

# HUES OF LIFE

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**PADMA SHRI. PROF. DR. A. MARTHANDA PILLAI  
A LUMINARY IN NEUROSURGERY AND PUBLIC HEALTH**

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# Contents

08

**PADMA SHRI. PROF. DR. A. MARTHANDA PILLAI**  
A LUMINARY IN EUROSURGERY AND PUBLIC HEALTH



12

**ANANTHAPURI HOSPITALS AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE**  
VANGUARD OF HEALTHCARE PIONEERING



16

**AUTOMOBILE ACCESSORY FITTINGS IN INDIA**  
ENHANCING YOUR VEHICLE WHILE STAYING WITHIN THE LAW

17

**VIZHINJAM INTERNATIONAL SEAPORT SETS SAIL TOWARDS GLOBAL PROMINENCE**

20

**EXEMPLARY BUSINESS & LEADERSHIP AWARDS 2024 E1**

22

**MSME EXCELLENCE AWARDS & EXEMPLARY BUSINESS & LEADERSHIP AWARDS @ INTERNATIONAL MSME DAY**



27

**KERALA'S TOURISM POWERHOUSE**  
THE ROLE OF MSMEs AND THE PATH FORWARD

30

**UNDERSTANDING IYCF PRACTICES**  
THE SAFETY NET OF YOUR BABY'S FUTURE

32

**ADI GROUP OF INSTITUTIONS**  
A HUB FOR QUALITY EDUCATION

34

**FROM VISION TO VOGUE**  
THE INSPIRATIONAL TALE OF PARAISO COMFORTWEARS

38

**REVOLUTIONIZING HOME HEALTHCARE IN THIRUVANANTHAPURAM**  
A SPOTLIGHT ON CARE TO HOME

40

**ALPHA HEAL**  
BRIDGING LUXURY AND AFFORDABILITY IN BEAUTY CARE

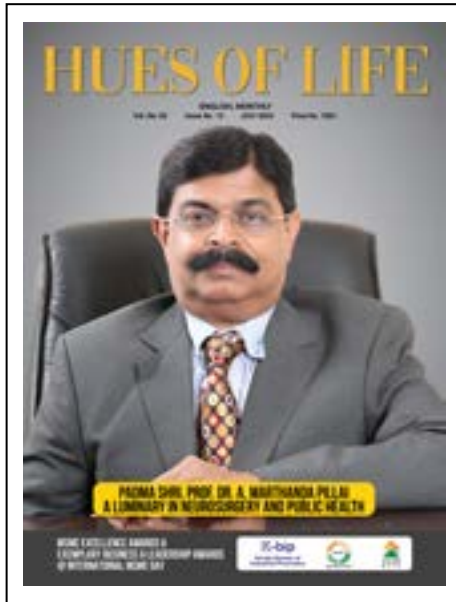
52

**AGAINST ALL ODDS**  
THE ARUN NAIR STORY

# HUES OF LIFE

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## Editor's Desk

Dear Readers,

July ushers in a wave of inspiration as we proudly present our special edition, spotlighting the dynamic world of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). On June 27, the Hues of Life MSME Excellence Awards and Exemplary Business Leadership Awards transformed the South Park Hotel in Thiruvananthapuram into a hub of innovation and excellence. This event, orchestrated by Hues of Life Magazine with the support of Kerala Bureau for Industrial Promotions (K-BIP) and the National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC), celebrated the outstanding contributions of MSMEs to our economy and sustainable development.

The evening shimmered with the presence of distinguished guests like Hon'ble Minister Shri Kadannappalli Ramachandran and MLA Shri Pramod Narayan, who honoured outstanding enterprises and visionary leaders. From Lifetime Achievement Award to Emerging Entrepreneur of the Year, the accolades highlighted exceptional dedication and innovation. The event also unveiled exciting initiatives aimed at nurturing future entrepreneurs and empowering local producers.

As we turn these pages, let's celebrate the resilience and creativity that define the MSME sector. Their unwavering commitment to excellence and social responsibility not only drives economic growth but also inspires us all. Here's to the visionaries and pioneers who continue to shape our MSME scopes. Enjoy this edition and join us in championing the transformative power of MSMEs.

Warm regards,

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# PADMA SHRI. PROF. DR. A. MARTHANDA PILLAI

## A LUMINARY IN NEUROSURGERY AND PUBLIC HEALTH

In the pantheon of Indian neurosurgeons, few names command the respect and admiration that Padma Shri Dr. A. Marthanda Pillai does. Renowned for his exceptional academic prowess, ground-breaking research, and unwavering commitment to advancing healthcare, he has carved an illustrious career spanning over five decades. His contributions to neurosurgery and public health have not only set new benchmarks but have also profoundly influenced medical practice across India and beyond.

Beyond his pioneering work in neurosurgery, Dr. Marthanda Pillai stands as the visionary founder, Chairman, and Managing Director of Ananthapuri Hospitals and Research Institute. Established in July 2005 in Thiruvananthapuram, this institution stands as a testament to his foresight and leadership in healthcare. Known for its excellence in tertiary care, Ananthapuri Hospital continues to uphold Dr. Marthanda Pillai's commitment to innovation and compassionate patient care, underpinning its role as a pivotal hub in the region's medical landscape.

### Early Life and Academic Journey

Dr. Marthanda Pillai's journey in medicine began at Thiruvananthapuram Medical College, where he graduated in 1969. His early career saw him joining the Kerala Medical Education Service as a tutor in neurosurgery in 1973. Driven by an insatiable quest for knowledge, he pursued an MS in Neurosurgery at the esteemed Christian Medical College, Vellore, completing it in 1978. The following year, he earned membership in the National Academy of Medical Sciences (MNAMS) in neurosurgery, signifying his growing expertise and commitment to advancing medical science.

To further refine his skills, Dr. Marthanda Pillai travelled to the United Kingdom, where he trained in micro neurosurgery and neuroradiology from 1980 to 1983. His dedication and expertise were recognized with a fellowship from the Royal College of Surgeons (FRCS), marking the beginning of a distinguished international career. During his time in the UK, he gained invaluable experience working alongside some

of the most renowned neurosurgeons, further sharpening his surgical skills and expanding his knowledge base.

### Professional Milestones and Innovations

Dr. Marthanda Pillai's tenure at the Government Medical College, Trivandrum, as Director and Professor of Neurosurgery, was marked by significant advancements. Under his leadership, the department underwent rapid modernization, introducing state-of-the-art equipment such as the Leica operating microscope, Midas Rex high-speed pneumatic drills, and multi-parameter monitors. His meticulous surgical techniques, especially in preoperative preparation, intraoperative handling, and postoperative care, drastically reduced infection rates and improved patient outcomes.

One of his notable contributions was the implementation of a three-dose antibiotic regimen, a pioneering approach that significantly lowered postoperative infections. His innovative methods, including craniofacial surgery and upper cervical spine surgery, set new standards and were instrumental in the evolution of neurosurgical practices in Kerala. These advancements not only improved surgical outcomes but also enhanced the overall quality of patient care, establishing new benchmarks in the medical community.

His expertise in craniofacial surgery allowed him to perform complex procedures with remarkable precision, restoring functionality and aesthetics for many patients. His pioneering work in upper cervical spine surgery addressed previously intractable conditions, offering new hope to patients suffering from debilitating spinal disorders. His contributions to these specialized fields have been documented in numerous publications, earning him recognition as a leading authority in neurosurgery.

### Leadership in the Indian Medical Association

Dr. Marthanda Pillai's influence extended beyond the operating room into the realm

of medical advocacy. As a distinguished leader in the medical community, he has been instrumental in spearheading IMA initiatives in Kerala. His exceptional dedication and leadership culminated in his tenure as the National President of the Indian Medical Association from 2014 to 2015. During his tenure, he led significant initiatives, including the protest against the proposed National Medical Commission Bill.

His leadership was pivotal in championing the rights and interests of medical professionals across India. Under his stewardship, the IMA undertook numerous campaigns to address pressing issues in the healthcare sector, advocating for policy changes that would benefit both practitioners and patients. Currently, he continues to lend his expertise and guidance to the organization at the senior advisory level, ensuring its ongoing excellence and influence.

His service as IMA President was marked by efforts to enhance the quality of medical education, improve healthcare delivery systems, and ensure ethical practices within the profession. Dr. Pillai's advocacy work underscored his commitment to creating a supportive and equitable environment for medical professionals, while also striving to elevate the standards of healthcare across the nation.

### Academic Contributions and Research

Dr. Marthanda Pillai's academic contributions are vast and varied. He has published 84 scientific articles in prominent national and international journals, and contributed chapters to eight textbooks. His research work spans a broad spectrum, including pioneering studies on transoral odontoidectomy with anterior fusion of the atlantoaxial joint, which he presented at the 40th Annual Conference of the Neurological Society of India in 1992. His modified technique of median corpectomy without fusion for cervical spondylosis, presented at the 49th Annual Conference of the Neurological Society of India in 2000, has been widely acclaimed.

He has also presented over 175 scientific papers at various conferences worldwide, reflecting his relentless pursuit of medical knowledge and innovation. His publication of the Drug Formulary, a ready reference book on rational drug prescription, has been a significant contribution to medical practice. This comprehensive guide has become an essential tool for physicians, promoting the judicious use of medications and enhancing patient safety.

His dedication to research has led to numerous breakthroughs in neurosurgical techniques and patient care protocols. His work has influenced the development of new surgical procedures, improved diagnostic methods, and advanced the understanding of complex neurological conditions. His contributions to the scientific community have not only elevated the field of neurosurgery but have



also had a profound impact on the broader medical landscape.

## Awards and Recognitions

Dr. Marthanda Pillai's exemplary contributions have been recognized with numerous awards. In 2011, he was honoured with the Padma Shri, one of India's highest civilian awards, a testament to his significant impact on the medical field and his unwavering dedication to improving healthcare. He was also awarded the B.C. Roy Award for his social service commitment during the earthquake in Bangladesh in 2015. Other accolades include the Dr. A.L. Sahney Award for Scientific Contribution in 1993, the Kerala State Government Best Doctor Award in 1998, and the Dr. M. Mathias Endowment Lecture Award in 1995. His orations, such as the Presidential Oration at the Neurological Society of India in 2005, underscore his stature as a thought leader in neurosurgery.

Dr. Marthanda Pillai's advisory roles at both central and state government levels underscore his pivotal role in shaping health policies and practices in India. As convener of the CII Healthcare Panel and a key figure in the All Kerala Private Hospital Association, he continues to drive impactful decisions that shape the future of healthcare delivery.

These numerous awards and roles reflect his exceptional contributions to medicine and his enduring commitment to excellence. Each recognition and responsibility serve as a testament to his hard work, innovative spirit, and profound influence on the medical community. His legacy is further solidified by the respect and admiration he has garnered from peers and patients alike.

## Role in Medical Education and Public Health

Dr. Marthanda Pillai has served in various capacities on at least 29 committees focused on public health and medical education. As Chairman of the Board of Studies in Medicine at the University of Kerala, he played a crucial role in shaping the medical curriculum. His contributions to medical education extend to his role as an Honorary Professor of Bioethics at SRM University, Chennai, and as the head of the UNESCO Chair in Bioethics at New Delhi. In these positions, he has been instrumental in promoting ethical practices in medicine and ensuring that future generations of medical professionals are well-equipped to navigate the complexities of healthcare.

His involvement in public health initiatives has also

been noteworthy. He has worked tirelessly to improve healthcare access and delivery, particularly in underserved communities. His efforts have included organizing health camps, conducting awareness programs, and advocating for policy changes to address public health challenges. His leadership in these areas has had a lasting impact, contributing to the overall improvement of health outcomes in various regions.

## Family and Personal Life

A dedicated family man, Dr. Marthanda Pillai works alongside his wife, Dr. Sornam.N, a chief consultant gynaecologist, and his children, who have also pursued medical careers. His daughter, Dr. Kamala.S, is a consultant paediatrician, and his son, Dr. Anand Marthanda Pillai, is an interventional cardiologist trained in the United States. The family's collective commitment to healthcare underscores their shared passion for medicine and their dedication to improving patient care.

His ability to balance a demanding career with a fulfilling family life speaks volumes about his character and values. He has managed to foster a supportive and nurturing environment for his family while also achieving remarkable professional success. His personal life serves as a testament to his ability to lead with empathy, integrity, and a deep sense of responsibility.

Dr. Marthanda Pillai's life and career epitomize excellence in neurosurgery and public health. His pioneering work, innovative techniques, and unwavering commitment to patient care and medical education have left an indelible mark on the field. As a visionary leader and dedicated practitioner, his bequest continues to inspire and influence future generations of medical professionals.

His impact extends beyond his immediate contributions to neurosurgery. His influence is felt in the broader context of healthcare, where his advocacy, research, and leadership have driven positive change. His dedication to improving medical practices and patient outcomes has earned him a place among the most respected and admired figures in the medical community. As we look to the future, Dr. Marthanda Pillai's legacy will undoubtedly continue to inspire and guide the next generation of healthcare professionals, ensuring that his contributions endure for years to come. His story is not just one of personal achievement but also of significant contributions to the advancement of medical science and public health, making him a true luminary in the world of medicine.



# ANANTHAPURI HOSPITALS AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE

## VANGUARD OF HEALTHCARE PIONEERING

**A**nanthapuri Hospitals and Research Institute (AHRI) stands tall as a premier institution in Asia, revered for its outstanding healthcare services and advanced medical capabilities. Established with a vision to provide comprehensive tertiary care, AHRI boasts a stellar team of top-notch medical professionals and state-of-the-art facilities.

