care centre for several renowned celebrities and skincare junkies.

THE MAN BEHIND ICONIC EVENTS

CILVIN J. ,
FOUNDER & BRAND HEAD, EVOKE MEDIA

An engineer turned entrepreneur, Cilvin started his entrepreneurship journey immediately after his graduation with 'iThoughtz Technologies', a tech company. When his first company failed, he took it in stride and quickly bounced back with Evoke Media, an entertainment, media and communication company that has taken the events & advertising industry by a storm with their large scale projects.

Cilvin was always inclined towards creative branding and to help enterprises grow using the latest trends in advertising, branding and event management. In a span of 10 years, Evoke Media has become synonymous with large scale Sportainment, Corporate and Government events such as the Special Olympics International Football Championship 2019, 2nd India-China informal Summit and the DEFEXPO 2018.

Evoke Media headed by Cilvin successfully executed the protocol and cultural arrangements at the second India- China Informal Summit that took place in the presence of Chinese President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Chennai. They played a vital role in the event and media publicity for the DEFEXPO 2018 and formulated a digital awareness campaign along with the State Government of Tamil Nadu to raise awareness about diseases like Dengue, Measles and Rubella and successfully executed the world's largest organ donation awareness drive with state-wide campaigns, promotional activities and marathons.



TRANSFORMING THE INTERNET LANDSCAPE

VENKATESH C.R.,
MANAGING DIRECTOR AND CEO OF DOT COM INFOWAY

Two decades back, Venkatesh C.R. entered the Internet space with his first venture, at a time when the Internet was still a very distant dream for many in India. But Venkatesh realised the potential of the Internet as a catalyst that can transform entrepreneurship and bring brands closer to the audience like never before. Over the years, his sheer passion for technology and entrepreneurship has kept him going even as he traversed difficult roads in the journey. He was instrumental in bringing Internet to Madurai when he was serving as the president of the Internet Users Community of India, Madurai Chapter



In 1996, Venkatesh started CRV Infotech, a web design company with just 5 employees. From hiring his core team to raising the business capital, he was completely hands-on in every step of the way.

In 2000, he started Dot Com Infoway which is now a premier IT company with a 300 + employee team, engaged in application development, web development and Internet marketing to clients across the globe. He is also the co-founder of the media initiative Galatta.com which started out as a passion but soon it became the #1 Movie Portal in South India. He also is the co-founder of Magzter, the world's largest digital newsstand with thousands of magazines and newspapers in its catalogue

In the years to come, Venkatesh hopes to stay ahead of the curve; continue steering his organisation forward, navigating through the digital ocean and expanding the digital horizon for everyone.

BEAUTY FASHIONED **WITH SURGICAL PRECISION**

DR. KARISHMA KAGODU,
FOUNDER, DR. KARISHMA AESTHETICS, INDIRANAGAR, BENGALURU

Bengaluru's own cosmetic surgeon Dr. Karishma Kagodu is one of the most sought after aesthetic surgery practitioners in the country. She credits her mother and the 3 values that she followed all her life - Passion, Persistence and Perfection which laid the foundation for Dr. Karishma Aesthetics. It is transforming the lives of many by making cosmetic & plastic surgery accessible to people from all walks of life.



Karishma was fascinated by beauty and fashion from a very young age. Her passions converged when she chose to do her specialisation in plastic surgery. She passed out with a gold medal and subsequently put herself through advanced training in the different aspects of cosmetic surgery.

In 2019, she started Dr. Karishma Aesthetics (a state of the art, all-inclusive cosmetic day care centre for cosmetic/plastic surgery, facial aesthetics, dermatology, skin lasers, medi facials and cosmetic dental treatments). Advanced technology such as the VASER Liposculpting for Body Contouring, SilkPeel Dermal Infusion Medifacial and the Alma Soprano Titanium laser hair reduction devices were launched for the first time in Bangalore, only at their facility.

The ambience of the clinic is very welcoming and comforting like a spa; in other words, the complete ant-thesis of a clinic. Dr.Karishma consults with the patients, discusses expectations and possibilities so that they are completely satisfied with the treatment and transformation. As a woman plastic & cosmetic surgeon and entrepreneur, Karishma realises that she is part of a small & exclusive club in India. She now has her eyes on making her brand a pan India household name and helping people transform their bodies through a relaxed, confidential and luxurious experience.

