

# HUES OF LIFE

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#ഇനിഎന്നുംമിസ്തമപനീർ



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# HUES OF LIFE

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## Editor's Desk

Dear Readers,

As we step into March, the month of reflections and fresh starts, Hues of Life embraces the spirit of transition—with one foot in the lessons of the past and the other in the promise of tomorrow. As students across the country feel the pulse of exam fever, we explore the mental endurance and discipline that define this crucial period. We turn our lens toward Dairy and Cattle, often unsung heroes, yet vital pillars of nutrition and the rural economy. From the raw intensity of kickboxing, a sport deeply rooted in global cultures and resistance, to the artistry of the leather industry, where timeless craftsmanship meets luxury, this issue unpacks stories where tradition meets evolution. Our culinary journey takes a healthy turn with steamed food, a delicious and wholesome tradition that proves flavour need not be sacrificed for wellness. And in the untamed corners of the natural world, wildlife photography captures fleeting moments of raw beauty and deep connection. As we close another chapter with our piece on the journey toward a new beginning, we invite you to reflect, renew, and recharge for the vibrant days ahead.

Warm regards,

Nijith Raj  
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# **Dairy and Cattle**

**THE BACKBONE OF NUTRITION AND ECONOMY**

*Dairy farming has been an integral part of human civilization for thousands of years, providing essential nutrition and playing a crucial role in the global economy. From small-scale traditional farms to large commercial dairy enterprises, cattle farming remains a major agricultural sector that sustains millions of livelihoods worldwide. Dairy products such as milk, cheese, butter, and yogurt are not only dietary staples but also key sources of essential nutrients like calcium, protein, and vitamins. The dairy industry contributes significantly to rural economies, food security, and even environmental sustainability when managed responsibly.*

Cattle, especially breeds such as Holstein, Jersey, Brown Swiss, and indigenous varieties, are the primary source of milk production. Proper cattle management, including nutrition, breeding, health care, and ethical farming practices, ensures both the quality and quantity of dairy output. A well-fed and healthy cow can produce an optimal amount of milk, making proper diet and veterinary care essential aspects of dairy farming. Farmers provide a balanced diet rich in fodder, grains, and minerals to maintain cattle health and productivity. Grazing on open pastures, where possible, leads to healthier cows and better milk quality compared to confined feedlot systems.

The importance of dairy extends beyond nutrition; it is a vital economic driver, particularly in countries where agriculture is the main livelihood. India, the United States, China, and Brazil are among the top dairy producers in the world. India, in particular, has a long-standing tradition of dairy farming, with millions of small-scale farmers contributing to the nation's milk production. The White Revolution, led by Dr. Verghese Kurien, transformed India into the largest producer of milk, making dairy farming a key contributor to rural empowerment. Cooperatives such as Amul have set an example of how collective efforts can revolutionize the dairy sector, ensuring fair prices for farmers while maintaining quality for consumers.

One of the key benefits of dairy farming is its role in ensuring nutritional security. Milk and dairy products are rich sources

of calcium, which is crucial for bone health. They also provide high-quality protein essential for muscle development, along with vitamins like B12, riboflavin, and vitamin D. For growing children, pregnant women, and the elderly, dairy plays a critical role in overall health and well-being. In many parts of the world, school milk programs have been introduced to combat malnutrition among children, reinforcing the significance of dairy in daily diets.

However, modern dairy farming is not without challenges. One of the major concerns in large-scale dairy operations is the ethical treatment of cattle. Sustainable and humane dairy farming practices are essential to ensure that cows are not subjected to stressful conditions, over-milking, or unhealthy living environments. Many farms now emphasize organic and free-range dairy farming, where cows are given space to roam, access to natural fodder, and are milked without the use of synthetic hormones. Ethical dairy farming not only enhances milk quality but also contributes to consumer trust and a more sustainable industry.



**One of the key benefits of dairy farming is its role in ensuring nutritional security. Milk and dairy products are rich sources of calcium, which is crucial for bone health.**



Environmental impact is another aspect of dairy farming that needs attention. Large-scale dairy farms produce significant amounts of greenhouse gases, particularly methane from cattle digestion. Improper waste disposal and overgrazing can lead to land degradation and water pollution. However, advancements in sustainable farming practices, such as biogas production from cattle manure, rotational



grazing, and water-efficient dairy processing, are helping to mitigate these environmental concerns. The integration of technology in dairy farming, including automated milking systems, precision feeding, and genetic improvements, is also playing a role in increasing efficiency while reducing the environmental footprint.

The dairy industry is constantly evolving with new innovations that enhance productivity and sustainability. Technologies like robotic milking machines, artificial intelligence in herd management, and the development of plant-based dairy alternatives are reshaping the future of the industry. While traditional dairy remains a stronghold, the rise of alternative milk products such as almond, soy, and oat milk has created competition, prompting



**The dairy industry is constantly evolving with new innovations that enhance productivity and sustainability. Technologies like robotic milking machines, artificial intelligence in herd management, and the development of plant-based dairy alternatives are reshaping the future of the industry.**



the dairy industry to focus more on organic, high-quality, and ethically produced milk to meet changing consumer preferences.

Despite modern challenges, dairy farming remains a resilient and indispensable industry. It provides employment to millions, ensures a steady supply of nutritious food, and plays a crucial role in rural development. As consumers become more conscious of their food, the emphasis on sustainable and ethical dairy farming will only grow. The future of dairy lies in balancing productivity with responsibility, ensuring that both cattle and farmers thrive in a system that is economically viable, environmentally sustainable, and nutritionally beneficial for all.

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# Exam Fever

THE PRESSURE, THE PREPARATION,  
AND THE PATH TO SUCCESS



*Examinations are an integral part of a student's academic journey, marking crucial milestones in education. As exam season approaches, students often experience a mix of emotions—stress, anxiety, excitement, and determination. This phenomenon, commonly known as “exam fever,” is not just about the academic challenge but also the mental and emotional strain that comes with it.*

The pressure to perform well, meet expectations, and secure a bright future can sometimes be overwhelming, making it essential to approach exams with the right mindset and strategy.

The fear of exams is deeply rooted in the education system, where performance is often equated with success and intelligence. From school students preparing for board exams to university graduates appearing for competitive entrance tests, the struggle is universal. The sleepless nights, endless revisions, last-minute cramming, and nervous anticipation before entering the exam hall are experiences that most students can relate to. While exams are designed to test knowledge and understanding, they also bring forth an immense psychological battle that can either push students towards excellence or lead to burnout and anxiety.

One of the primary reasons for exam fever is the immense pressure imposed by society, parents, and sometimes even self-imposed expectations. Many students fear failure because academic results often dictate career opportunities and future prospects. The idea of competition further intensifies this stress, making students believe that only the highest scores will secure a promising future. This pressure can sometimes lead to unhealthy habits such as excessive studying without breaks, neglecting sleep, and resorting to unhealthy food or caffeine to stay awake. In extreme cases, students might experience panic attacks, self-doubt, or even develop a fear of examinations, leading to underperformance despite their potential.