### Excellence in Medical Disciplines

AHRI is distinguished for its excellence in a wide range of medical disciplines, including Neurosciences, Cardiac Sciences, Gastroenterology & GI Surgery, Nephrology, Urology, Paediatrics & Neonatology, Orthopaedics, Critical Care, and Obstetrics & Gynaecology. Each department combines cutting-edge technology with specialized expertise to deliver superior patient outcomes.

### Advanced Critical Care Unit

The hospital features a renowned critical care unit equipped with 13 ICUs, offering advanced treatments such as Navigation Guided Brain Surgery, Minimal Invasive Spine Surgery, and complex procedures like Aneurysm Coiling and AVM Embolization.

### Sophisticated Cardiovascular Centre

The Cardiovascular Centre houses a sophisticated Cath Lab capable of performing intricate cardiac interventions with precision. In the field of neurology and neurosurgery, AHRI provides comprehensive stroke care, advanced neurosurgical procedures, and specialized rehabilitation programs. The cardiology and cardiothoracic & vascular surgery departments offer state-of-the-art treatments for cardiac conditions, including minimally invasive surgeries and complex cardiac interventions.

### Comprehensive Nephrology Care

The Nephrology Department provides advanced treatments such as haemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis, critical care nephrology, and renal transplantation. It specializes in treating acute and chronic kidney conditions, infections, diabetic kidney disease, hypertension-related issues, cystic and stone diseases, inflammatory and hereditary renal conditions, poisonings, and pregnancy-related renal diseases. The department collaborates closely with urology and vascular surgery teams, supported by a multidisciplinary team of social workers, psychologists, dietitians, nurses, technicians, and transplant coordinators.



## Expertise in Gastroenterology & Hepatology

In Gastroenterology & Hepatology, AHRI delivers advanced diagnostic and therapeutic services for gastrointestinal and liver disorders. The Orthopaedics Department offers expert care for orthopaedic conditions, while the Urology Department provides specialized treatments.

## Preferred Destination for Medical Tourism

Located near Trivandrum International Airport, AHRI is a preferred destination for medical tourists seeking world-class healthcare. Tailored packages cater to international patients, ensuring holistic care and recovery in Kerala's serene landscapes. AHRI's holistic approach includes personalized care plans, advanced medical technology, and a focus on patient comfort and well-being. International patients benefit from seamless coordination, language assistance, and cultural sensitivity. The hospital's commitment to excellence and patient-centric care makes it a trusted choice for both local and global patients.

## Comprehensive Support Services

Beyond clinical excellence, AHRI provides comprehensive support services including Homecare Services, Health Check-up Packages, and 24x7 Emergency Services equipped with advanced life support systems. Its strategic location on the National Highway ensures convenient accessibility for patients from across the globe. Ananthapuri Hospitals and Research Institute continues to redefine healthcare standards with a blend of advanced medical technology and compassionate care. Dedicated to innovation and patient-centred healthcare, AHRI remains a beacon of medical excellence in Asia, committed to enhancing and preserving the health and well-being of all its patients.

## Robust Neurology and Neurosurgery Department

Ananthapuri Hospitals and Research Institute has a robust infrastructure that supports its wide range of medical specialties. The Department of Neurology is equipped with a comprehensive stroke care unit offering intravenous thrombolytic therapy for acute stroke. It provides treatment for various neurological problems with intensive neuro-medicine care support, including plasmapheresis for Guillain-Barré syndrome and myasthenia gravis. The department also offers paediatric neuro services, neuro metabolic and genetic screening lab services, routine EEG, video EEG, telemetry, nerve conduction studies, electromyography, repetitive nerve stimulation tests, evoked potential tests like VEP and SSEP, polysomnography, and invasive diagnostic procedures such as four-vessel cerebral angiography and digital subtraction angiography.

## Leadership in Neurosurgery

The Neurosurgery Department, headed by Dr. A. Marthanda Pillai, one of India's pioneering neurosurgeons, handles a wide array of neurosurgical cases, including micro neurosurgery, endoscopic surgery, aneurysm surgery, stereotactic surgery, microdiscectomy, and various tumour surgeries. This department is supported by a team of neurosurgeons, anaesthetists, and trauma care experts capable of managing complicated trauma cases. The fully equipped ambulance service ensures patient care extends beyond the hospital to wherever it is needed.



## Advanced Cardiac Care

Since its inception in July 2005, the Department of Cardiology at AHRI has been committed to offering state-of-the-art care for cardiac ailments. With periodic upgrades in equipment and skills, the department has evolved to provide comprehensive cardiac care. The cardiovascular centre is equipped with a sophisticated cath lab featuring advanced gadgets like FFR, IVUS, Rotablator, and IABP, enabling the performance of complex interventions. The Cardio Thoracic and Vascular Surgery unit mirrors this excellence, offering advanced diagnostic and therapeutic capabilities for a wide range of cardiac problems.

## Cardiac Anaesthesia and Critical Care

The Department of Cardiac Anaesthesia and Cardiac Critical Care is staffed with a highly skilled team of cardiac anaesthetists, intensivists, and perfusionists who manage long and complex cardiac surgeries with intraoperative transoesophageal echocardiography and ECMO standby for high-risk cases. The 10-bedded CTICU offers 24/7 coverage and is fully equipped to stabilize and manage complex post-cardiac surgery patients. The Centre for Heart Rhythm Disorders provides comprehensive care for patients with abnormal heart rhythms, syncope, and heart failure, offering diagnostic and treatment services, including pacemaker implants, ICD, CRT, subcutaneous ICD, and leadless pacemakers. The electrophysiology lab conducts curative catheter ablation procedures for all types of supraventricular and ventricular arrhythmias.



## Comprehensive Nephrology Services

The Nephrology Department offers outstanding clinical care for a variety of kidney diseases, including haemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis, critical care nephrology, and renal transplantation. The department's team is experienced in treating acute and chronic kidney conditions, kidney infections, diabetic kidney disease, hypertension-related kidney issues, cystic and stone diseases, inflammatory and hereditary renal diseases, poisonings, and renal diseases associated with pregnancy. The nephrology department works closely with the urology and vascular surgery teams to provide comprehensive care, supported by a multidisciplinary team of social workers, psychologists, dieticians, nurses, technicians, and transplant coordinators.

## Gastroenterology & Hepatology Excellence

The Gastroenterology & Hepatology Department at AHRI is a referral centre for patients across the state and beyond, offering early detection, diagnosis, and treatment of complex gastrointestinal, liver, and pancreatic diseases. The advanced endoscopy suite allows for complex endoscopic therapeutic procedures, ensuring top-notch care and outcomes. The Surgical Gastroenterology Department complements these services with a wide range of surgical interventions for gastrointestinal disorders, supported by a state-of-the-art modular operation theatre and a team of highly experienced surgeons.

## Advanced Pulmonology Care

In the Pulmonology Department, AHRI provides advanced diagnostic, therapeutic, and preventive services for managing respiratory diseases in adults. The outpatient division handles conditions like obstructive sleep apnoea, asthma, allergic rhinitis, COPD, interstitial lung disease, and bronchiectasis, while the inpatient division offers specialized care for acute respiratory problems or respiratory failure. The department's medical team includes internationally trained consultants, specialists, nurses, and technicians who follow stringent treatment protocols to ensure high-quality, evidence-based care.

## Leading Critical Care Department

AHRI's Critical Care Department was the first tertiary care centre in Trivandrum to establish an organized critical care unit, boasting a decade-long track record of treating seriously ill patients. The unit manages round-the-clock patient care under the supervision of senior consultants and supports seven different specialty intensive care wards. The department offers highly skilled, protocol-based management for various medical and surgical emergencies.

## Comprehensive Obstetrics and Gynaecology

The Obstetrics and Gynaecology Department at AHRI provides comprehensive diagnostic services and treatment for women with high-risk pregnancies. The department offers critical and multidisciplinary prenatal care for women and new-borns around the clock, ensuring a safe and nurturing environment for mothers and babies. The Infertility and Laparoscopy Department offers advanced diagnostic tests and treatments for male and female infertility, employing assisted reproductive technology to help couples conceive when natural methods fail.

## Renowned Orthopaedics Department

The Orthopaedics Department has been a reputed centre in South India for over a decade, providing international-standard treatment for all types of orthopaedic problems. The department is equipped with state-of-the-art machines, well-equipped operation theatres with laminar air flow, C-arm, and AO instrumentation, and the latest orthopaedic instruments and superior quality implants. The team of experienced consultants is available 24/7 to handle routine major surgeries, accident and trauma care, and specialized procedures like joint replacement, interlocking nailing, paediatric orthopaedic surgery, arthroscopy, minimally invasive plate osteosynthesis, and microvascular surgery.

## Comprehensive Urology Care

AHRI's Urology Department offers comprehensive care in all urological subspecialties, carried out with the latest equipment in a well-equipped department. The hospital's commitment to international standards ensures that patients receive the best possible care.

## Medical Tourism

Medical tourism is a significant aspect of AHRI's appeal, with Kerala becoming a preferred destination for patients seeking affordable and high-quality medical treatment. AHRI provides excellent pre- and post-operative care, allowing patients to recover in the state's serene environment. The hospital's strategic location near Trivandrum International Airport makes it an attractive choice for international patients seeking advanced medical care.

## Comprehensive Support Services

AHRI's comprehensive support services include home-care services, health check-up packages, ECHS, and 24x7 ALS & BLS ambulance services. The hospital's latest and most advanced facilities enable it to treat rare and highly critical conditions, offering world-class healthcare right at home. The deluxe rooms provide a soothing and panoramic view of the landscaped garden, ensuring a comfortable and serene environment for patients.

## Ready for Emergencies

The Emergency Services Department at AHRI is ready to respond to a wide variety of emergency situations, offering rapid intervention and quality care with dignity and compassion. The fully equipped ambulance service and specialized emergency nursing staff ensure that trauma victims receive immediate care right from the site of the accident.

## Strategic Alliances for Streamlined Healthcare

Ananthapuri Hospitals and Research Institute (AHRI) has forged strategic alliances with leading insurance companies and empanelled firms, ensuring streamlined access to premier healthcare services. These partnerships facilitate comprehensive coverage and financial ease for patients, underscoring AHRI's dedication to delivering unparalleled medical care. This robust network of affiliations highlights AHRI's commitment to excellence, providing patients with sophisticated, accessible healthcare solutions.

## Commitment to Innovation and Patient-Centred Care

Ananthapuri Hospitals and Research Institute remains dedicated to innovation and patient-centred healthcare, continuing to redefine healthcare standards with advanced medical technology and compassionate care. As a beacon of medical excellence in Asia, AHRI is committed to enhancing and preserving the health and well-being of all its patients.



**Ananthapuri Hospitals**  
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TOPGEAR

**A**utomobile accessory fittings have become increasingly popular among car enthusiasts in India. From adding a sleek spoiler to upgrading your audio system, the possibilities for customizing your vehicle are virtually endless. However, while these modifications can enhance both the aesthetics and functionality of your car, it's crucial to ensure that they comply with Indian regulations. Here's a guide to help you understand how to go about customizing your vehicle responsibly.

In India, car enthusiasts are always on the lookout for ways to make their vehicles stand out. Whether it's installing custom seat covers to add a touch of personal style or upgrading the audio system for a better sound experience, there are plenty of ways to enhance your car's interior. Exterior modifications are equally popular, with alloy wheels, body kits, and custom paint jobs giving cars a unique and personal touch. Performance enhancements, like upgraded exhaust and suspension systems, are also in high demand among those looking to improve their car's handling and efficiency.

However, while the excitement of modifying your car is undeniable, it's essential to remember that not all modifications are legal. Indian law places strict guidelines on vehicle modifications to ensure safety and environmental standards are maintained. For instance, any modification that alters the basic structure or silhouette of the vehicle is generally prohibited. This includes extreme body kits and significant changes to the chassis, which can compromise the vehicle's safety and stability.

Lighting modifications are another area where enthusiasts need to tread carefully. LED headlights and taillights are allowed, but they should not be excessively bright or cause glare to other drivers. Reflectors are also mandatory as per the Motor Vehicles Act to ensure that your vehicle remains visible in low light conditions.

When it comes to performance enhancements, especially exhaust systems, it's vital to ensure they comply with the emission standards set by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). Loud and excessively polluting exhausts are not only illegal but can also attract hefty fines.

It's also worth noting that some modifications may require approval from the Regional Transport Office (RTO). Always check if your planned alterations need official sanction to avoid any legal complications. Additionally, any modification should be reported to your insurance company as it can affect your policy and premiums.

Customizing your car is an exciting journey that allows you to express your personality and preferences. However, it's important to strike a balance between personalization and compliance with Indian laws. By following the guidelines and ensuring that your modifications are legal and safe, you can enjoy the benefits of a customized vehicle without any hassle. Remember, responsible customization is key. So, ensure that every alteration not only meets your personal preferences but also adheres to the regulatory standards.

# VIZHINJAM INTERNATIONAL SEAPORT SETS SAIL TOWARDS GLOBAL PROMINENCE

**K**erala's vibrant capital city Thiruvananthapuram proudly announces the commencement of a trial run at the Vizhinjam International Seaport, marking a significant milestone in India's maritime capabilities. The trial run is set to begin with the arrival of the mammoth container ship, San Fernando.