CHANGING THE WORLD **ONE SMILE AT A TIME**

DR. KIRUBAHARAN, MDS,
DIRECTOR, OPAL DENTISTRY

Opal dentistry, an exclusive cosmetic dental clinic specialized in Invisalign headed by Dr. Kirubaharan, a celebrity dentist and Orthodontist had the dream of transforming smiles into healthy desired ones by his unique visionary of turning patient's virtually dreamt smile into reality based on scientific grounds.

They are the first dental clinic in Tamil Nadu to be equipped with In-office 3D iTero scanner for Invisalign and digital smile designing along with Opg and laser therapy. Dr. Kirubaharan had travelled extensively to countries such as Australia and Japan to learn the most up to date latest advancements in dentistry and inculcates in daily practice at Opal Dentistry.

It is the first and only dental clinic in South India with Diamond Status for Invisalign. Invisalign are invisible braces imported from the USA to align teeth.

Opal dentistry is the renowned go- to place for smile designing and correction treatment. Over the years, they have Styled thousand of Smiles, including top models and celebrities.

Opal dentistry has received several prestigious awards which includes , Best quality practice from World dental and oral Heath congress London 2017, Best smile designer award from World dental congress in 2019, Famdent clinic of the year recognition in 2019.

Opal dentistry has many branches in South India,two branches in the heart of the Chennai - Nungambakkam and Guindy, Coimbatore and Bangalore.

Dr. Kirubaraharan envisions to expand Opal Dentistry to many more cities across India and making World Class dentistry accessible to everyone.



COMPASSION THROUGH MEDICINE

DR. REPUBLICA SRIDHAR,
MANAGING TRUSTEE AND THE MEDICAL DIRECTOR,
RMD PAIN RELIEF AND PALLIATIVE CARE

Republica Sridhar witnessed old, terminally-ill people suffer from a poor quality of life without caregivers or pain management treatment. Their pain and helplessness pushed her towards starting RMD Pain Relief and Palliative Care in 1994. "Pain is Universal, Why can't the treatment be universally accessible too?" This is the question that led Dr. Sridhar towards palliative medicine and work towards making it affordable for all.



Back then, it was a 20 bed nursing home that offered affordable healthcare and homecare for elderly people & terminally ill patients. She soon realised that the financial situation of a person played a major role in the nature of care they received. This further motivated her to start the RMD Pain Relief and Palliative Care Trust to offer free healthcare to underprivileged patients.

RMD is now a 110 bed facility with hospital and hospice care facilities in Madurai, Maduravoyal, Sriperumbudur and Chennai. They also train rural and urban youngsters from economically backward families and employ them as caregivers and geriatric nurses. Palliative care in India has come a long way but there is always the need for more trained professionals in the field. This is possible only through sensitisation and training programmes for medical professionals to integrate pain management, palliative care and geriatric care with healthcare hospitals and provide a better quality of life to all patients.

ENHANCING THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

SENTHIL SUNDRAM,
CEO, LIVE GRAND HOTELS, INDIA

Senthil Sundram's hands-on experience in luxury hotels and resorts across the globe gives him a definite edge in managing and running hotels & resorts. He is also quite an expert at business consultation; he has turned around many loss-making hotels and conceptualised resorts and hotels from scratch. Live Grand Hotels, co-founded by Sundram, now has 25 + properties across South India in locations such as Munnar, Vagamon, Thekkady, Valparai, Mysuru, Bengaluru and Yercaud.



Between 2003-2007, he was instrumental in opening about 27 properties across Capetown, Doha, Durban, Muscat, Riyadh, Abu Dhabi and Sharjah. After a few more hotel stints abroad, Sundaram returned to India where he co-founded the Live Grand Hotels and there has been no looking back since then. Their first project was a luxury resort in Yercaud started with the aim of transforming Yercaud into something more than a weekend destination.

Each property of Live Grand offers a unique experience such as interacting with pets, adventurous night safaris on jeeps, bison watching, bird watching and a lot more. One of their properties, Ud's Coco in Udumalpet, offers capsule style rooms that reminds us huge water pipes between cities. From business class hotels to laid back resorts and adventurous stays, Live Grand Hotels caters to different sections of audience through their ventures. Senthil Sundram strongly believes the hotel industry is reeling from the pandemic setback quickly and targets opening 100 hotels by next year.