The key to overcoming exam fever lies in effective preparation and a balanced approach. Time management plays a crucial role in ensuring that students do not feel overwhelmed as exams draw closer. Creating a structured study timetable helps in covering all subjects

systematically while allowing sufficient time for revision. Breaking down topics into smaller, manageable sections and setting realistic goals can make studying more efficient and less stressful. Rather than cramming information at the last minute, consistent and daily revision helps in better retention and understanding of concepts.

Another essential aspect of exam preparation is the importance of relaxation and self-care. A well-rested mind is more capable of absorbing information than an exhausted one. Sleep deprivation not only affects concentration but also weakens memory, making it difficult to recall information during exams. Ensuring at least seven to eight hours of sleep, taking short breaks between study sessions, and engaging in light physical activities such as walking or stretching can significantly reduce stress levels. Meditation, deep breathing exercises, and listening to calming music can also help in managing anxiety and maintaining focus.

Eating the right food during exams also plays a crucial role in mental alertness and energy levels. A balanced diet rich in proteins, vitamins, and healthy carbohydrates keeps the brain functioning efficiently. Fresh fruits, nuts, whole grains, and dairy products provide sustained energy, while excessive caffeine and junk food should be avoided as they can lead to fatigue and restlessness. Hydration is equally important, as dehydration can cause headaches and difficulty in concentration.

Apart from individual efforts, the role of teachers, parents, and mentors in helping students cope with exam pressure is significant. Teachers should encourage a positive learning environment where students feel comfortable asking questions and clarifying doubts. Schools and educational institutions should focus on skill-based learning rather than rote memorization, helping students develop critical thinking and





problem-solving abilities. Parents, on the other hand, need to provide emotional support rather than adding to the pressure. Instead of fixating on marks, they should acknowledge the effort put in by their children and remind them that exams are just one part of life's journey. Encouraging words, understanding, and motivation from family members can do wonders in boosting a student's confidence.

During the final days before exams, it is essential to stay calm and maintain confidence. Going through summary notes, revising key points, and practicing previous years' question papers can help in gaining familiarity with the exam pattern. Avoiding negative thoughts and unnecessary discussions about the difficulty of exams with peers can also prevent last-minute panic. Entering the exam hall with a composed mind, reading questions carefully, managing time effectively during the test, and not dwelling on difficult questions for too long are simple yet effective strategies to perform well.

Post-exam stress is another

aspect of exam fever that affects many students. Often, students tend to overanalyze their performance, discuss answers with friends, and worry about their results. While reflecting on one's performance is natural, excessive worrying about mistakes or

comparing answers can create unnecessary anxiety. It is essential to accept that once an exam is over, it cannot be changed, and focusing on the next paper or moving forward is the best approach.

Exam fever, though stressful, is a phase that can be tackled with the right mindset and preparation. Exams are not just about testing knowledge; they teach resilience, discipline, and time management—skills that are valuable beyond academics. The journey of education is much more than marks and grades; it is about learning, growth, and personal development. With a positive attitude, proper planning, and a healthy routine, students can not only perform well in their exams but also emerge stronger and more confident individuals, ready to take on future challenges with determination.



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# കേരളം നൂതനപാതയിൽ, കെ-ഡിസ്കിനൊപ്പം



കേരള ഡവലപ്മെന്റ് ആൻഡ് ഇനൊവേഷൻ സ്ട്രാറ്റജിക് കൗൺസിലിന്റെ (K-DISC) KGDC, YIP, OLOI, KKEM, EV Consortium, ET, Manchadi, Mazhavillu തുടങ്ങിയ പദ്ധതികൾ കേരളത്തിലെ വികസനത്തിന് വഴിയെടുക്കുന്നു.

## കേരള ജീനോം ഡാറ്റാ സെന്റർ (KGDC)

അന്താരാഷ്ട്ര തലത്തിൽ നിലനിൽക്കുന്ന മാതൃകകൾക്ക് അനുസൃതമായി ജീനോമിക് ഡാറ്റാ ക്ലസ്റ്റർ ചെയ്യുന്നതിനും പ്രസിദ്ധീകരിക്കുന്നതിനും.

## യങ് ഇനവേഷൻ പ്രോഗ്രാം (YIP)

സ്കൂൾ, കോളേജ്, ഗവേഷണ വിദ്യാർത്ഥികളിൽ നൂതന ആശയ രൂപീകരണം പ്രോത്സാഹിപ്പിച്ച് നാടിന്റെ യഥാർത്ഥ ജീവിത പ്രശ്നങ്ങൾക്ക് പരിഹാരം തേടുന്നു.

## കേരള നോളജ് ഇക്കോണമി മിഷൻ (KKEM)

കേരളത്തിലെ അത്യുന്നതവിലയായ തൊഴിൽരഹിതർക്ക് വിവിധ രംഗങ്ങളിൽ തൊഴിലവസരങ്ങൾ സൃഷ്ടിക്കാനുള്ള ബഹുതരം പദ്ധതി.

## ഇലക്ട്രിക് വെഹിക്കിൾസ് കൺസോർഷ്യം (EV Consortium)

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## എന്തെർപ്രൈസ് ടെക്നോളജീസ് ഇൻ ഗവൺമെന്റ് (ET)

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## ബന്ധി 'ടിച്ച് ഓഫ്സ് ഫോർ കേരള' (Manchadi)

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## മഴവില്ല് 'ടിച്ച് സമ്മർസ് ഫോർ കേരള' (Mazhavillu)

മൂന്നാം ക്രാസ്സുമുതൽ എഴാം ക്രാസ്സുവരെയുള്ള കുടികളിൽ സംയോജിത ശാസ്ത്ര പഠനം എന്ന ആശയത്തെ മുൻനിർത്തി പ്രായോഗിക പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളിലൂടെയും വിശകലനത്തിലൂടെയും ശാസ്ത്ര ബോധം വർദ്ധിപ്പിക്കുന്നതിന് മൂന്നാം നൽകിക്കൊണ്ട് പ്രാവർത്തികമാവുന്ന നൂതന ആശയമാണ് 'മഴവില്ല്'.



# Home

## MORE THAN JUST A PLACE, A FEELING OF BELONGING

*Abounding with nature, diverse cultures, and various cuisines, Kerala is a land of food varieties. Of all the many gastronomic delights of Kerala, history, culture, and a symphony of flavours alone seem to have been encapsulated in biryani. Though Kerala biryani may not have the universal fame that is associated with Hyderabad or Lucknow-style biryani, it however forms a widely central and northern stronghold of the dish in Kerala.*

A home is more than just four walls and a roof—it is a sanctuary, a place of comfort, love, and security. While a house is a physical structure, it transforms into a home through the people who live in it, the emotions it holds, and the small, thoughtful details that make it special. A home is where one finds peace after a long day, where memories are created, and where every corner tells a story. From the arrangement of furniture to the choice of colours, from the presence of pets to the flow of fresh air, every element contributes to making a house feel like home.