San Fernando, operated by Maersk, the world's second-largest container shipping company, will be the first to arrive at Vizhinjam port with cargo containers. Maersk, a Danish company operating in over 110 countries, sent San Fernando from Hong Kong on June 22, 2024. The vessel's voyage included stops at Shanghai and Xiamen ports in China before it returned to Vizhinjam on July 1 with more than 2,000 containers from Xiamen. The vessel will reach the outer sea of Vizhinjam at 6 am on July 11 and approach the port on July 12. It will be anchored in the middle of the 800-meter berth in the harbour and will depart at noon on the same day, heading to Colombo.

The trial run aims to test and fix all systems, including automated cranes, before the port's commissioning. The ship's unloading will be handled by 23 cranes controlled by a navigation centre running software developed by IIT Madras, similar to air traffic control at airports. Containers unloaded from San Fernando will be transported to smaller feeder ships for distribution to other ports in the country.

Vizhinjam, positioned just 10 nautical miles from major international shipping routes linking Europe, the Persian Gulf, and the Far East, is set to become a strategic gateway for global trade. The port's infrastructure is designed for Megamax container-

ships, ensuring swift vessel turnaround times and streamlined operations.

The launch of Vizhinjam has garnered attention from industry giants, including Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC), APM Terminals, and Hapag-Lloyd, affirming its role as a pivotal global transshipment hub. The current 800-meter berth can accommodate two motherships simultaneously, with an initial capacity to handle one million 20-foot equivalent units (TEUs) and plans for expansion to accommodate up to 6.2 million TEUs.

San Fernando, built in 2014 by Daewoo Shipbuilding Company and registered in the Marshall Islands, measures 300 meters in length and 48 meters in breadth. The port can be fully commissioned once it receives electronic data interchange, recognition, custodian code, immigration check post clearance, and full clearance from NSPC.

Economically, Vizhinjam International seaport's operationalization represents a transformative milestone for India, enabling the domestic processing of transshipment cargo previously handled abroad. This shift promises significant economic benefits, job creation, and accelerated infrastructure development across Trivandrum and its environs.

Full-fledged commercial operations at Vizhinjam International port are just around the corner, heralding a new era of growth and prosperity for Thiruvananthapuram, cementing its position as a dynamic global trade hub. Vizhinjam International Seaport signifies not just a port but a gateway to unparalleled opportunities in global maritime trade and connectivity.



# DIGITAL PRODUCTS IN SBI

## TOWARDS EFFICIENT AND INCLUSIVE LENDING TO MSMES

**M**icro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are a vital component of the Indian economy, serving as a primary catalyst for job creation, innovation, and economic progress. On average, 15000 MSME units were registered annually in Kerala till FY 2021-22. Govt. of Kerala declared the year 2022-23 as the 'Year of Enterprises' to facilitate the formation of at least one lakh new MSMEs during the financial year. 1,39,840 Enterprises were formed during the year with an investment of 8422 Crore and nearly 3 lakh employment. Kerala's MSME sector has made a big leap by adding over one lakh ventures for the second consecutive year in 2023-24, taking the total number of newly set up units to 2,40,396 since the launch of the Year of Enterprises in 2022-23. The initiative also netted a total investment of ₹15,167 crore and created 5,09,740 jobs in the MSME sector in the last two years.

The call for 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' has emphasised the contributions of MSMEs to the country's economy through manufacturing output, GDP, exports, and employment generation. Deployment of gross bank credit to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) under priority sector lending during March this year stood at Rs 24.67 lakh crore, according to the latest data on sectoral deployment by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The credit deployment has grown by 19.2 percent from Rs 20.69 lakh crore in March 2023. Access to financing, however, is usually mentioned as a major impediment to MSMEs' ability to expand. According to several studies, SMEs have difficulty borrowing money because of their small size, lack of financial diversification, and weaker financial structures.

### What is Digital Lending?

Technological advancements may serve as the fuel for MSMEs, which are considered as the growth engines of developing nations.

Digital Lending is a remote and automated lending process, largely using seamless digital technologies for customer acquisition, credit assessment, loan approval, disbursement, recovery, and associated customer service.

### Digital Lending Solutions provided by SBI

SBI is a pioneer and market leader in SME financing, providing a comprehensive package of products and services to MSMEs to meet their requirements, such as cash management, transactions and credit needs for both domestic/export sales. The bank's approach to driving SME growth rests on three pillars: Customer Convenience, Risk Management, and Technology-based digital offerings and process improvements. With over 20 Lakh customers, the SME portfolio of ₹4,33,000 Crore as of 31st March 2024 accounts for nearly 13.41% of the Bank's total domestic advances. The portfolio registered a growth of 20.50% (YoY) in FY2024.

SBI is leveraging technology in business, designing products, streamlining processes, and improving delivery to monitoring. Bank has taken several initiatives to build an SME portfolio by implementing significant changes in the Product suite, Processes, and Delivery to ensure Ease of Banking. The YONO Business is a mobile banking application and integrated platform from SBI that offers banking services for businesses. It combines all the corporate banking needs by being a one-stop solution for the company. Bank is increasingly deploying advanced technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning and Business Analytics, to augment its product offerings, ensuring customer delight each time without exception. Pre-Approved Business Loan (PABL), The Business Rule Engine (BRE) and MSME Sahaj are some of such initiatives.

### Pre-Approved Business Loan (PABL)

PABL is an analytics-based product that identifies existing Current Account customers' eligibility for pre-approved loans based on their transaction history, with a loan amount of up to ₹20 lakh sanctioned through a simplified digital journey through YONO Business.

PABL scheme is Cash Flow Based digital lending and the loan amount eligibility will be based on trade related credits in Current Account which is to be arrived

at based on last 12 months credits in a Current Account maintained with SBI. Through Mobile Banking Application of the Bank, Yono Business or through Internet Banking, pre-approved offer is provided to the customer. Using the above mentioned interface, an eligible customer can accept the loan offer and also for provide various status updates. Documentation can be done either through manual or Digital Documents Execution (DDE). In FY 2024, SBI has disbursed more than 1 lakh PABL loans.

## The Business Rule Engine (BRE)

BRE is a single credit risk model developed for SME Loans up to ₹5 Crore, making the loan sanction process faster, innovative, and future-ready and enabling Straight Through Processing (STP) for all types of loan applicants, viz. New to Bank (NTB), Existing to Bank (ETB), New to Credit (NTC), Existing to Credit (ETC), as well as for Renewals. The BRE will handle the end-to-end credit process (loan journey) from existing application forms to appraisal formats to reduce TAT for processing the proposals.

The Model has been developed based on the Logistic Regression methodology wherein Regression will predict default events and model the influence of different variables on the applicant's creditworthiness. It uses digitally fetched and verifiable data (to the extent possible) as model inputs and to leverage different data sources like Bureau history, GST Returns, Income Tax Returns (ITRs) and Bank Statements. The model output provides Risk Grade and objective decisioning of Go/No-go/Refer to Credit for all new/existing applications. It assesses the Model-based limit for Cash Credit facilities to brownfield units, providing objective inputs for the assessment of credit limits to greenfield projects, viz. Cash Credit, Term Loan and Non-fund-based limits to sanction authorities.

In BRE, the Contactless Lending Platform (CLP) has been used as the front end to make the process of applying loans by MSME customers easier. The customer has two options to apply for the loans viz., Direct journey through CLP, where the customers can log in and apply for MSME loans on URL <https://www.psbloansin59minutes.com> and Branch User Assisted CLP journey on URL <https://www.psbloansin59minutes.com/banker>, whereby the entire loan process can be managed by the Bank Official on behalf of the customer.

BRE has been rolled out in SBI in November 2023 for loans above ₹10 Lakh and up to ₹50 Lakh in the first phase. The second phase for Loans above ₹50 Lakh and up to ₹5 Crore has been rolled out in the third week of March 2024. More than 15000 loans have been sanctioned under the scheme so far with new connections constituting nearly 45% of the total sanctions.

## MSME Sahaj

MSME SAHAJ Seller's Invoice Financing on YONO Business by providing digital loans and financing of GST invoices. With the new web-based solution, the Bank's customers can avail finance against their Goods and Service Tax (GST) registered sales invoices of up to ₹1 lakh in less than 15 minutes. The purpose of the product is to provide "on tap" short-term credit for working capital needs to MSME units that are part of the GST regime. MSME Sahaj is a data-driven invoice financing credit assessment engine that will provide end-to-end solutions - from applying the loan to documentation and disbursement of the sanctioned loan. The closure of the loan on the due date is also automated and is carried out by the system itself. The product is based on a machine learning model and uses authentic data footprints from GST Identification Number, Customers' Bank Statements and CIC (credit information company) data base etc.

## Electronic Dealer Finance Scheme (e-DFS)

By leveraging state-of-the-art technology and branch network, SBI continues to be a major player in Supply Chain Finance, strengthening its relationship with the corporate world across various sectors. SBI has extended supply chain finance to more than 35000 dealers with total sanctioned limits of over ₹50000 Crore.

## e-Mudra

This loan aims to assist micro businesses in India. This loan supports and promotes new businesses and micro business owners offering easy credits to those individuals involved in various sectors, including manufacturing, services and trade. Maximum eligible Loan amount is Rs.1.00 Lakh and instant availability of loans up to Rs.50,000/- based on the Bank's eligibility norms. Customers can apply for this loan through the portal <https://emudra.bank.sbi:8044/emudra>.

## Way Forward

Among the 64 million MSMEs in the country, less than 20% have access to formal credit. The digital adoption is expected to bridge this gap faster and bring more units to formal lending platforms. The lending experience could be significantly enhanced in the future by investing in strategic skill sets, utilising data promptly, and implementing technology quickly. The products in SBI detailed above are crafted with the vision of providing MSME units faster and easier finance using digital mode in the end to end journey.



# EXEMPLARY BUSINESS & LEADERSHIP AWARDS 2024 E1



**PADMA SHRI PROF. DR. A MARTHANDA PILLAI,**  
CMD, ANANTHAPURI HOSPITALS AND  
RESEARCH INSTITUTE  
**LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**



**SHRI. M S FAIZAL KHAN**  
MANAGING DIRECTOR – NIMS MEDICITY PRO  
CHANCELLOR-NOORUL ISLAM UNIVERSITY  
**ICONIC BUSINESS LEADERSHIP**



**SHRI. S JYOTHIS CHANDRAN**  
CHAIRMAN, JYOTHIS CENTRAL SCHOOL  
**EDUCATORS' BEACON AWARD**



**SHRI. MUKESH M NAIR**  
CEO – BRANDING KING  
(FOOD, TRAVEL & LIFESTYLE INFLUENCER)  
**OUTSTANDING BRAND-  
BUILDING INFLUENCER**



**DR. ROBIN RADHAKRISHNAN**  
**MOST VIBRANT INFLUENCER OF THE YEAR**



**STATE BANK OF INDIA**  
**HIGHEST LOAN DISBURSEMENT FOR MSMEs**



**CANARA BANK**  
**MOST PREFERRED BANK FOR MSMEs**



**KERALA FINANCIAL CORPORATION**  
**EXCELLENCE IN FINANCIAL SCHEMES FOR MSMEs**



**URBANSCAPE PROPERTIES BY BHIMA**  
**BEST CUSTOMER-CENTRIC BUILDER**



# MSME EXCELLENCE AWARDS & EXEMPLARY BUSINESS & LEADERSHIP AWARDS @ INTERNATIONAL MSME DAY



**G**lobal MSME Day, observed annually on June 27 under the auspices of the United Nations, celebrates the unparalleled contributions of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to the global economy. On June 27, 2024, the second edition of the Hues of Life MSME Excellence Awards and Exemplary Business Leadership Awards took place at the prestigious South Park Hotel in Thiruvananthapuram. Organized by Hues of Life Magazine and supported by Kerala Bureau for Industrial Promotions (K-BIP) and National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) as the knowledge Partner, the event highlighted the pivotal role MSMEs play in fostering sustainable development and economic growth. The ceremony honoured the remarkable achievements of distinguished leaders and innovators in the MSME sector, celebrating their significant contributions to industry and innovation.

The inauguration of this year's MSME award ceremonies and presentations was graced by the esteemed presence of Hon'ble Minister of Museums, Ports, and Archaeology, Shri Kadannappalli Ramachandran. Distinguished enterprises from Kerala's MSME sector—including organizations, startup communities, service providers, and business estab-



lishments—were honoured on this prestigious platform.

As part of the MSME Day celebrations, a 60-day campaign aimed at inspiring and encouraging future generations of entrepreneurs was also launched. This ambitious campaign will be carried forward in collaboration with various trade associations and industrial centres. Additionally, NSIC organized a seminar titled “Innovation Waves: Sailing MSMEs to Success” to motivate and guide emerging MSMEs.

The distinguished guest, Shri Pramod Narayan, Ranni Constituency MLA, unveiled the logo for this year’s Hues of Life Women’s Conclave, titled “SHEROES SUMMIT: Recognizing the Hero Within Her.” He also emphasized the crucial role MSMEs play in the economy and the significance of socially responsible events to foster those. He com-



mended the winners for their dedication and praised the impactful initiatives undertaken as his words underscored the importance of recognizing and supporting the MSME sector for sustainable growth.

Alongside various MSMEs, individuals who have demonstrated exemplary social responsibility in Kerala’s industrial sectors were also honoured on stage. At the prestigious Exemplary Business and Leadership Awards, Padma Shri Dr. A. Marthanda Pillai, CMD of Ananthapuri Hospitals and Research Institute, received this year’s Lifetime Achievement Award. The Iconic Business Leadership Award was bestowed upon Shri M. S. Faizal Khan, Managing Director of NIMS Medicity and Pro Chancellor of Noorul Islam University. Although unable to attend, the nominees graciously accepted their awards.



**Shri. VIGNESH PRASAD**  
(BAKED CAKE SHOP)

**EMERGING ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR**



**FEMISAFE**  
**BEST WOMEN PERSONAL HYGIENE BRAND**



**ALPHA HEAL SKIN & HAIR CLINIC**  
**EXCELLENCE IN BEAUTY AND WELLNESS**



**ADI GROUP OF INSTITUTIONS**  
(ADI EDUCATION & MANAGEMENT SERVICES)  
**BEST EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE**



**PARAISO COMFORTWEARS**  
(WEAVEMONKS COMFORT LIFESTYLE LLP)  
**EMERGING FASHION BRAND**  
(CASUAL & COMFORT WEARS)



**LA POSH**  
**EXCELLENCE IN INTERIOR SOLUTIONS**

Shri S. Jyothis Chandran, Chairman of Jyothis Central School, was honoured with The Educators' Beacon Award. Additionally, Shri Mukesh M. Nair, esteemed food, travel, and lifestyle vlogger, and CEO of Branding King, received the award for Outstanding Brand-Building Influencer. Mukesh M. Nair also unveiled the logo for DEAL MACHAN, a dedicated launchpad designed to provide exclusive benefits and privileges to members of Motoraid Privilege Club, Kerala's premier automobile club platform.

Another distinguished Chief Guest of the event, prominent social media influencer Dr. Robin Radhakrishnan, unveiled the logo for HUES OF LIFE

ELEGANZA EXQUISITO, a fashion platform poised to offer substantial exposure to aspiring and established fashion professionals alike. Dr. Robin Radhakrishnan was also honoured with this year's Most Vibrant Influencer of the Year award for his significant impact in the realm of social media and fashion.

On this occasion, PEPINO AGRO TECH was launched, heralding a new era in bolstering fruit and vegetable producers across Kerala. This innovative initiative aims to foster Group Farming and High-Tech Farming while establishing robust support systems. It promises to provide comprehensive marketing assistance, remarketing plans, and

essential services to empower producers in the region.

The event was further graced by special guests including NSIC Chief Manager Shri Paul Bright Singh, SBI Deputy General Manager Shri Santosh Kumar, and Canara Bank Deputy General Manager Shri Ajay Kumar Singh. SBI was honoured with the award for the highest loan disbursement for MSMEs, while Canara Bank received the accolade for the most preferred bank for MSMEs. Kerala Financial Corporation clinched the Excellence in Financial Schemes for MSMEs award, and Urbanscape Properties by Bhima was recognized with the Best Customer-Centric Builder award.



**SHRI. ARUN NAIR**  
(UNSCO GLOBAL)  
**YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR**



**PROMPT UPVC WINDOW SOLUTIONS**  
(CITY TRADERS)  
**BEST SSI UNIT**



**GRAMEEN CRAFT**  
BY VEDIKA TRADERS  
**BEST GREEN INITIATIVE COMPANY**



**My NEST BUILDERS & DEVELOPERS Pvt Ltd**  
**BEST BUDGET CONSTRUCTION**



**JOAN & ADRY CHOCOLATE COMPANY**  
**MOST PROMISING BRAND**



**NEENU RATHIN**  
SOCIAL TOWN FOUNDATION  
**OUTSTANDING ACHIEVER - SOCIAL IMPACT**

Shri. Vignesh Prasad was honoured as the Emerging Entrepreneur of the Year, celebrated for his innovative leadership and entrepreneurial acumen. Shri. Arun Nair of UNSCO Global was recognized as a Young Entrepreneur, praised for his visionary achievements in business.

Neenu Ratin, representing Social Town Foundation, received the Outstanding Achiever for Social Impact award, commending her significant contributions to social welfare and community development.

Femisafe was applauded as the Best Women Personal Hygiene

Brand, highlighting its dedication to enhancing women's health and hygiene standards. Meanwhile, Alpha Heal Skin and Hair Clinic earned acclaim for Excellence in Beauty and Wellness, reflecting its outstanding contributions to healthcare and beauty care services.

Season Two Senior Living (A S Carehomes Pvt Ltd) was honoured with the Excellence in Senior Citizens' Care award for its exceptional services and commitment to elderly residents. Care to Home received recognition for Excellence in Medical Home Care Services, providing compassionate healthcare solutions.

My Nest Builders and Developers Pvt Ltd was awarded Best Budget Construction, recognized for consistently delivering high-quality projects within budget constraints.

Wallmark Ply (Star Plywood Industries) was esteemed as the Best Plywood Brand in Kerala, renowned for its reliability and superior quality products. Adi Group of Institutions (Adi Education and Management Services) received the Best Educational Institute award, acknowledged for its excellence in educational and management training.

Paraiso Comfortweares (Weavemonks Comfort Lifestyle LLP)



**NOVATO INTERIORS**  
**BEST INTERIOR DESIGNER**



**CARE TO HOME**  
**EXCELLENCE IN MEDICAL  
HOME CARE SERVICES**



**MANDI MANZIL**  
**BEST NETWORK OF RESTAURANTS**



**THANUZ BRIDAL BOTIQUE**  
**BEST BRIDAL BOUTIQUE**

emerged as an Emerging Fashion Brand (Casual and Comfortwears), introducing innovative designs in casual wear fashion. Tanus Bridal Boutique was celebrated as the Best Bridal Boutique, renowned for its exceptional service and bridal fashion expertise.

La Posh was acknowledged for Excellence in Interior Solutions, showcasing creativity and expertise in interior design projects. Novato Interiors was named Best Interior Designer, noted for its exceptional craftsmanship and design finesse.

Joan and Adry Chocolate Company was honoured as the Most Promising Brand, recognized for its innovative approach and quality in the chocolate industry. Mandi Manzil received accolades as the Best Network of Restaurants, celebrated for its culinary excellence and exemplary hospitality.

Prompt UPVC Window Solutions (City Traders) was awarded Best SSI Unit, praised for its outstanding performance and contribution to the small-scale industry sector. Grameen Craft by Vedika Traders was lauded as the Best Green Initiative Company, emphasizing its dedication to sustainable practices and environmental responsibility.

The selection process for the MSME Excellence Awards prioritized enterprises that demonstrate a strong commitment to social responsibility and inspire future generations. Each award was meticulously chosen based on comprehensive evaluations of business integrity, social impact, and growth trajectories gathered through public nominations at multiple stages. This approach ensured that only the most deserving enterprises received recognition for their outstanding contributions to both business and society.



# KERALA'S TOURISM POWERHOUSE

## THE ROLE OF MSMES AND THE PATH FORWARD



**DR. PRIYA PRASAD**

*Associate Professor and  
Head of the Department,  
Rajadhani Business School,  
Rajadhani Institute of Engineering  
and Technology,  
Attingal, Trivandrum*

India's tourism industry is a powerhouse, fueling economic growth and creating a wealth of employment opportunities. It's a key player in the "Make in India" initiative, attracting investment and accelerating development. Nestled within this vibrant sector, Kerala stands out as a jewel – a destination in Asia that captivates travelers with its breathtaking beauty and rich cultural heritage.

Tourism plays a central role in Kerala's economic prosperity. It generates valuable foreign income, promotes traditional crafts, and creates balanced development across the state. Tourism creates a wealth of employment opportunities, particularly in the transportation, hospitality, and trade sectors. The tourism sector in Kerala contributes around 10% to the state's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). It fosters cultural exchange, brings in revenue, and acts as a catalyst for building essential infrastructure, including high-quality hotels, luxurious resorts, excellent restaurants, efficient transportation networks (air, road, water, and rail), and modern healthcare facilities. However, the success story wouldn't be complete without acknowledging the pivotal role played by Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). These businesses form the backbone of the sector, offering a diverse range of experiences that cater to every traveler's desire.

### MSMEs in Kerala's Tourism and Hospitality Sector

Kerala's tourism industry thrives on the vibrant network of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). These businesses are the backbone of the sector, offering a kaleidoscope of experiences for tourists:

**Accommodation:** From luxurious Ayurvedic resorts nestled amidst swaying palm trees to cozy homestays that offer a glimpse into local life, MSMEs cater to all budgets and preferences.

**Culinary Delights:** Indulge in a gastronomic adventure with MSMEs operating restaurants, cafes, and street food stalls, showcasing the rich tapestry of Kerala's cuisine. Think fragrant curries simmered with fresh coconut milk, flaky appams soaked in stew, and a mind-boggling array of seafood dishes cooked to perfection.

**Unveiling Hidden Gems:** MSMEs manage and maintain many cultural and natural attractions, allowing visitors to explore the heart and soul of Kerala

**Seamless Journeys:** MSMEs provide a range of transportation options, making it easy for tourists to navigate Kerala. Rent a car and explore at your own pace, hop on a bike tour and discover hidden waterfalls nestled amidst the hills, or cruise the serene backwaters on a traditional houseboat, a quintessential Kerala experience.

**Adventure Awaits:** Thrill-seekers can embark on exciting journeys with MSMEs offering outdoor adventure activities. Trek through lush green plantations teeming with exotic birdlife, raft down cascading waterfalls, or embark on a wildlife safari in one of Kerala's many national parks, hoping to spot majestic tigers, playful monkeys, and a dazzling array of bird species



**Memorable Events:** Planning a destination wedding on a pristine beach or a corporate retreat amidst breathtaking landscapes? MSMEs include skilled event planners and venue operators, ensuring a successful and unforgettable gathering. Imagine exchanging vows with the turquoise waters of the Arabian Sea as your backdrop, or hosting a productive business meeting in a tranquil setting overlooking verdant hills..

**Travel Expertise:** Travel agents, part of the MSME network, act as your personal guide, facilitating bookings and crafting customized travel itineraries. Leverage their local knowledge to discover hidden gems, experience authentic cultural events like Kathakali dance performances, and create a truly personalized travel experience that caters to your specific interests.

**Souvenirs and More:** Take a piece of Kerala home! MSMEs operate souvenir shops selling handcrafted artifacts, traditional textiles like Kasavu sarees, and locally-sourced spices like fragrant cardamom and fiery chilies. Indulge in rejuvenating Ayurvedic treatments at wellness centers run by MSMEs, known for their holistic approach to health and well-being, or pamper yourself at a spa offering traditional massages and beauty therapies. By offering diverse services and personalized touches, MSMEs are the beating heart of Kerala's tourism industry.

### Challenges Faced by MSMEs in Kerala's Tourism and Hospitality Sector

While MSMEs are the backbone of the tourism and hospitality industry, they also face a unique set of challenges that hinder their growth and success.

**Seasonality and Economic Instability:** Kerala's tourist numbers fluctuate dramatically throughout the year, creating a boom-and-bust cycle for MSMEs. This seasonality translates to shaky income for staff, often leading to high employee turnover. MSMEs can implement strategies like offering discounts during the off-season and developing new, exciting experiences to attract tourists year-round.

**Taxation Challenges:** Kerala's tourism MSMEs are grappling with a complex tax structure that throws a wrench in their operations. The Goods and Services Tax (GST) applied to foreign visitors and the recently introduced Tax Collected at Source (TCS) for international travel packages, create a significant burden. Streamlining the tax system and reducing its complexity would be a major win for



While MSMEs are the backbone of the tourism and hospitality industry, they also face a unique set of challenges that hinder their growth and success.



MSMEs in the Kerala tourism sector.

**Skills and Knowledge Gaps:** MSMEs may not have the resources to invest in training programs for staff, potentially impacting customer service, digital marketing skills, and operational efficiency. Navigating the complex web of regulations and licensing requirements can also be overwhelming for small businesses.

**Marketing Challenges:** MSMEs in Kerala's tourism industry face a double whammy when it comes to marketing. Large corporations, with their overflowing marketing budgets, often dominate online spaces, making it hard for smaller businesses to get noticed by potential tourists. Additionally, MSMEs might not have the resources or expertise to leverage online platforms effectively.

**Operational Hurdles:** Reliable infrastructure is the foundation of any successful business, and Kerala's tourism MSMEs are no exception. Limited access to dependable utilities like electricity and internet connectivity throws a wrench into their operations. Disruptions in the supply chain can lead to shortages of essential goods and services, hindering the quality and efficiency MSMEs can offer. Investing in better infrastructure and building strong relationships with suppliers are crucial steps for MSMEs to overcome these operational challenges.

**Adherence to International Standards:** MSMEs struggle with meeting international benchmarks and complying with regulations, affecting their global competitiveness.

**Global Market Accessibility:** Limited capability and understanding of MSMEs to enter and thrive in global markets restrict their growth potential.

## The Goa Roadmap: A Blueprint for Empowering Tourism MSMEs

Emerging from the 2023 G20 Tourism Working Group meeting in Goa, India, the Goa Roadmap for Tourism MSMEs presents a groundbreaking vision for sustainable tourism growth. This roadmap isn't just a declaration; it's a practical guide for nations to empower Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) within the tourism sector.

The Goa Roadmap recognizes tourism's multifaceted impact on society, the economy, and the environment. It outlines five key areas, acting as building blocks for nations to align their tourism policies with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030:

**Green Tourism:** Promoting eco-friendly practices within tourism businesses to minimize waste and conserve resources.

**Digital Revolution:** Harnessing technology to enhance tourist experiences, improve marketing strategies for MSMEs, and streamline data management.

**Skills Development:** Developing and delivering training programs to equip tourism MSMEs with the necessary skills to flourish in a competitive market.

**Empowering MSMEs:** Providing targeted support and resources specifically designed to empower tourism-focused MSMEs.

**Destination Management:** Encouraging responsible tourism practices to ensure destinations remain attractive for future generations.