The emotional connection to a home is what truly defines its importance. A home reflects the personalities, tastes, and values of those who live in it. It is a place where laughter is shared, meals are enjoyed together, and a sense of belonging is nurtured. The warmth of a home comes from the love and effort put into it—be it through family traditions, décor choices, or simply the presence of loved ones, including pets. Pets, in particular, add an irreplaceable charm to a home. Their presence brings joy, companionship, and a sense of responsibility. Whether it's a dog wagging its tail at the door or a cat

curling up on the couch, pets make a home feel alive and filled with unconditional love.

The design and layout of a home play a crucial role in creating an atmosphere of comfort. Thoughtful interior design goes beyond aesthetics—it influences mood, energy, and well-being. Colours, for instance, have a profound impact on emotions. Warm tones like beige, soft yellow, and earthy shades create a cozy and inviting atmosphere, while cool tones like blue and green promote calmness and relaxation. Neutral colours provide a timeless elegance, whereas bold shades can add personality and vibrancy. A carefully chosen colour palette can transform a space from cold and impersonal to warm and welcoming.

Natural light and air circulation are other vital aspects of a home. A well-lit home with good ventilation not only enhances comfort but also improves health. Sunlight streaming through windows brightens up interiors, creates a cheerful ambiance, and reduces the need for artificial lighting. It also has health benefits, such as boosting mood and providing essential vitamin D. Similarly, proper air circulation keeps the home fresh, reduces humidity, and prevents the buildup of toxins. Open windows, indoor plants, and air-purifying devices help maintain clean



air, making the home a healthier place to live.

Furniture and décor contribute to the overall warmth of a home. The placement of furniture should promote functionality and ease of movement while maintaining a sense of harmony. Comfortable seating, cozy rugs, and soft lighting make a space feel inviting. Personal touches, such as family photographs, artwork, and souvenirs from travels, add character to a home and create a sense of familiarity. Handmade or custom-designed pieces often carry sentimental value and can turn a house into a space that truly feels personal and unique.

A well-maintained home is also essential for peace of mind. Cleanliness and organization contribute to a stress-free environment. Cluttered spaces can lead to mental unrest, whereas a neat and organized home promotes relaxation and productivity. Smart storage solutions, minimalistic décor, and routine cleaning help in

maintaining a clutter-free space that feels refreshing and peaceful.

The kitchen is often considered the heart of a home. It is not just a place for cooking but a space where families gather, share stories, and bond over meals.

A well-designed kitchen with efficient storage, ample lighting, and functional appliances enhances the cooking experience and makes daily life easier. The warmth of home-cooked meals and the memories created around the dining table add to the emotional connection with one's home.

Bedrooms, on the other hand, are personal retreats where one unwinds and recharges. A comfortable bed, soft bedding, and soothing colours contribute to restful sleep. The design of a bedroom should reflect tranquillity and comfort, providing a space to escape from the stresses of daily life. Similarly, bathrooms should be designed as personal sanctuaries with proper lighting,



**A well-maintained home is also essential for peace of mind. Cleanliness and organization contribute to a stress-free environment. Cluttered spaces can lead to mental unrest, whereas a neat and organized home promotes relaxation and productivity.**





ventilation, and an arrangement that promotes relaxation and cleanliness.

Outdoor spaces, such as gardens, balconies, or patios, add an extra layer of charm to a home. A small garden with plants, flowers, or even a simple seating area provides a connection to nature, which is known to enhance well-being. Green spaces within a home create a sense of calmness and allow for moments of relaxation in the fresh air. Even in urban settings, small indoor plants, vertical gardens, or window planters can bring a touch of nature into the home.

A home is also defined by the people who inhabit it and the way relationships are nurtured within its walls. It is a space for celebrating achievements, overcoming

challenges, and finding support in difficult times. The essence of a home lies in the love and understanding shared among family members, making it a place of emotional security and comfort. Even for those living alone, a home can be a reflection of self-care, personal expression, and individuality.

Ultimately, a home is a reflection of life itself—dynamic, ever-changing, and filled with moments that shape who we are. It is a place of warmth, safety, and happiness. Whether big or small, luxurious or simple, a home is where the heart finds peace. By incorporating elements that enhance comfort, well-being, and personal connection, a house truly becomes a home—a haven where life unfolds beautifully, day after day.



# **The World in Strikes**

**KICKBOXING'S JOURNEY THROUGH  
HISTORY AND CULTURE**



*Kickboxing, an electrifying blend of martial arts and combat sports, has captured the imagination of fighters and fitness enthusiasts worldwide. Combining the fluidity of punches, kicks, and knee strikes with rigorous discipline and strategy, this dynamic sport transcends physicality to become a way of life for many. While its roots lie in ancient combat traditions, kickboxing has evolved into a global phenomenon, with practitioners from different corners of the world achieving mastery and contributing to its rich legacy.*

**K**ickboxing, as we know it today, is a relatively modern sport with its formal inception in the 1950s and 1960s. However, its foundational techniques are deeply entrenched in ancient martial arts traditions. From Muay Thai in Thailand to karate in Japan, and from savate in France to taekwondo in Korea, various combat disciplines

have influenced the development of kickboxing. The sport gained prominence in Japan during the 1960s when Tatsuo Yamada, a karateka, collaborated with Muay Thai fighters to create a hybrid fighting style. This new form combined the rigorous precision of karate with the aggressive strikes and clinching techniques of Muay Thai. By the 1970s, kickboxing had spread to the



United States, where it was further popularized by pioneers like Joe Lewis, Bill Wallace, and Benny "The Jet" Urquidez. The introduction of safety gear and formalized rules helped transition kickboxing from a brutal, bare-knuckle contest to a regulated sport.

Today, kickboxing is a cornerstone of combat sports and fitness. It is divided into various styles, including American Kickboxing, Dutch Kickboxing, and Japanese Kickboxing. Each style has its unique nuances but shares the core principles of power, agility, and mental resilience. Prominent global organizations such as K-1, Glory, and ONE Championship have played a significant role in elevating the sport's profile, showcasing the artistry and athleticism of kickboxing on international stages. Fighters from diverse backgrounds have embraced the sport, pushing its boundaries and inspiring countless fans worldwide.

Kickboxing requires a high level of physical and mental discipline. Practitioners undergo rigorous training regimes that include strength and conditioning, technique refinement, and sparring sessions. The sport emphasizes not only the mastery of strikes but also defensive maneuvers, footwork, and strategy. Beyond its competitive aspects, kickboxing is celebrated for its fitness benefits, offering a full-body workout that enhances cardiovascular health,



builds strength, and improves flexibility. This dual appeal, as both a sport and a fitness routine, has contributed to its widespread popularity.