### The supportive Eco system suggested by the Goa Roadmap

The Goa Roadmap isn't just a set of lofty goals; it's a blueprint for creating a nurturing environment where Kerala's tourism MSMEs can thrive. Here's how it envisions a supportive ecosystem:



The Goa Roadmap isn't just a set of lofty goals; it's a blueprint for creating a nurturing environment where Kerala's tourism MSMEs can thrive.



**Financing Lifeline:** Unlocking resources by facilitating easier access to financing will be a game-changer. This could involve microloans, government grants, or preferential interest rates, allowing MSMEs to invest in growth and overcome financial limitations.

**Skilling Up for Success:** The roadmap emphasizes the importance of skill development initiatives and training programs. By equipping staff with the necessary skills in areas like customer service, digital marketing, and sustainable practices, MSMEs can enhance their overall efficiency and competitiveness.

**Champions of Responsible Tourism:** The Goa Roadmap promotes responsible tourism practices that benefit both local communities and the environment. This could involve initiatives that support local businesses, minimize environmental impact, and ensure cultural preservation. By embracing responsible practices, MSMEs can become leaders in sustainable tourism and attract eco-conscious travelers.

**Tech-Savvy Marketing:** The roadmap recognizes the power of technology. By providing support and resources for MSMEs to leverage digital marketing tools, they can reach a wider audience and compete more effectively in the online space. Imagine user-friendly platforms that help MSMEs create captivating online profiles, manage

social media presence, and implement targeted online advertising campaigns.

**Recognizing the MSME Powerhouse:** The Goa Roadmap goes beyond offering practical tools. It highlights the critical role MSMEs play in the tourism industry. This recognition serves as a motivator, encouraging MSMEs to continue their vital contribution and fostering a sense of pride within the sector.

By implementing these supportive measures, the Goa Roadmap paves the way for a brighter future for Kerala's tourism MSMEs. A future where they flourish, empowered by resources, skills, and technology, all while championing responsible tourism practices.

### Global Impact of the Goa Roadmap

The Goa Roadmap isn't just for G20 nations. It serves as a voluntary framework for any country looking to create a more inclusive and responsible tourism sector. By adopting its principles, nations can create a win-win situation for all stakeholders: tourists, local communities, and the environment. The Goa Roadmap empowers MSMEs, fosters sustainability, and paves the way for a brighter future for tourism

### Conclusion

Kerala's tourism and hospitality sector, powered by MSMEs, plays a pivotal role in the state's economic development. Despite the challenges they face, MSMEs continue to be the backbone of this thriving industry, offering unique experiences and fostering sustainable growth. The Goa Roadmap provides a comprehensive framework to empower MSMEs, promoting sustainability and inclusivity in the global tourism landscape. By addressing the challenges and leveraging the opportunities, Kerala can further enhance its position as a leading tourist destination in Asia, ensuring a prosperous future for its tourism sector.

# UNDERSTANDING IYCF PRACTICES

## THE SAFETY NET OF YOUR BABY'S FUTURE



**DR. KAMALA S**  
MD(Paed), DCH

FELLOWSHIP IN NEONATAL -  
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SENIOR CONSULTANT - PAEDIATRICS



**Ananthapuri Hospitals**  
AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE

**A**s parents, we always want our children to receive the best possible nutrition for optimal growth and development. But in this era, inadequate knowledge and incorrect feeding habits have led to the huge burden of overweight, obesity and related comorbidities among children. The 1st 1000 days of life in a child (from conception to 2nd birthday) is a window of opportunity for parents and paediatricians to pave a way for lifelong health, growth and development. The Infant & Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices target this critical period and aims at promoting correct understanding of optimal nutrition, when and how to introduce complementary foods and how to maintain a balanced and healthy dietary pattern in the pediatric age group.

### 1. Breastmilk- The Elixir of Life

The importance of breastmilk and breastfeeding have been preached time immemorial. Not only breastfeeding promoted a healthy bond between the mother and baby, but also breastmilk meets all the nutritional requirements of a newborn and boosts up a child's immunity and overall health. Hence IYCF emphasizes on promoting and supporting breastfeeding, which includes- early initiation of breastfeeding within 1 hour of birth, irrespective of the mode of delivery, in all babies who can suck and swallow; exclusive breastfeeding till 6 completed months of age; and continuing breastfeeding along with complementary feeding till 2 years and beyond.

### 2. Complementary Feeding- The Gateway to the World of Flavours

Complementary feeding, also known as weaning, is the gradual introduction of solid foods alongside breast milk or formula in an infant's diet, ideally beginning by 6 completed months of age, when breast milk or formula alone may no longer provide all the necessary nutrients for optimal growth and development. The goal of complementary feeding is to provide your baby a balanced diet that meets their increasing nutritional needs, while they are still maintained on breast milk or formula. However, complementary feeding is the weakest link in infant nutrition and needs better awareness and strengthening.

### 3. Practicing Active Responsive Feeding

Even though the recommended age for starting complementary feeding is around 6 months of age, every baby being unique, it's essential to observe their developmental readiness for accepting solid foods like:

- **Good head and neck control:** Your baby should be able to hold their head up and support their neck while sitting upright.
- **Improved coordination:** Your baby should be able to bring food to their mouth and swallow solid foods.
- **Interest in food:** Your baby should show interest in food and be willing to explore new tastes and textures.

#### 4. FATVAH- The 6 Attributes of Complementary Feeding

- **F- Frequency:** There should be a minimum meal frequency for giving solid feeds at each age group. For example, start with 1-2 times/ day and by 1 year of age reach 5-6 times/day (3 meals + 2 -3 snacks).
- **A- Amount:** Start with 1/4th cup and reach ¾-1 cup by 1 year of age
- **T- Texture & Taste:** Start as pureed foods (6-8 months) followed by lumpy foods (8-10 months), and then finger foods. Family pot feeding should be established by 1 year of age. The perfect consistency of semisolids is that it "should not fall off the spoon" and without added salt/ sugar initially.
- **V- Variety:** Start with a single-ingredient such as ragi, rice cereal or mashed banana, to reduce the risk of allergy or intolerance and to aid in easy acclimatisation. Gradually add-on new foods, one at a time, every 2-3 days, to monitor for any signs of allergy or intolerance. Ideally, in addition to breastmilk/formula feeds, 4 out of 7 food groups should be provided to the child every day, which is known as Minimum Dietary Diversity (MDD).The 7 food groups are: Cereals & Starchy foods, Pulses & Nuts, Dairy products, Egg, Fleshy foods, Vitamin A rich fruits and vegetables and Other fruits and vegetables.
- **A-Active Responsive Feeding:** Following infant cues and avoiding forceful feeding. Force feeding eventually leads to food aversion, thus destroying the entire process and balance. Also, create a relaxed and positive mealtime environment free from distractions.
  - **H-Hygiene:** Foods must be prepared and served in a hygienic manner. Practice hand washing with soap and water before feeding and after toilet usage.



#### 5. What more can be done for our children?

- Zero separation of mother and baby after delivery better breast feeding
- Say no to formula feeds, wherever feasible
- Promoting 'Annaprasan' ceremony at 6 months of age
- Proper micronutrient supplementation like iron-folic acid weekly regime
- Biannual deworming after 1 year of age
- Properly sterilised and safe drinking water
- Following the 'My Plate' concept of balanced diet including atleast 4 food groups
- Avoiding JUNCS- Junk foods, Ultra-processed food, Nutritionally inappropriate foods, Coloured and carbonated beverages and Sugary sweetened drinks
- Consult paediatrician early in case of any concerns/ illness
- Proper vaccination and health check-ups for children.

# ADI GROUP OF INSTITUTIONS

## A HUB FOR QUALITY EDUCATION



In a world where education is the cornerstone of progress, Adi Group of Institutions stands as leader, setting a benchmark in technical education. Since its establishment in 2014 at Valanjambalam in Ernakulam, this pioneering institution has rapidly ascended to international acclaim.

Initially established to cater to students aspiring for careers in engineering and polytechnic fields, the institute has grown to achieve recognition for its excellence in both technical and non-technical courses. This achievement reached a new milestone in 2017-18 with the establishment of Adi Group of Management Studies in Kochi, dedicated exclusively to management courses. Today, Adi Group of Institutions stands tall as one of India's premier training institutes, boasting the two branches mentioned above.

### Visionary Leadership and Strategic Expansion

The journey of Adi Group of Institutions began with the vision of Muhamed Shafi, a computer science graduate of 2011. Recognizing the scarcity of high-quality educational facilities in Kerala, Shafi leveraged his extensive experience in educational leadership to address this gap. He identified a critical need for institutions that not only provide superior education but also ensure viable career opportunities for students' post-school levels. This insight led to the inception of Adi Group of Quality Engineers, an institution dedicated to delivering exceptional technical education.

From its inception, Adi Group of Quality Engineers offered an array of specialized courses, including Diplomas in Oil and Gas Technology, Civil, Electrical, Safety, Software, and other technical and non-technical fields. The institute's growth is reflected in its expansion to multiple branches across Kochi, Thiruvananthapuram, Kozhikode, and Malappuram. Shafi's vision is supported by a dedicated team, including Bineesh Ravi as General Manager and Rahul Kumar as Trivandrum Branch Manager.





## Innovative Adaptation During Challenging Times

The COVID-19 pandemic presented unprecedented challenges for educational institutions worldwide. However, the leaders at Adi Group of Institutions turned this crisis into an opportunity. Demonstrating remarkable foresight, they swiftly transitioned to online learning by developing a proprietary app. This quick pivot ensured that education continued uninterrupted, even for practical-oriented courses.

Adi Group's innovative approach included meticulously filming practical sessions and making them available online, a strategy that proved highly effective. This adaptation not only maintained the quality of education but also attracted a significant number of new admissions. During the lockdown, the student body quadrupled from under 1,000 to over 4,000.

## Commitment to Student Success

Post-pandemic, Adi Group of Institutions has continued to expand its infrastructure and facilities, currently educating over 6,000 students annually. Two key factors set Adi Group apart: its transparent admission process and robust placement support. The institution prides itself on not making false promises about guaranteed placements. Instead, it focuses on genuinely guiding students to develop the skills needed to secure employment.

Each branch of Adi Group has a well-functioning placement cell dedicated to assisting students in finding suitable job opportunities. It's a fact that only about 20% of students enrol to bridge career gaps or for on-the-job studies, while the remaining 80% seek to secure employment through their studies. The courses are designed to maximize support

and ensure students are well-prepared for the job market.

## Ethical Approach to Education

Adi Group of Institutions stands out for its ethical approach to education and admissions. Prospective students are given a clear and honest overview of the courses and career opportunities available. Inquiry rooms in each branch provide visual demonstrations, helping students understand their strengths and potential career paths before enrolling. This honest, no-pressure approach has garnered trust and voluntary admissions, setting Adi Group apart from institutions that make misleading promises.

## A Bright Future Ahead

Adi Group of Institutions' commitment to quality education and genuine student support has made it a leader in the field. As Muhamed Shafi, the managing partner, asserts, the institution's goal is to provide 100% support to help students develop their skills and secure job opportunities. The focus is on honest communication and effective guidance, ensuring students are well-prepared to achieve their career goals.

In an educational landscape filled with lofty promises and inadequate delivery, Adi Group of Institutions shines as a model of integrity, innovation, and excellence. Its continued growth and success are a testament to the vision and dedication of its leaders and the unwavering support of its team.





# FROM VISION TO VOGUE

## THE INSPIRATIONAL TALE OF PARAIISO COMFORTWEARS

**P**araiso Comfortwears is the brainchild of two visionary Malayalee women, Devinandana from Muhamma, Alappuzha, and Helena Mary Thomas from Kattapana, Idukki. United by friendship and a shared dissatisfaction with the available maternity wear, they embarked on a mission to create an internationally recognized comfortwear brand. Their journey began during the tumultuous times of the Covid-19 pandemic, a period that sparked numerous entrepreneurial ideas across the globe. Amid this backdrop, Devi and Helena identified a critical gap in the market: the need for affordable, comfortable homewear and maternity wear that women could feel good in during pregnancy.

Choosing comfortable cotton maternity wear can be particularly challenging, compounded by the high cost of purchasing clothes for each stage of pregnancy, often unaffordable for the average family. Devi and Helena envisioned a solution: introducing good quality cotton comfortwear at prices more accessible than those of leading maternity wear

brands. With a keen eye for design and an unwavering commitment to comfort, they meticulously planned their designs, first in their minds and then on paper.

Recognizing that pregnancy is a time of significant physical change, Devi and Helena were determined that Paraiso comfortwears' clothing should enhance, rather than diminish, the self-confidence of the wearer. With this guiding principle, they meticulously crafted their business plans and ideas. Thus, the brand Paraiso comfortwears was born with a steadfast commitment to ensuring that every piece of clothing they produce is both comfortable and stylish.

The core philosophy behind Paraiso comfortwears' design itself is "Comfortably Presentable." Whether it's maternity wear, homewear, or outdoor casual wear, their goal is to ensure that the wearer feels both comfortable and confident. The primary focus group, women aged 18-40, are dynamic individuals who are not just homemakers but also actively participating in various economic activities, necessitating attire that is both ready and presentable.

Although Paraiso comfortwears began as a maternity brand, the founders have expanded the product line to include non-maternity homewear, adhering to the same principle of offering high-quality products at affordable prices. Today, approximately 60% of Paraiso's product portfolio consists of homewear, reflecting their commitment to providing versatile comfortwear for all women.

They were driven by the optimistic belief that the brand would thrive by seamlessly blending aesthetics with functionality in their homewear and maternity wear collections.