On the global stage, numerous athletes have achieved legendary status in the world of kickboxing. Fighters like Ernesto Hoost, a four-time K-1 World Grand Prix champion from the Netherlands, have set benchmarks of excellence with their skill and dominance. Buakaw Banchamek, a Thai fighter renowned for his explosive power and precision, has been a formidable force in both Muay Thai and kickboxing circuits. Giorgio Petrosyan, often called "The Doctor" for his surgical precision in fights, has captivated fans with his technical mastery. These fighters, among others, have not only achieved individual glory but have also elevated the status of kickboxing as a respected and admired sport.

In India, kickboxing has steadily gained traction over the years. While not as mainstream as cricket or badminton, it has carved out a niche among martial arts enthusiasts and competitive athletes. The formation of the WAKO (World Association of Kickboxing Organizations) India has provided a structured framework for nurturing talent and organizing events. Indian fighters have begun making their mark on the international stage, showcasing grit and determination against seasoned opponents.





Athletes like Suresh Babu, a gold medalist in the Asian Kickboxing Championships, and Chaitanya Deshpande, known for his victories in international kickboxing tournaments, exemplify the rising talent from the country. These individuals serve as inspirations for aspiring kickboxers, demonstrating that with dedication and perseverance, Indian fighters can achieve global recognition.

The cultural impact of kickboxing extends beyond the ring. It has found a place in popular media, with films and television series showcasing its techniques and philosophy. Movies like "Kickboxer," starring Jean-Claude Van Damme, and franchises like "The Karate Kid" have introduced audiences to the discipline and artistry of martial arts. In recent years, reality shows and competitions have further popularized the sport, bringing its intensity and excitement to living rooms worldwide.

Kickboxing's influence also permeates the realm of fitness and personal development. The sport is celebrated for its ability to build confidence, instill discipline, and foster a sense of empowerment. Many practitioners find that the mental focus required in kickboxing extends to other areas of life, helping them



navigate challenges with resilience and clarity. This holistic approach to physical and mental well-being makes kickboxing more than just a sport; it becomes a lifestyle for those who embrace it.

Despite its growth and popularity, kickboxing faces challenges that require attention and action. Issues such as insufficient infrastructure, lack of funding, and limited awareness can hinder the sport's development, particularly in countries where it is still emerging. Addressing these barriers requires collaboration between governing bodies, sponsors, and the community to create opportunities for aspiring fighters and promote the sport's values of respect, discipline, and perseverance.

The journey of kickboxing, from its ancient roots to its modern-day prominence, is a testament to its universal appeal. It transcends cultural boundaries, bringing together people from different walks of life to celebrate the art of combat and the pursuit of excellence. For those who practice and master it, kickboxing is more than a sport; it is a path to self-discovery, a challenge that pushes the limits of body and mind, and a way to connect with a global community united by a shared passion.

As kickboxing continues to evolve, it will undoubtedly inspire new generations of athletes, fitness enthusiasts, and fans. Its legacy, shaped by pioneers and practitioners from around the world, serves as a reminder that the pursuit of mastery in any discipline is a journey worth undertaking. Whether in the ring, in the gym, or in life, kickboxing teaches us to embrace challenges, stay focused, and strive for greatness.

# THE LEATHER INDUSTRY

## A TIMELESS CRAFT ROOTED IN UTILITY AND LUXURY

*The leather industry is one of the oldest and most significant sectors in human history, deeply interwoven with culture, craftsmanship, and commerce. For centuries, leather has been valued for its durability, versatility, and aesthetic appeal, making it an essential part of daily life. From clothing and footwear to furniture, accessories, and even industrial applications, leather continues to hold a distinct place in global markets. While synthetic alternatives have emerged, real leather remains unmatched in quality, longevity, and sustainability when sourced responsibly.*





One of the key advantages of real leather is its durability. Unlike synthetic materials that degrade over time, genuine leather ages gracefully, developing a rich patina that adds character and uniqueness. Leather products, when properly cared for, can last for decades, reducing the need for frequent replacements and minimizing environmental waste. This makes it an investment-worthy material, whether in the form of a luxury handbag, a well-crafted pair of shoes, or a classic leather jacket.

Comfort is another reason why leather remains a preferred choice.

Leather is a natural material derived primarily from the hides of animals such as cattle, sheep, goats, and buffalo. The process of transforming raw hides into finished leather involves tanning, a method that preserves the material and enhances its strength. Traditional vegetable tanning uses organic compounds from tree bark and leaves, while modern chrome tanning ensures faster processing with increased softness and flexibility. Each technique offers unique characteristics, catering to diverse consumer preferences.



Its breathable nature allows air to circulate, preventing excessive moisture build up and ensuring a comfortable fit in footwear and clothing. Leather also adapts to the wearer's body over time, providing a personalized experience that synthetic alternatives struggle to replicate. In furniture, leather upholstery offers both elegance and practicality, resistant to dust, allergens, and spills while maintaining a sophisticated appearance.

Sustainability is a growing concern in today's consumer market, and ethical sourcing in the leather industry plays a crucial role in addressing environmental impact. Contrary to popular misconceptions, leather is a by-product of the meat industry, meaning that the hides would otherwise go to waste if not utilized. Many manufacturers are



to incorporate high-quality leather into their collections, reinforcing its status as a material of refinement. Whether it's a tailored leather blazer, a timeless belt, or a designer handbag, real leather exudes sophistication that withstands ever-changing trends. The automotive industry also relies heavily on leather, using it for car interiors to offer a premium and comfortable driving experience.

adopting eco-friendly tanning methods, reducing water consumption, and ensuring responsible waste management to create a more sustainable production cycle. The use of biodegradable vegetable-tanned leather further supports environmentally conscious choices, making it an alternative to synthetic materials that contribute to plastic pollution.

The cultural and economic significance of the leather industry cannot be overlooked. Countries such as Italy, India, Brazil, and the United States are renowned for their expertise in leather production, with skilled artisans passing down their craft through generations. Handcrafted leather goods represent a fusion of tradition and innovation, attracting global demand for their authenticity and craftsmanship. The industry also provides employment to millions worldwide, contributing to economic growth and preserving heritage skills in regions known for their leather craftsmanship.

In fashion, leather is a symbol of style and prestige. Luxury brands continue



Despite its many advantages, the leather industry faces challenges, including ethical concerns over animal welfare and environmental impact. However, with advancements in sustainable practices, responsible sourcing, and increasing consumer awareness, the industry is evolving to balance luxury with ethical responsibility. Certifications such as the Leather Working Group (LWG) ensure that leather producers adhere to stringent environmental standards, promoting transparency and sustainability.

Real leather continues to be an irreplaceable part of everyday life, offering a blend of functionality, artistry, and longevity. As consumers become more conscious of their purchases, the demand for ethically produced leather is shaping the industry's future, ensuring that this age-old craft remains relevant in a modern, eco-conscious world.