At Paraiso comfortwears, quality is paramount, upheld by a rigorous three-stage quality control process. The first stage involves a thorough inspection of materials upon procurement, selecting the best among the most. The second stage occurs during manufacturing, focusing on stitching and finishing. Finally, a third and final quality check is conducted before dispatch. These meticulous checks are performed manually to ensure the highest standards are met. Unlike typical homewear, which often features loose stitching, products from Paraiso comfortwears boast double-threaded stitches and cross-knitted seams, similar to those found in casual wears. This meticulous craftsmanship ensures that Paraiso garments are not only comfortable but also exceptionally durable.

At the inception of their dream venture, Devi and Helena began by selling their products through WhatsApp, capitalizing on the platform's direct and personal approach. To achieve profitability, Paraiso comfortwears needed to reach significant volume due to their strategy of offering products at affordable prices and lower margins. Social media became their key platform for this effort. However, building trust and converting followers into customers was crucial, especially given the widespread scepticism stemming from previous negative experiences with many brands offering social media purchases. The team at Paraiso recognized that gaining customer confidence was essential for driving sales. This realization led to the creation of their "NO DOUBT WHILE SHOP" policy, which included several strategic initiatives.

By starting their branding and sales online, they were able to achieve their goal of offering high-quality products at affordable prices. The Covid-19 pandemic further accelerated online sales, providing a timely boost to their efforts. Embracing the limitless possibilities of Instagram, they skilfully leveraged the platform to reach a wider audience. While Paraiso comfortwears also maintains a presence on other social media platforms, it was through Instagram that the brand truly gained recognition and traction.

As the exceptional quality of Paraiso's products became widely recognized, their cus-

tomers base experienced exponential growth. Despite the presence of an official website, positive feedback continued to flood in through personal WhatsApp chats, underscoring the brand's intimate connection with its clientele. By personally managing these interactions, Devi and Helena gleaned invaluable insights into their customers' preferences, desires, and suggestions, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and unparalleled customer satisfaction.

In the crucible of 2020, the seed of a visionary business idea took root in the minds of Devi and Helena, two relentless dreamers committed to birthing an internationally acclaimed comfortwear brand. Fuelled by their unwavering determination, they embarked on a journey to redefine comfort and style. As demand for their products soared and the need for a formal structure emerged, Paraiso transitioned into a fully-fledged comfortwear brand, officially launching its e-commerce website in September 2023. This pivotal moment marked a significant milestone in Paraiso's evolution, signalling its transformation from a mere concept to a tangible reality.

They integrated a WhatsApp Widget on their website, extending their pre-website launch sales strategy. This system combines semi-automated responses for frequently asked questions with personalized support from their COMFORT COUNSELLORS (chat support executives) available for at least 15 hours each day. This approach not only assists customers but also provides valuable real-time feedback.

In an industry-first move, Paraiso introduced





SIZE CHECKERS, available for Rs 100/- on their website. These checkers match the size measurements of their actual products, though made from different materials. This allows customers to confidently determine their size before making a full purchase, minimizing the risk of returns and enhancing the overall shopping experience.

Paraiso comfortwears also leverages their YouTube channel and Instagram Reels to showcase and explain the measurements and features of their models in detail. This visual reference helps customers make informed decisions and feel more confident in their purchases. Through these initiatives, the brand effectively bridges the trust gap, providing a seamless and reassuring shopping experience that converts social media followers into loyal customers. Garnering an impressive 4.9 rating on Google, Paraiso comfortwears swiftly captured the attention of a vast audience. Renowned for its impeccably stitched fabric and effortless wearability, Paraiso swiftly carved a niche for itself in the market, setting a new standard for comfortwear excellence.

This hands-on approach not only allowed them to refine their offerings but also nurtured a deep sense of loyalty among their clientele. Operating as a bootstrap venture, Paraiso skilfully reinvests its monthly turnover into fuelling subsequent growth, ensuring seamless and sustainable operations without encountering any significant challenges.

Presently, Paraiso's garment unit in Idukki Vanapuram, along with other packing houses, boasts a dedicated team of 25 staff members. However, fuelled by a relentless pursuit of excellence, plans are underway to expand unit

and diversify the product line. Anticipating the ever-evolving needs of their clientele, Paraiso comfortwears is poised to unveil two exciting new ranges: 'Miss Myrtle,' a collection of outdoor casual wear, and 'Paraiso Moms,' tailored for outdoor maternity wear. These innovative additions underscore Paraiso's commitment to offering versatile, comfortable solutions for every lifestyle.

Looking ahead, Paraiso has set its sights on expanding its footprint to North India, recognizing the nuanced differences in dress and dressing styles across regions. With a keen understanding of the diverse needs of consumers, the brand aims to tailor its comfortwear offerings to suit the preferences of North Indian consumers, ensuring a seamless fit in every geography. Furthermore, Paraiso has begun fielding inquiries from overseas markets, signalling its burgeoning global appeal and setting the stage for an exciting new chapter in its journey toward international acclaim.

### **Crafting Comfort: The Dynamic Duo Behind Paraiso's Triumph**

The formidable duo behind Paraiso, Devi Nandana and Helena Mary Thomas, demonstrated remarkable academic excellence throughout their educational journeys. Devi Nandana, armed with an MBA in HR and Marketing, embarked on her professional journey in the HR department of a leading NBFC. However, her ascent was momentarily interrupted by health challenges during pregnancy, preventing her from completing her probationary period as a management trainee. Undeterred, Devi re-entered the workforce after childbirth, only to encounter the disruptive force of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Meanwhile, Helena Mary Thomas pursued her passion for the sciences, obtaining a postgraduate degree in Physics and fielding lucrative job offers, including one from Wipro. However, driven by her insatiable thirst for knowledge, Helena opted to further her education, completing an M.Sc. and delving into the field of Geoinformatics. Despite her academic achievements, life's twists and turns-marriage, pregnancy and familial responsibilities-led her to put her career on hold. Undeterred, Helena ventured into entrepreneurship, launching a boutique in Vannapuram, a rustic hamlet nestled in Idukki, where her husband's ancestral home resided. However, the onset of the Covid-19 lockdown brought unforeseen challenges, causing the venture to fall short of her expectations despite her meticulous calculations.

Later, fate led Helena to discover a social media advertisement showcasing a team that supplied fabric to local artisans, who then sewed kurtis for distribution to various companies. Recognizing the opportunity to empower local women and foster economic independence, Helena rallied the community for the task of stitching kurtis. However, their hopes were dashed when the absence of a centralized area for manufacturing and the inability to enforce proper quality checks

resulted in the entire batch being rejected by the supplier, abruptly halting their promising endeavour.

Meanwhile, Devi found herself at a crossroads, resigning from her job for the second time amidst the tumult of the Covid-19 pandemic. Determined to chart her own course, she turned to reselling products like sarees and bed sheets through WhatsApp, leveraging her entrepreneurial spirit and knack for business.

It was during this pivotal moment that Helena reached out to Devi, her trusted confidante and kindred spirit. As their passions converged and their shared vision crystallized, the seeds of Paraiso Comfortwears were sown. United by a common purpose and fuelled by unwavering determination, Devi and Helena embarked on a journey to redefine comfort and style, birthing a brand that would revolutionize the world of comfortwear. Thus, the inception of Paraiso Comfortwears marked the beginning of an extraordinary partnership and an enduring legacy of innovation, resilience, and unwavering commitment to excellence. Quality, comfort, and customer centricity are the three keywords for Paraiso, encapsulating the core values that drive their brand forward.



# REVOLUTIONIZING HOME HEALTHCARE IN THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

## A SPOTLIGHT ON CARE TO HOME



**A**midst the shifting paradigms of healthcare, the demand for home-based medical services has never been more pronounced. Enter Care to Home, a premier healthcare provider based in Thiruvananthapuram near Ananthapuri Hospitals NH bypass, which is setting a new benchmark in delivering high-quality, affordable medical care directly to patients' residences. This organization epitomizes the confluence of compassion, competence, and cutting-edge technology, offering a plethora of services designed to cater to a diverse array of medical needs.

### Exemplary Healthcare Services

Care to Home distinguishes itself through an extensive suite of services, ensuring that patients receive the finest medical care without the inconvenience of hospital visits. Their offerings encompass physiotherapy, post-hospitalization care, wound dressing, catheterization, RYLES tube insertion, IV fluid injections, and comprehensive 24-hour nursing services. The meticulous attention to detail and unwavering commitment to quality are evident in every aspect of their operations.

### Operational Excellence and Accessibility

Providing round-the-clock service within a 12 km radius of Thiruvananthapuram city, Care to Home guarantees prompt and efficient delivery. Their 24/7 ambulance and emergency services further underscore their dedication to patient care, providing an essential lifeline during critical moments. The seamless integration of a robust network and an efficient platform facilitates prompt visits from doctors and healthcare professionals, reinforcing the organization's reputation for reliability and excellence.





## A Visionary Approach to Home Healthcare

The mission of Care to Home is unequivocal: to provide affordable healthcare services without compromising on quality. Transparency, agility, and technological integration are the pillars that support their operational framework, fostering an environment of trust and reliability. Their vision is ambitious yet attainable—to become a household name in the realm of home healthcare.

Central to Care to Home's exceptional service portfolio is their on-call doctor service, ensuring patients receive professional medical attention at their doorsteps with pre-booked appointments, supported by a dedicated team of doctors. Complementing this is their on-call laboratory service, offering convenient home sample collection, which is invaluable for the elderly, especially those whose children may not be nearby. Additionally, Care to Home boasts an in-house pharmacy, facilitating the home delivery of a wide range of medications, thereby underscoring their commitment to providing reliable, accessible, and compassionate healthcare solutions for the residents of Thiruvananthapuram. Through these integrated services, Care to Home is redefining the standards of home healthcare, ensuring that every patient receives the highest quality of care in the comfort of their home.

## Nursing Services Par Excellence

A cornerstone of Care to Home's offerings is its specialized nursing services, which mirror the standards of care found in sophisticated hospital settings. This service is particularly beneficial for patients who, while no longer requiring hos-

pitalization, still need ongoing medical attention. The certified and well-trained nurses at Care to Home deliver compassionate, high-quality care, ensuring that patients receive the support they need in the comfort of their own homes. This not only enhances the patient experience but also represents a cost-effective alternative to prolonged hospital stays.

## Core Values and Ethical Foundations

At the heart of Care to Home's philosophy are its core values of empathy, integrity, and teamwork. The organization's empathetic approach ensures a deep understanding of each patient's condition, while their commitment to integrity guarantees ethical conduct at every stage of service delivery. Teamwork is the bedrock upon which their effective and responsive home-based care is built, enabling them to consistently exceed patient expectations.

In an era where healthcare demands are increasingly dynamic, Care to Home stands out as a signal of innovation and compassion in Thiruvananthapuram. By bringing hospital-quality care to the home, they are not only enhancing the quality of life for their patients but also redefining the paradigms of healthcare delivery. As they continue to expand their reach and refine their services, Care to Home is poised to become synonymous with excellence in home-based healthcare.



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# ALPHA HEAL

## BRIDGING LUXURY AND AFFORDABILITY IN BEAUTY CARE



Jayakumar V. N's transition from the gold jewellery business to the beauty and healthcare sectors has been nothing short of remarkable. Having taken over the leadership of Chungath Jewellery, a traditional and revered gold jewellery brand, Jayakumar brought his business acumen back from Muscat, where he had previously found success. Expanding his portfolio, he launched Royal Chest, two exclusive showrooms in Thiruvananthapuram offering antique silver jewellery, further establishing his footprint in the market. However, his journey didn't stop at jewellery.

Observing that many customers purchasing gold for weddings also sought comprehensive beauty services, Jayakumar identified a new opportunity. Eight years ago, he introduced Thiruvananthapuram to the renowned Jawed Habib's hair and beauty franchise, catering to wedding needs and personal grooming. This venture flourished, revealing a broader demand for quality yet affordable beauty services.



## Alpha Heal: Democratizing Beauty and Healthcare

Thus, in late 2022, Alpha Heal Skin and Hair Clinic was born on the first floor of Chungath Jewellery near Ayurveda College on MG Road, Thiruvananthapuram. Alpha Heal represents Jayakumar's vision to democratize beauty and healthcare services, making them accessible to the broader public at competitive prices. Offering a range of treatments from hair transplantation to skin pigmentation, Alpha Heal has demonstrated that world-class procedures can be performed in Kerala without the exorbitant costs typically associated with such services.

Staffed by around fifteen specialists, including dermatologists and surgeons, Alpha Heal provides treatments such as hair loss prevention, hair regrowth, skin lightening, pigmentation correction, and advanced laser therapies for melasma. Alpha Heal also offers a modern dental care experience, focusing on personalized and gentle treatments in a friendly environment. From routine check-ups to advanced cosmetic procedures, their goal is to make comprehensive dental care accessible and comfortable for everyone.

The rapid success of Alpha Heal, marked by the opening of branches in Narmada Complex at Kowdiar and Kadapakada, Kollam, is an indication to Jayakumar's vision and commitment. In just a year and a half, three branches have been established, each embodying his dream of providing affordable beauty and healthcare services across Kerala. With around 65 staff members employed across the Jawed Habib franchise and two Alpha Heal clinics in Thiruvananthapuram, Jayakumar is also creating job opportunities within the region.

Looking ahead, Jayakumar aims to expand Alpha Heal's presence throughout Kerala, from Kollam to the northern districts. His ambition is not just to grow a business but to ensure that high-quality beauty and healthcare services are available to everyone, breaking the barriers of cost and accessibility. Through Alpha Heal, Jayakumar V. N is transforming the beauty and healthcare landscape in Kerala, continually extending his reach and impact across the region.



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 Ayurveda College, Trivandrum

**ALPHA HEAL KOWDIAR**  
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 Narmada Complex Kowdiar

# BAKED

## SWEET DREAMS BAKED FRESH

**V**ignesh Prasad, originating from Kollam Mayyanad, ventured into the bakery industry initially by supplying desserts for weddings across South and North Kerala. His journey began with providing desserts and starters to numerous caterers, gaining invaluable insights into the catering and service sectors. Regular interactions with caterers in Kollam further deepened his understanding of client needs and operational dynamics, laying a strong foundation for his future endeavours.

In 2018, Vignesh ventured into the juice business with 'Juiced' in Kottiyam. However, the onset of adverse weather conditions like Kerala floods led to setbacks, forcing him to close the venture. Undeterred, Vignesh redi-

rected his efforts and expanded his services to include supplying confectionery delights like popcorns, Bombay mittai and chocolate fountains for wedding receptions. With a commitment to enhancing his offerings, he invested in various types of machinery to bolster his capabilities in confectionery production.

As part of this expansion, he invested the remaining funds and established a small borma facility behind his residence in February 2020, dedicated to crafting brownies and pastries tailored to catering teams' requirements. Additionally, Borma started preparing puddings on demand.

Unfortunately, just as it began gaining traction, the COVID-19 pandemic struck, bringing the wedding industry—Vignesh's primary market—to a halt as restrictions tightened, adversely affecting his business operations. Despite these setbacks, Vignesh's resilience and strategic foresight would soon propel him towards new opportunities and growth in the baking industry.

During the pandemic, as people stayed home and sought comfort in indulgent treats, the demand for home-delivered cakes soared. Recognizing this opportunity, Vignesh pivoted his focus to his brand, Baked. Overseeing the baking process and adhering to stringent safety protocols, he ensured that each cake delivered not only met but exceeded customer expectations. His dedication paid off as Baked gained traction, attracting a loyal customer base primarily in Mayyanad, Kollam, and gradually expanding its reach across Kerala.

Embracing digital marketing strategies, Vignesh leveraged social media platforms and online channels to promote Baked effectively. This strategic shift not only increased brand visibility but also expanded the customer base, paving the way for his first outlet—Baked Cakes and Pastries at Kazhak-





Beyond business, Vignesh's diverse interests include solo travel and adventure sports.



kootam, Thiruvananthapuram. Despite entering a competitive market, Baked differentiated itself through superior quality and innovative offerings like the Timmy Tommy and Rudolph cakes, capturing the hearts—and taste buds—of local residents and visitors alike.

Buoyed by the success of the Kazhakkootam outlet, Vignesh continued to expand Baked's presence across Kerala. Additional outlets were established in strategic locations including Vellayambalam and Kottarakkara, further solidifying Baked's position in Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam districts. The opening of an outlet at Changampuzha Metro Station in Kochi marked another significant mile-

stone, underscoring Baked's ambition to broaden its footprint beyond its native regions.

Looking ahead, Baked is poised for continued growth with plans to open outlets in Balaramapuram, Kottayam, and Kozhikode. Future aspirations include expanding into Bangalore and beyond, reflecting Vignesh's vision to establish Baked as a leading brand in the regional and national baking industry. Each new outlet represents not only a strategic expansion but also a commitment to delivering exceptional quality and customer satisfaction.

Beyond business, Vignesh's diverse interests include solo travel and adventure sports. A certified paragliding pilot, he embodies an adventurous spirit that translates into his entrepreneurial endeavours. His dedication to excellence and customer satisfaction drives Baked's success, earning accolades and loyal patrons along the way.

Through resilience, innovation, and a passion for perfection, Vignesh Prasad has transformed Baked into a beloved brand synonymous with exceptional cakes and pastries. As he continues to navigate challenges and explore new horizons, Vignesh exemplifies the entrepreneurial spirit, driving Baked towards continued success and expansion in the competitive baking industry.

# INDULGE IN DECADENCE

## DISCOVER THE ARTISTRY OF JOAN & ADRY CHOCOLATES



JOAN & ADRY CO.

**W**elcome to Joan & Adry Chocolate Company (Joan Adry Co), where every bite is a journey into the heart of gourmet indulgence. Perched amidst the serene surroundings of Arakkunnam in Ernakulam district, Joan & Adry Chocolate Company (Joan Adry Co) invites chocolate aficionados on a journey of gourmet delight. Founded by Anu Jose and her team of skilled chocolatiers, this haven of decadence crafts exquisite handmade chocolates that promise to enchant the senses. With a commitment to using only the finest ingredients, each creation at Joan & Adry Co. embodies luxury and indulgence, perfect for both personal enjoyment and elegant gifting occasions.

Joan & Adry Co. offers a diverse collection of couverture chocolate bars, featuring everything from bitter dark to creamy white chocolate. Sig-

nature combinations include the classic fruit and nut, as well as unique flavours such as rose and cranberry. Each bar is a testament to the company's dedication to perfection, offering a rich and satisfying experience that is second to none.

The gourmet chocolate spreads from Joan & Adry Co. are a delightful addition to any pantry. The Choco Hazelnut Spread stands out as a healthier alternative, made with pure cocoa butter and coconut oil, free from palm oil, preservatives, artificial colours, and flavours. This 100% vegetarian product is perfect for waffles, toast, ice creams, pancakes, sandwiches, dips, drinks, donuts, muffins, banana breads, cupcakes, or even enjoyed directly from the jar.

Joan & Adry Co.'s chocolate barks are an all-encompassing sensory treat. Great for gifting, these barks are salty, sweet, crunchy, aromatic, and



decadent. The dark, milk, and white chocolate varieties, paired with nuts like cashews and almonds and fruits such as cherries, cranberries, and raisins, make for the perfect treat. Whether for gifting or a quick snack, these indulgences are made special by Joan & Adry Co.

The company also offers an array of other chocolate confections, including Peanut Butter Cups, Salted Caramel Cups, French Mendiants, Assorted French Bonbons, Gianduja Fudge, and Cookie & Cream Fudge. Each confection is meticulously crafted to provide a delightful and indulgent experience.

For corporate gifting, Joan & Adry Co. collaborates with prestigious names in the corporate sector across the country. They take pride in curating customized corporate gift hampers for esteemed

customers for festivals like Diwali, Christmas, Holi, and Onam. These hampers are tailored to meet specific requirements, ensuring the perfect gift for customers, employees, and partners.


Joan & Adry Co. also specializes in customized gift hampers for personal occasions. Whether it's a wedding, engagement, child's birthday, Holy Communion, or Baptism, their carefully curated return gift hampers and wedding invitation hampers add special joy to any celebration.

For those seeking innovative and dependable manufacturers of gourmet chocolates and spreads, Joan & Adry Co. offers white labelling and contract manufacturing services. They provide end-to-end solutions, from product concept to manufacturing and packaging, helping build brands with zero hassle.

Joan & Adry Co. is more than just a chocolate company; it's a hub of empowerment for the local women community. The members of Kudumbashree, the renowned women's self-help group in Kerala, play a pivotal role in crafting these exquisite chocolates. Through comprehensive training provided by the company, these women gain valuable skills and a sustainable livelihood. This initiative not only enhances their economic independence but also fosters a sense of community and purpose, making Joan & Adry Co. a proud contributor to women empowerment.

Coming soon, Joan & Adry Co. will introduce sugar-free dark chocolate, broadening their selection of indulgent yet health-conscious offerings. Joan & Adry Chocolate Company consistently sets the benchmark for premium chocolates, with each creation being a luxurious delight that enhances any occasion with joy.





Know more about us at :  
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# WALLMARK PLYWOOD

## A LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION

**E**stablished in the year 2000 as Star Plywood by a visionary entrepreneur Mr. Assainar, WallMark Ply has grown to become a nationally recognized leader in the plywood industry. With over two decades of tradition and excellence, WallMark Ply started its journey with a commitment to high-quality plywood manufacturing. This commitment has only strengthened over the years, evolving into the WallMark brand we know today under the dynamic leadership of next generation, Mr. Anthru P. A and grandsons, Mr. Hussain M. A and Mr. Hassan M. A.

Assainar's vision and relentless pursuit of quality laid a strong foundation. His dedication to producing superior plywood was not just about business; it was about creating a legacy. His passion was passed down to his son Anthru P. A, who inherited the same commitment to excellence. Anthru, recognizing the potential for growth and innovation, took the helm and steered the company towards new heights.

The transition from Star Plywood to WallMark Ply marked a significant milestone, symbolizing the evolution of the brand and its unyielding commitment to quality. Their strength lies in our satisfied customers spread across India. The trust they place in the brand has been instrumental in its growth and improvement. WallMark Plywood is manufactured keeping in mind the interests of every customer, making it the benchmark for quality and durability.

From the manufacturing stage to the completion of the final product, the plywood from WallMark Ply undergoes meticulous checks against stringent quality parameters before reaching the end consumer. They cherish

the trust of their customers place in us and consistently strive to be the most trusted name in the industry.

### Growing with the industry trends

WallMark Ply remains at the forefront of key trends in each sub-segment of the Indian plywood industry. The team behind the brand provides insights and market forecasts for various applications, including residential and commercial sectors, organized and unorganized sectors, new construction, and replacements. The market categorization based on these applications and regional demands ensures they stay ahead of industry trends and continuously meet consumer's needs.

The plywood industry in India is witnessing a significant transformation. With increasing urbanization and the rise in residential and commercial construction, the demand for high-quality plywood has surged. WallMark Ply, with its advanced manufacturing processes and strict quality controls, is well-positioned to capitalize on these trends. They have invested heavily in technology and automation to enhance production capabilities and maintain the highest standards of quality. This strategic focus on innovation ensures that the brand not only meets but exceeds the expectations of its customers.

### Commitment to Quality

"Quality Beyond Your Imagination" is not just a motto for WallMark Ply-it's a guiding principle. The commitment to quality is reflected in every sheet of plywood they produce. They understand that our customers rely on them for products that are not only durable but also meet the highest standards of performance. To ensure this, Wall-

Mark team has implemented rigorous quality control measures at every stage of the manufacturing process. From the selection of raw materials to the final inspection, every step is scrupulously monitored to ensure consistency and excellence.

The manufacturing plants of WallMark, located at Perumbavoor in Ernakulam, Kannur, and Idukki, are equipped with state-of-the-art automated machinery. This investment in technology allows them to produce high-quality plywood efficiently and consistently. Automation minimizes human error, enhances precision, and ensures uniformity in the products.



The commitment to technological advancement serves as a testament to their dedication to quality and innovation.

## Expanding Horizons

The third generation of the family, Hussain M. A and Hassan M. A, are now directors of the company, bringing fresh perspectives and energy to the business. Hussain and Hassan have inherited the family's passion for quality and innovation. Their leadership is characterized by a forward-thinking approach and a commitment to upholding the legacy of excellence that their grandfather started.

Hassan, a doctor by profession, adds a unique dimension to the company's leadership. Together, the brothers are driving the company towards new horizons as their vision for the future includes expanding the brand's presence and ensuring that all products are unified under WallMark brand. This strategic focus on brand consolidation and expansion is aimed at delivering consistent quality and value to the customers.

## Why Wallmark?

WallMark Ply is more than just a business; it's a commitment to excellence. The brand is built on a foundation of trust, forged through years of delivering consistent quality and reliability. Under the strong and positive leadership of Anthru P. A and his sons Hussain and Hassan, WallMark Ply has continued to innovate and grow. They maintain a focus on their strengths, leveraging high-quality manufacturing processes and integrating advanced technology to ensure the products meet the highest standards.

## Effective Use of Technology

In today's fast-paced world, staying ahead of the curve requires a commitment to technological advancement. WallMark Ply has embraced this challenge wholeheartedly. The manufacturing facilities are equipped with the latest automated machinery, ensuring precision and ef-

iciency in production. This technological edge allows to maintain the highest standards of quality while meeting the increasing demand for the products.

Automation has revolutionized our manufacturing process, minimizing human error and ensuring uniformity. It has also enabled WallMark Ply to scale the operations and improve productivity. The team believes that by leveraging technology, they can continue to deliver products that exceed customers' expectations and set new benchmarks in the industry.

## Customer-Centric Approach

WallMark Ply's customer-centric approach extends beyond the manufacturing process. The brand is committed to providing excellent customer service, ensuring that the customers have a seamless and satisfying experience with WallMark plywood. From the moment they place an order to the delivery of the final product, the team strive to exceed their expectations at every step.

## Looking to the Future

As looking to the future, WallMark Ply remains committed to its core values of quality, innovation, and customer satisfaction by focusing on expanding market presence, enhancing product offerings, and continuing to set new standards in the plywood industry. Their vision for the future is to be the most trusted and preferred brand in the industry, delivering products that are not only superior in quality but also sustainable and environmentally friendly.

WallMark Ply's journey from its origins as Star Plywood to becoming a market leader is a remarkable story of vision, dedication, and innovation. Under the leadership of Anthru P. A and his sons, Hussain and Hassan, the company has continued to evolve and grow, always staying true to its core values. As moving forward, they remain committed to the mission of providing "Quality Beyond Your Imagination" and ensuring that every product that leaves the plants is a result to their legacy of excellence.