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# PMFME SCHEME

## EMPOWERING INDIA'S MICRO FOOD PROCESSING ENTERPRISES

India's food processing industry is one of the largest in the world, contributing significantly to employment and economic growth. However, a vast portion of this sector operates in an unorganised manner, struggling with challenges such as lack of access to modern technology, institutional credit, training, and regulatory compliance. Recognising the need to formalise and strengthen these micro food processing units, the Government of India launched the Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) Scheme. This initiative, implemented by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI), aims to enhance the competitiveness of micro food processing enterprises and integrate them into the mainstream economy.

The PMFME scheme was introduced in 2020 under the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan for a period of five years, from 2020-21 to 2024-25. With a total outlay of ₹10,000 crore, it is a centrally sponsored scheme, where the funding is shared between the central and state governments. For most states, the ratio stands at 60:40, while in North-Eastern and Himalayan states, the central government contributes 90% of the funding, with the remaining 10% coming from the respective state governments. By focusing on formalisation, skill development, access to finance, infrastructure support, and branding opportunities, the scheme ensures that micro food processing enterprises can scale up their operations and improve their market reach.

A key feature of the PMFME scheme is the One District One Product (ODOP) approach. This initiative encourages states to identify and promote a single food product from each district. The ODOP strategy facilitates the development of a dedicated supply chain, ensuring better procurement, infrastructure development, and marketing support for the identified product. Some of the popular products covered under ODOP include mango, potato, litchi,

tomato, poultry, fishery, millet-based products, animal feed, and traditional herbal items such as turmeric, honey and amla. This approach not only helps micro enterprises but also promotes local agricultural produce and enhances their economic viability.

The PMFME scheme is designed to support various components essential for the growth of micro food processing units. One of its primary objectives is to develop common infrastructure, such as cold storage facilities, warehouses, food incubation centres, and food safety laboratories. Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), Self-Help Groups (SHGs), cooperatives, and private enterprises are eligible to receive assistance under this component. These infrastructure developments play a crucial role in reducing post-harvest losses, maintaining food quality, and enabling efficient supply chain management. The scheme also provides a credit-linked capital subsidy of 35% of the eligible project cost, which allows entrepreneurs to expand their businesses with minimal financial burden.

Another major aspect of the PMFME scheme is branding and marketing support, which is crucial for micro food processing enterprises to establish their presence in competitive markets. The government assists in areas such as common packaging, product standardisation, quality control, and compliance with food safety norms. The National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED) and the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) play a vital role in ensuring that these enterprises receive the necessary marketing support. The scheme also provides financial assistance to prepare Detailed Project Reports (DPRs), enabling entrepreneurs to formulate robust business strategies.

Training and skill development are essential for transforming unorganised enterprises into professionally managed units. Under the PMFME

scheme, beneficiaries undergo training to enhance their technical knowledge and entrepreneurial skills. The National Institute for Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management (NIFTEM) and the Indian Institute of Food Processing Technology (IIFPT) are the two primary institutions responsible for implementing training programs. These institutes, along with other state-level technology training institutions, provide capacity-building programs on food safety, hygiene, packaging, and business management. By equipping entrepreneurs with the right skills, the scheme ensures sustainable growth and improved productivity.

The PMFME scheme also extends its benefits to individual food processing units that require financial assistance for upgrading their technology or expanding their operations. Unorganised micro food processing units are eligible for a 35% credit-linked capital subsidy, covering up to ₹10 lakh per unit. This financial support enables them to procure modern equipment, adopt innovative processing techniques, and improve efficiency. Additionally, the scheme provides seed capital support to Self-Help Group (SHG) members, allowing them to purchase small tools and manage their working capital requirements. Each SHG member engaged in food processing can receive up to ₹40,000, with a maximum limit of ₹4 lakh per SHG. This initiative particularly empowers women entrepreneurs and rural food processors, helping them achieve financial independence.

To ensure effective implementation, the PMFME scheme lays down clear eligibility criteria for various categories of beneficiaries. For common infrastructure development, FPOs, cooperatives, and SHGs must have at least three years of experience in processing ODOP products and a minimum annual turnover of ₹1 crore. Additionally, they must contribute 10% of the project cost as internal resources and have the necessary working capital for business operations. Enterprises seeking branding and marketing support must ensure that their ODOP-related products have a minimum turnover of ₹5 crore and are scalable to larger markets. Individual entrepreneurs applying for financial aid must be above 18 years of age, possess a minimum education qualification of Class VIII, and should not have received similar benefits from other government schemes. Furthermore, only one person per family is eligible to avail financial assistance under the scheme. Applying for the PMFME scheme is a straightforward process, with both online and offline options available. Entrepreneurs can visit the official



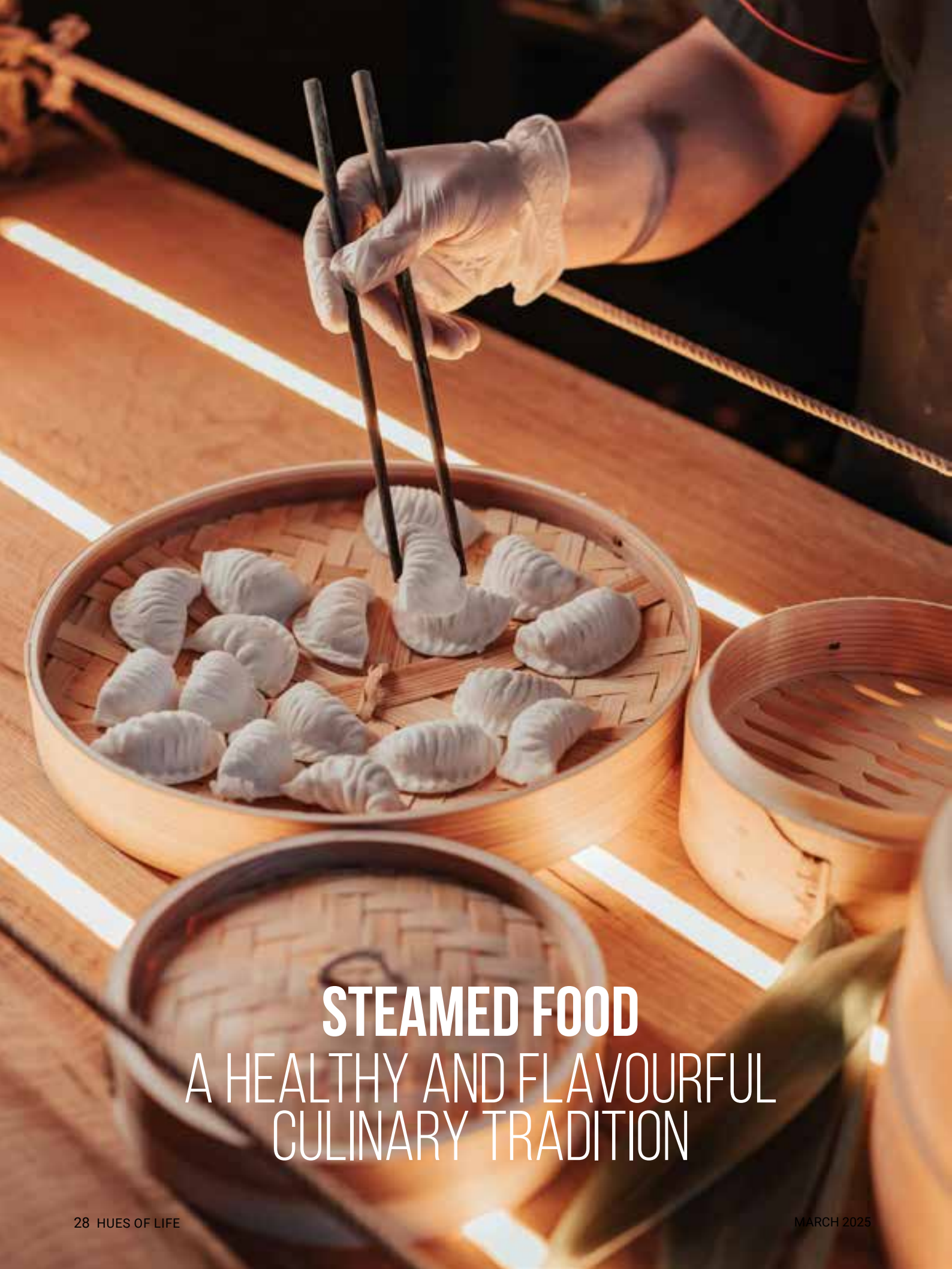
**The PMFME scheme is designed to support various components essential for the growth of micro food processing units. One of its primary objectives is to develop common infrastructure, such as cold storage facilities, warehouses, food incubation centres, and food safety laboratories.**