# NOVATO INTERIORS

## TRANSFORMING SPACES

### WITH INNOVATION AND PERSONALISATION

**N**ovato Interiors, founded by Mr. Shiraz Bava, a native of Trivandrum, has quickly become a leading name in the interior design industry. Known for its unique blend of creativity, quality, and a customer-centric approach, the company has established a strong reputation. His son, Mr. Amit Bava, joined the venture, furthering its growth and innovation. Under the meticulous management of Sajeev M. S., the Head of Operations, Novato Interiors is setting new benchmarks by turning clients' dreams into reality with tailored design solutions.

At Novato Interiors, the journey begins with a complimentary consultation, allowing clients to engage directly with expert architects to discuss their vision in detail. This initial engagement ensures that client preferences and ideas are the foundation of their work, leading to a personalised planning experience. Novato also provides free architectural and design support for their clients, ensuring that every project reflects their unique tastes and lifestyle.

Novato offers a comprehensive range of interior design services, including home, flat, office, and commercial interiors. Their versatility caters to various design needs, making them a one-stop destination for any interior project. Their approach to design is holistic, considering the client's design requirements, budget, and ideas to create a customised plan. This transparency and collaboration guarantee that clients receive an estimate they can approve, ensuring there are no surprises down the line.

Quality is at the forefront of Novato's philosophy. They use durable materials like Multiwood, especially in kitchens, to withstand Kerala's tropical climate. Unlike pulp-based MDF and HDF, which deteriorate in moisture, Multiwood is water-resistant and ideal for wet areas like kitchens and wash areas. Their innovative approaches, such as automotive painting in various colour choices and modular kitchen design, set them apart from competitors. The basic concept of a modular kitchen at Novato is movement management, optimising the workflow between the refrigerator, sink, and stove to enhance efficiency and functionality.

Novato's design philosophy goes beyond aesthetics. They focus on ergonomics and mood setting, ensuring that every space is comfortable and functional. From optimising movement in modular kitchens to customising lighting and colour schemes, Novato's designs enhance daily living experiences. For instance, they use white or light colours in kitchen areas to create a clean and inviting atmosphere, while ensuring living rooms have lighting that doesn't strain



the eyes. Their expertise in creating mood-specific environments, like calm kitchen areas or well-lit reading rooms, underscores their attention to detail.

Recognising the importance of safety and comfort for the elderly, Novato incorporates features that cater to the needs of older adults. This includes designing interiors with appropriate floor friction, elder-friendly furniture, and accessible storage solutions. Untouched wardrobes and shelves are renovated to be exactly elder-friendly, making spaces safer and more accessi-

ble. Such thoughtful design elements make Novato a preferred choice for clients looking to create safe and comfortable living spaces for all ages.

Novato's client-centric philosophy is evident in their personalised planning and transparent collaboration. Every project begins with a detailed discussion of the client's design requirements, budget, and ideas, leading to a customised plan and estimate. This direct interaction ensures that the final design resonates with the client's vision, creating spaces that are both practical and inspiring. Their ability to seamlessly integrate modern aesthetics, cosy traditional charm, or innovative trends into practical and curated interior designs makes them a standout in the industry.

Novato also addresses the need for environmentally-friendly and emission-free materials. For instance, their use of UPVC sheet called Multiwood, made of virgin plastic, ensures there are no emission issues, making it safe for kitchens and other areas. This commitment to quality and environmental responsibility underscores their dedication to creating healthier living spaces.

Novato Interiors is more than just an interior design firm; it's a partner in transforming spaces into personalised havens. With a focus on quality, innovation, and customer satisfaction, Novato Interiors continues to lead the way in Trivandrum's interior design industry. Whether it's a modern kitchen, a cosy traditional living room, or an elder-friendly home, Novato

brings every vision to life with precision and care. Experience the difference with Novato Interiors, where your dream space becomes a reality.

## Crafting Holistic Living Spaces for Alive Lifespaces

The Rainbow community project by Alive Lifespaces epitomizes the exceptional work of Novato Interiors, the premier interior design company known for its innovative and customer-centric approach. Novato Interiors was entrusted with the complete interior design of The Rainbow community project, ensuring that every space within reflects the ethos of comfort, safety, and holistic living. Shiraz Bava, the Co-founder and COO of Alive Rainbow, the first holistic community living project at Puliyaarakonam, Trivandrum, has played a pivotal role in this collaboration.

Headquartered in Trivandrum, Kerala, and with a base in Chennai, Alive is a pioneering group dedicated to addressing the challenges of growing old. Comprising four key verticals—Alive Lifespaces, Home Solutions, Alivekart, and Alive Foundation—Alive focuses on the Six Dimensions of Wellness: Physical, Intellectual, Emotional, Occupational, Social, and Spiritual. Alive Lifespaces has introduced the concept of community living with a unique differential—"Adding Life to Age." Their flagship project, The Rainbow, is envisioned as a holistic living community in Trivandrum, Kerala, designed to support and empower the elderly.

Novato Interiors has meticulously crafted living spaces that integrate architecture and universal design elements tailored to the needs of elderly residents. By creating eco-friendly green living spaces, Novato promotes environmentally sustainable and healthy lifestyles. Their designs are not only practical but also enhance the overall well-being of residents through thoughtful and detailed attention to comfort and accessibility.

The team at Novato Interiors has transformed The Rainbow into a vibrant and supportive community where residents can enjoy an enviable quality of living. With round-the-clock security and a compassionate service staff that handles daily chores, residents can focus on engaging in community initiatives that promote mind, body, and spiritual wellness. Novato's commitment to quality and innovation ensures that every aspect of the interior design contributes to a safe, vibrant, and happy life for the elderly.

Through their work on The Rainbow, Novato Interiors has truly brought Alive's vision of "Adding Life to Age" to life, providing a holistic and supportive environment that meets the unique needs of elderly residents.



# EMBRACING LUXURY LIVING WITH URBANSCAPE PROPERTIES



**B**hima's Urbanscape Properties, founded on a century-long tradition of service and trust, is dedicated to crafting exceptional living spaces that redefine luxury and comfort. As one of Trivandrum's premier builders, Urbanscape Properties offers high-quality villas and apartments with unparalleled amenities, earning the trust of countless satisfied customers.



## Urbanscape Divinity

Nestled near Santhigiri Ashram in Pothencode, Urbanscape Divinity offers 3 & 4 BHK villas that blend tranquillity with divine luxury. These exquisite villas are designed for those seeking a harmonious balance of luxury and spiritual well-being. USP Divinity is a sanctuary of serenity, promising a life filled with positivity and happiness. An ideal investment, these villas reflect Bhima's commitment to superior craftsmanship and exceptional living standards.



## Urbanscape Solitaire

Rising 18 stories in Vattiyoorkavu, Urbanscape Solitaire offers designer 2 & 3 BHK apartments in one of Trivandrum's fastest-growing suburbs. With the area undergoing significant infrastructure development, Solitaire combines luxury and practicality. Planned amenities include a rooftop party area, indoor games room, and a yoga and meditation centre, providing residents with a perfect blend of comfort and modern living.



### Urbanscape Dynasty

In the heart of Thiruvananthapuram, Urbanscape Dynasty stands as a beacon of luxury in Kuravankonam. Just 1 km from Kowdiar, these premium 2 & 3 BHK apartments feature top-quality fittings and finishes. Urbanscape Dynasty exemplifies Bhima's legacy of trust, offering homes that surpass expectations in both quality and value. Experience a life of elegance and sophistication at this prime location.



### Urbanscape MidTown

Urbanscape MidTown, a stunning 19-story residence, features stylish 2 & 3 BHK apartments with intelligently designed layouts to maximize living space. Conveniently located in Kazhakoottam, this prime location aligns with Trivandrum's Master Plan, ensuring access to essential infrastructure, including proximity to Technopark and Technocity. Perfect for families and professionals, MidTown offers luxury and convenience with amenities like a swimming pool, kids pool, unisex gym, and home theatre.

#### A Legacy of Excellence

With nearly a hundred years of trust and quality, Bhima's legacy continues through Urbanscape Properties. Committed to top-notch service and customer satisfaction, they create luxury spaces in prime locations with meticulous planning and state-of-the-art design. Each project, from MidTown to Divinity, stands as a testament to their dedication to excellence.

Join Bhima's storied legacy and experience homes designed for a lifetime of happiness and peace of mind. Trust, quality, and excellence define Urbanscape Properties, ensuring every customer feels the difference in their everyday life.

To learn more about Urbanscape Properties, call 9947254777 or visit [www.urbanscapeproperties.com](http://www.urbanscapeproperties.com).

# AGAINST ALL ODDS

## THE ARUN NAIR STORY

**A**midst the lively neighbourhood of Ambalathara, Thiruvananthapuram, Arun Nair's journey unfolds, painting a picture of perseverance and triumph over adversity. Born the youngest of two sons to modest parents, Arun's early life was an echo of countless others, marked by simplicity and the pursuit of basic survival. Yet, within this ordinary upbringing blossomed an extraordinary tale of perseverance, vision, and remarkable success.

Arun's childhood was a mosaic of daily hardships and fleeting moments of joy. Financial independence was an alien concept until the age of twenty. Despite his brilliant academic performance, which earned him a place at a prestigious school, the path was fraught with challenges. He would sleep on a mud floor, awakening each day with a resolve unshaken by adversity. At twelve, Arun's realization that big dreams required financial means led him to work as a helper for his uncle, a painting contractor. Juggling various jobs, he nurtured a vision of becoming an engineer, but fate had other plans. Influenced by advice to pursue an MBA for better career prospects, Arun switched to commerce in his higher secondary education.

His dream was to become a government employee, an aspiration common among middle-class youth. However, life had more significant plans for him. Arun's exposure to the world of media and advertising through his elder brother's connections opened new avenues. At seventeen, without any prior experience, he joined an advertising company as a marketing executive. His knack for generating substantial revenue quickly set him apart from more seasoned colleagues.

While pursuing his degree at MG College, Thiruvananthapuram, Arun balanced his studies with weekend work. An idea for event management, pitched by a colleague, sparked his entrepreneurial spirit. Despite initial ignorance about the industry, he dove into learning and leveraged his connections to secure manpower for events. This period of relentless effort and sleepless nights, sometimes working as a housekeeper, forged his resilience and commitment to his goals.

At nineteen, Arun co-founded an event management company with a friend. Despite parting ways due to differing opinions, this venture marked the beginning of his entrepreneurial journey. Circumstances, rather than a clear vision, nudged him toward entrepreneurship.





While others around him aspired to go abroad for better opportunities, Arun focused on building his business locally. He restarted his manpower supply venture, using his college connections to grow the business across Kerala.

The COVID-19 pandemic posed unprecedented challenges, bringing his business to a standstill. Unfazed, Arun adapted by taking on food delivery jobs to sustain himself. His perseverance paid off when, at twenty-one, he launched Vihara Distributors with a modest capital of two lakh rupees. His early marketing experience proved invaluable as he rapidly expanded his client base, achieving growth in months that typically took years for others.

Arun's journey took an unexpected turn when his performance in PSC tests opened doors to lucrative government jobs. Contemplating handing over Vihara to his elder brother, Arun was met with the stark realization that the business couldn't flourish without his active involvement. Consequently, he made the difficult decision to sell Vihara to ensure its continuity, should a better opportunity arise. This experience deepened Arun's appreciation for entrepreneurship, revealing the invaluable independence and financial freedom it offered.

As Arun's name began appearing on multiple PSC lists, invitations from friends and officials to manage events poured in, affirming his natural aptitude for leadership at a young age. Influential figures encouraged him to pursue entrepreneurship over a secure government career, prompting Arun to formally establish UNISON Solutions—a human resource firm—in 2021. The company's name, inspired by his father Unnikrishnan, was a coincidental yet fitting tribute to his familial roots.

Arun then secured a position as a junior associate at Milma, which was conveniently located near his home and offered numerous amenities. However, as his involvement in event management grew, he realized his true passion lay there. At the age of 23, Arun made the bold decision to quit his secure government job, understanding that he couldn't fully commit to both roles. His choice surprised everyone around him, as leaving a stable position seemed risky. Driven by a desire to deepen his

business acumen, Arun sought opportunities to learn from successful entrepreneurs. This exposure strengthened his resolve to fully embrace the world of business, setting the stage for his continued growth and success as an entrepreneur.

Arun explored the option of offering temporary manpower solutions to clients, focusing on roles such as tele-calling, receptionists, and drivers, albeit on a temporary basis. With 6 to 7 years of experience in the event management field, he decided to take this as a profession. His efforts led to the establishment of UNSO Global for Events and Marketing in 2022, aimed at organizing events and weddings under a dedicated umbrella. Additionally, he founded UNSON Solutions for Human Resources and Vihara Celebrations for wedding planning, marking significant expansions in his entrepreneurial endeavours. Arun's ventures now provide employment to thousands annually, with coordinators across Kerala and events managed throughout South India. His story is not just one of personal success but a testament to uplifting others from similar backgrounds. Arun's ultimate goal is to lift aspiring individuals facing adversity. Beyond creating an innovative online platform to expand opportunities, he is committed to providing mentorship, training, and resources to help these individuals succeed. Arun's mission goes beyond his personal achievements; he is dedicated to building a supportive community where resilience and ambition are nurtured, empowering others to overcome their challenges and thrive regardless of their background.

Arun Nair's journey from a humble background to a prominent young entrepreneur exemplifies the power of determination, adaptability, and the relentless pursuit of one's dreams. Growing up in a family and friend circle that often advised him to dream within limits, Arun received no support in his entrepreneurial endeavours. It was his own potential and mindset that propelled him to success, proving that his dreams have no limits and his only limit is the sky. His goal of owning or partnering in at least ten companies by the age of thirty reflects a vision far beyond personal success, embracing a broader mission of social responsibility and community upliftment.

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