PMFME website, complete the registration process, and submit their applications. There are separate application forms for individual entrepreneurs, FPOs, cooperatives, common infrastructure projects, and SHGs. The government has also appointed state nodal agencies to facilitate offline applications, ensuring accessibility for those with limited digital literacy.

The PMFME scheme is a game-changer for India's food processing industry, particularly for small and micro enterprises that form the backbone of the sector. By providing financial assistance, infrastructure development, branding and marketing support, and skill training, the scheme empowers unorganised food processors to transition into competitive, scalable, and sustainable businesses. Additionally, the ODOP approach enhances regional agricultural produce, creates local employment opportunities, and strengthens rural economies. As the scheme progresses towards its final phase in 2024-25, it is expected to transform India's food processing landscape, ensuring higher income generation, better product quality, and improved global competitiveness.

By addressing the long-standing challenges of limited financial access, outdated technology, lack of formal training, and market constraints, the PMFME scheme plays a crucial role in shaping the future of micro food processing enterprises in India. The initiative not only contributes to the success of the 'Vocal for Local' movement but also aligns with India's vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat, where self-sufficiency and economic resilience drive national progress.



**STEAMED FOOD**  
A HEALTHY AND FLAVOURFUL  
CULINARY TRADITION

*Steamed food is one of the healthiest and oldest cooking techniques, widely appreciated for its ability to retain nutrients, enhance natural flavours, and create light yet satisfying meals. Unlike frying or roasting, steaming uses gentle, moist heat to cook food, preventing the loss of essential vitamins and minerals. This method requires no added fats, making it an excellent choice for those seeking a nutritious and balanced diet. Beyond its health benefits, steaming enhances the natural texture and taste of ingredients, allowing them to retain their original colours, flavours, and moisture. It is a preferred cooking style in many cultures and has gained renewed popularity in modern kitchens as people shift towards mindful eating and healthier lifestyles.*

The practice of steaming food is deeply rooted in culinary traditions across the world, with each region developing its own unique steamed dishes. In Asia, steaming is particularly prevalent, with China, Japan, Thailand, and India incorporating it into their traditional cuisines. Chinese dim sum is a classic example of steamed delicacies, featuring dumplings such as har gow (shrimp dumplings), siu mai (pork dumplings), and fluffy baozi (steamed buns) filled with meat, vegetables, or sweet pastes. The gentle steaming process ensures that these dumplings remain soft and juicy while preserving the richness of their fillings. Similarly, in Japan, steaming is used to prepare dishes like chawanmushi, a delicate egg custard with seafood and vegetables, which is cooked to a silky, smooth consistency. In Thailand, steamed fish with lime and chili is a popular dish where fresh fish is cooked gently to maintain its natural taste, complemented by a tangy and spicy sauce.

India is another country where steaming plays a vital role in its diverse cuisine. South Indian idlis, soft and fluffy rice cakes, are a breakfast staple that is steamed to perfection and served with coconut chutney and sambar. In Maharashtra, modaks, sweet dumplings filled with jaggery and coconut, are an integral part of religious celebrations. Gujarat offers dhokla, a steamed fermented cake made from chickpea flour, which is light, spongy, and flavoured with

mustard seeds and green chilies. In north-eastern India, momo dumplings, a close relative of Chinese dumplings, are widely enjoyed, often served with spicy dipping sauces.

Beyond Asia, steamed food is also a key element of European and Latin American cuisine. In Italy, cotechino con lenticchie, a dish of steamed pork sausage with lentils, is traditionally eaten on New Year's Eve for good luck. France has papillote-style cooking, where fish or vegetables are enclosed in parchment paper and steamed in their own juices with herbs and spices, creating a fragrant and delicate dish. In Latin America, tamales are a famous steamed food, where corn dough is filled with meat, cheese, or chilies, wrapped in banana leaves or corn husks, and steamed to perfection. These hearty, flavorful parcels have been a part of Mesoamerican cuisine for centuries.

African cuisine also features steaming as a traditional cooking method. In Ethiopia, enset, also known as the false banana, is fermented and then steamed to make kocho, a staple flatbread. Moroccan cuisine includes steamed couscous, where semolina grains are steamed multiple times

to achieve a fluffy, light texture, often served with slow-cooked meats and vegetables. Even in the Middle East, steaming is used to prepare dishes like stuffed grape leaves, where rice and meat fillings are delicately cooked inside grape leaves for a tender and flavourful bite.





Apart from cultural significance, steamed food is also highly valued for its health benefits. Since steaming preserves essential nutrients like vitamin C, B vitamins, and antioxidants, it is an excellent way to prepare vegetables, keeping them vibrant and rich in flavour. Steamed broccoli, carrots, and spinach retain more of their nutritional content compared to boiling, which can cause water-soluble vitamins to leach out. Similarly, steaming fish helps retain omega-3 fatty acids, which are crucial for heart and brain health. Because no additional oils or fats are required, steamed food is lower in calories and cholesterol, making it a preferred choice for those following a healthy lifestyle.

One of the biggest advantages of steaming is its simplicity. It requires minimal equipment—just a steaming pot, bamboo steamer, or even a simple sieve over boiling water. Modern kitchen appliances like steam ovens and electric steamers have further made steaming an accessible cooking technique for home cooks. The process is also incredibly versatile, allowing for the preparation of a wide range of dishes, from savoury meals to desserts. Steamed puddings, for instance, have been a favourite in British cuisine, with classics

like sticky toffee pudding or Christmas pudding cooked using gentle steam to maintain a moist and dense texture.

With growing awareness about healthy eating, many chefs and food enthusiasts are rediscovering steaming as a sustainable and beneficial cooking method. It not only enhances the natural flavours of ingredients but also reduces the need for excessive seasoning, oils, or artificial enhancers. As people look for ways to eat cleaner while still enjoying delicious food, steaming presents itself as an ideal solution. Whether in traditional kitchens or modern fine dining, this age-old technique continues to hold its place as one of the healthiest and most effective ways to prepare food.

Steamed food is more than just a cooking method; it is a culinary tradition that connects cultures, promotes health, and enhances the dining experience. Whether enjoying a delicate dumpling, a soft idli, a flavourful tamale, or a fragrant fish dish, steaming offers a unique way to preserve the essence of food. As we move towards a future that embraces both wellness and taste, steamed food stands as a testament to the perfect balance between nutrition and flavour.

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# WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY

## CAPTURING THE WILD IN ITS PUREST FORM

**W**ildlife photography is more than just a passion or profession; it is an art form that brings people closer to nature. It allows us to witness the beauty, rawness, and mystery of the wild without disturbing its delicate balance. Every image captured in the wild tells a story—of survival, of beauty, and of the intricate relationships between different species and their ecosystems. Unlike studio photography, where lighting and subjects can be controlled, wildlife photography is unpredictable. It demands patience, skill, knowledge of animal behaviour, and a deep respect for nature.

India, with its diverse landscapes ranging from dense forests and mighty mountains to vast grasslands and coastal regions, is home to a rich variety of wildlife. The country boasts some of the most spectacular wildlife sanctuaries and national parks, including Jim Corbett

National Park, Ranthambore, Kaziranga, Sundarbans, and Gir Forest. These locations offer photographers a chance to capture majestic creatures like Bengal tigers, Asiatic lions, elephants, rhinos, leopards, and a myriad of bird species. The challenge, however, lies in capturing these animals in their natural habitat without intruding upon their world.

### **The Masters Behind the Lens**

India has produced some of the most remarkable wildlife photographers whose work has not only brought attention to the beauty of the wild but also raised awareness about conservation. These photographers have braved extreme conditions, spent days in the wild, and displayed an unmatched dedication to documenting the natural world.

Rathika Ramasamy is one of India's most celebrated

wildlife photographers. Known for her expertise in bird photography, she has captured the most stunning images of avian species in India and beyond. Her work focuses on the delicate beauty of birds and their interaction with nature. She has inspired many young photographers, especially women, to take up wildlife photography as a profession.

Sudhir Shivaram is another legendary name in Indian wildlife photography. A former engineer turned full-time photographer, he has dedicated his life to educating and mentoring aspiring photographers. His breath-taking images of tigers, elephants, and other wildlife have earned him global recognition. He believes in ethical photography—capturing animals without disturbing their natural environment.

Shaaz Jung is a renowned photographer and filmmaker, widely known as “The Leopard Man of India.” His exceptional work in tracking and documenting melanistic leopards (black panthers) in Kabini has gained international fame. His photographs capture the elusive beauty of big cats in their most intimate and striking moments.

Sandesh Kadur is a National Geographic Fellow and an award-winning photographer whose work focuses on biodiversity conservation. His photographs and films have played a crucial role in raising awareness about India’s fragile ecosystems and the need for conservation efforts. He has traveled extensively, capturing the wild landscapes of the Western Ghats, the Himalayas, and the forests of Northeast India.

Dhritiman Mukherjee is another renowned wildlife photographer known for his deep commitment to

conservation. His work spans from the high-altitude regions of the Himalayas to the deep oceans, capturing everything from snow leopards to marine life. He has spent years documenting endangered species, and his images have been instrumental in conservation projects.

## The Challenges of Wildlife Photography

Wildlife photography is not for the faint-hearted. It requires immense patience, as one might have to wait for hours or even days to get the perfect shot. The unpredictability of animals means that photographers must always be alert and ready with their cameras. Unlike urban photography, where subjects can be directed, wildlife photographers must adapt to the movements of their subjects.

The conditions in the wild can also be extreme—scorching heat in the deserts, bone-chilling cold in the mountains, or high humidity in the forests. Photographers must be physically fit to endure long treks, unpredictable weather, and sometimes even dangerous encounters with wild animals.

Another major challenge is ethical wildlife photography. Many photographers today stress the importance of responsible photography—avoiding artificial lures, not disturbing nesting animals, and maintaining a safe distance from the wildlife. Using flash or loud noises can distress animals, and getting too close might even disrupt their natural behaviours. A true wildlife photographer follows ethical guidelines to ensure that the beauty of nature is captured without causing harm.





## The Role of Wildlife Photography in Conservation

Photography plays a vital role in wildlife conservation. A single powerful image can raise awareness about endangered species, illegal poaching, deforestation, and climate change. Many photographers use their work to educate the public and influence conservation policies. Images of tigers, elephants, rhinos, and birds in distress due to habitat destruction have led to greater efforts in protecting their environments.

Organizations like National Geographic, World Wildlife Fund (WWF), and the Wildlife Conservation Society collaborate with photographers to document and showcase the need for conservation. In India, initiatives such as “Project Tiger” and the “Save the Rhino” campaign have greatly benefited from powerful wildlife images that bring attention to the plight of these species.

## The Beauty of the Wild Through the Lens

One of the most rewarding aspects of wildlife photography is the chance to witness nature in its raw and untouched form. Whether it's the intense gaze of a tiger, the graceful flight of a bird, or the playful interaction of a herd of elephants, every photograph tells a story. The thrill of capturing a rare species or witnessing an extraordinary moment in the wild is what keeps photographers passionate about their craft.

Bird photography, in particular, has gained immense popularity in India. With over 1,300 species of birds found in the country, enthusiasts travel to hotspots

like Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary, Ranganathittu, Chilika Lake, and the Sundarbans to capture rare and migratory birds. The colours, patterns, and behaviours of these avian species make bird photography an exciting and intricate field within wildlife photography.

## The Future of Wildlife Photography in India

With advancements in camera technology, wildlife photography has become more accessible to aspiring photographers. High-speed cameras, powerful zoom lenses, and drone photography have opened new dimensions in capturing the wild. However, the real challenge lies not just in having good equipment but in understanding animal behaviour, reading the environment, and practicing patience.

Social media has also played a huge role in popularizing wildlife photography. Platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube allow photographers to showcase their work to a global audience, inspiring others to appreciate and protect wildlife. Photography competitions, wildlife exhibitions, and online workshops have further encouraged young talents to explore this field.

Despite its challenges, wildlife photography remains one of the most thrilling and fulfilling genres of photography. It requires dedication, knowledge, and a love for the natural world. Every image captured contributes to a greater cause—preserving the beauty of the wild for future generations. As more photographers take up this art, the hope is that their work will continue to inspire conservation, foster respect for wildlife, and deepen humanity's connection to nature.



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A photograph of a hand reaching upwards towards a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. The hand is positioned on the right side of the frame, with fingers slightly spread. In the foreground, there are several long, narrow, green leaves, likely from a plant like an olive tree, which are slightly out of focus. The overall mood is one of hope and aspiration.

# REFLECTING ON A YEAR OF CHANGE

THE JOURNEY TOWARDS A NEW  
BEGINNING

*As March unfolds, the world transitions into a season of reflection and renewal. It is the end of a financial year, a closing chapter, and a doorway to fresh possibilities. It is a time when individuals and businesses pause to assess their journey—celebrating achievements, acknowledging lessons learned, and setting new goals for the future.*

Unlike the more festive and emotional New Year's Eve, which is often filled with grand resolutions and celebrations, March signifies a more practical shift. It is the month where reality meets vision, where decisions shape the road ahead, and where the seeds of the future are sown. Whether in personal life, career aspirations, or economic ventures, this period offers an opportunity to evaluate progress and make meaningful course corrections.

### **A Year of Growth and Transformation**

The past year has been a rollercoaster of change. Industries have evolved, global economies have faced challenges, and personal lives have been redefined by shifting priorities. Many have discovered the importance of adaptability, innovation, and resilience. Businesses have embraced digital transformations, individuals have reimagined career paths, and communities have found strength in unity.

This year has been about learning to navigate uncertainties while embracing opportunities. Entrepreneurs have explored new markets, professionals have upskilled to stay relevant, and families have learned to balance work, health, and well-being in a rapidly changing world. The struggles have been real, but so have the triumphs. Each challenge overcome has added to the strength of individuals and enterprises alike.

### **The Power of Reflection**

March offers a unique chance to look back and assess the journey so far. Reflection is not just about counting successes but also about acknowledging setbacks with grace. It is about understanding what worked, what did not, and what changes are necessary for a better tomorrow.

For businesses, this is the time to review performance metrics, financial statements, and growth strategies. It is an opportunity to fine-tune operations, set new revenue targets, and realign business models to changing market demands. March is a turning point—a moment to ask: Are we moving in the right direction? Have we adapted enough? What is the next big step?

For individuals, reflection is equally valuable. Career professionals may reassess their paths—whether

to continue on the same trajectory or explore new opportunities. Students may evaluate their learning progress and set goals for the coming academic year. Families may look at financial planning, health priorities, and lifestyle changes. The key lies in understanding one's own journey and identifying areas of improvement and growth.

### **Embracing Renewal and Setting Intentions**

Every ending marks the beginning of something new. As one financial year ends and another begins, it is a time to set fresh intentions with clarity and confidence. This is not about making impulsive resolutions but about laying down a structured plan for the months ahead.

For businesses, the new financial year is a clean slate—an opportunity to innovate, invest wisely, and drive growth. Budget allocations, hiring plans, and expansion strategies take center stage. Many organizations use this time to reset goals, launch new products, and strengthen partnerships.

For individuals, this renewal phase is just as critical. Setting clear, realistic goals can bring focus and motivation. It could be about personal wellness, career advancement, financial security, or even pursuing passions that were long set aside. The power of intention lies in taking small, consistent steps toward a meaningful future.

### **Looking Forward with Optimism**

As March draws to a close, it is essential to embrace the future with a mindset of optimism and purpose. The lessons of the past year serve as a guide, but the journey ahead is shaped by determination and effort. Change is inevitable, but growth is a choice.

The coming year holds immense potential for those who dare to dream and take action. Whether in business or personal life, success belongs to those who are willing to adapt, learn, and move forward with courage. The challenges of yesterday are stepping stones for tomorrow's victories.

March is more than just a month—it is a moment of transformation. It is the bridge between what has been and what can be. As we step into the next phase of our journey, let us do so with confidence, clarity, and the unwavering belief that the best is yet to come.



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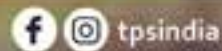


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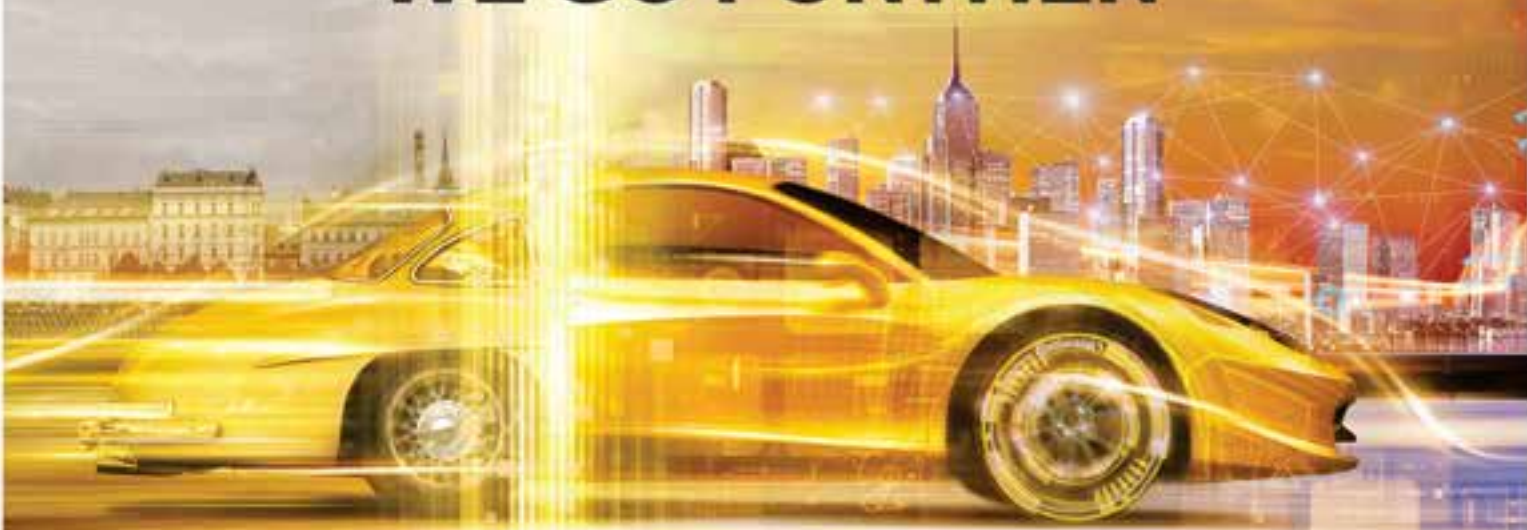
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