

## The media landscape is not pluralistic

Readers may appreciate the role of a newspaper, if they are aware of the important findings of the Media Ownership Monitor, a research project carried out in India by Reporters Without Borders and the Delhi-based digital media company, DataLEADS. Though India has some 1.2 lakh print publications, over 550 FM radio stations and nearly 880 satellite TV channels, including more than 380 claiming to be news channels, the study says the Indian media landscape is hardly pluralistic. The research found the media space to be "tight", with state monopoly in radio news, and regional newspaper markets being "controlled by a small number of powerful owners, some of whom have strong political affiliations". It notes that the production and distribution of content are getting concentrated in the hands of a few. The research attributes the high level of ownership concentration to "considerable gaps in the regulatory framework".

I take specific complaints seriously and I rely on the core values and cardinal principles of journalism to evaluate the merits of those complaints. But is it possible to examine vague, sweeping statements that cast aspersions on journalists and writers? A decade ago, novelist and philosopher Umberto Eco identified two forms of censorship: censorship through silence and censorship through noise. While all of us are aware of censorship through silence, wherein the state disapproves of certain ideas, we are not conscious enough of the censorship that flows from noise. In his lecture at the conference of the Italian Association for Semiotic Studies in 2009, Eco paraphrased the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein to explain a trend that is engulfing us today: "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must talk a great deal." The lecture is a part of an anthology of essays, "Inventing the Enemy" — again, a malady that is afflicting us.

In "Censorship and silence", Eco eloquently explained how innocuous stories are given disproportionate space so that readers do not notice the silence in covering important stories that the media ought to have covered. He used the example of how the press controlled by Silvio Berlusconi undermined the authority of the magistrate who criticised the Prime Minister by reporting that he wore turquoise socks. According to Eco, to make noise you don't have to invent stories; "all you have to do is report a story that is real but irrelevant, yet creates a hint of suspicion by the simple fact that it has been reported. It is true and irrelevant that the magistrate wears turquoise socks, but the fact it has been reported creates a suggestion of something not quite confessed, leaving a mark, an impression. Nothing is more difficult to dispose of than an irrelevant but true story." All of us watching prime-time news channels in India can relate to this.

As a news ombudsman, I make a crucial distinction between multiple voices and noise that is meant to drown out voices. I am aware of the fact that with regards to censorship, noise can be more powerful than silence because those who deploy this tactic are aware of the impact of this noise: "An accusation that is not an accusation cannot be challenged." Journalism is neither silence nor noise but a credible voice.

## Global Iconic Awards 2019

Global Iconic Awards, an Initiative by Pulse Events & Wedding by Sunny Sabharwal, held in Udaipur by Ferns N Petals catapulted amass talent and the potential of individual and corporate sectors that are building or leading successful businesses. Pulse Wedding Planner Pvt. Ltd. by Sunny Sabharwal is a wedding planning and event management company that works to curate destination weddings & other events globally.

The charm of the Global Iconic Awards, 2019 was enhanced by the presence of celebrity guest Parineeti Chopra and Kainaar Arora. The presence of many other renowned artists



like the Bollywood artist Chunky Pandey, Gulshan Grover, Navraj Hans, Dilbagh Singh, Kaptaan Laadi and many other celebrities became a part of this ceremony. Chunky Pandey received the award on behalf of Ananya Pandey as the best female debut. People from PAN India became a part of this prestigious award ceremony. This show turned out to be one of the biggest award shows in the history of Delhi-NCR.

## Greater dimension with "RIIFT Fashion Mall"

**Mumbai:** With the changing of time, online shopping has become a bigger and important trend. It is the more convenient way to allow people to shop at their own comfort and discretion and that too at very reasonable prices. Through e-commerce platforms, the manufacturer finds it easier to connect with the consumers for their products and services. In other words, businessmen and customers have embraced online sales as a cheaper and fitting in well with their needs not only within the country but also across the globe.

Radical Innovation In Fashion Trends (RIIFT), a company based in Kochi (Cochin) is joining the ranks of digital revolution within the 'fashion industry' a big way.

The company is all geared for something enormous and inimitable organization. The company earmarked its launch on Saturday, 8 June 2019 in a grand way at Hotel Athli, near domestic airport, Vile Parle (East) with their division 'RIIFT Fashion Mall Limited' and initiate the 'website' and 'mobile app' of RIIFT Fashion Mall in the presence of guests, and media personals.

The program was helmed by Mr. Roy P. Anthony - the Company's Director of Event & Promotion, Captain Hari Kumar - Director of Overseas Operations, Mr. Suresh Babu - Director of Marketing, Anil Vijay - Marketing Head, Mr. Ali C. P. - Executive Director of IT and many other dignitaries. The event began with the lighting of the traditional lamp by the Chief Guest - Dr. Ajeet Jain - Lions Club's District Governor M/J Lion. Marketing staffers of the company, Hitesh Oza and Praveen Vohra were honoured with the Best Performers' Award.

# Javed Akhtar launched IRS Sonal Sonkavde's new book So What at Crossword, Juhu



Renowned Poet, Lyricist, Screenwriter and Socio - Political Activist, Javed Akhtar came specially to launch Sonal Sonkavde, an astute IRS new book 'So What?' at Crossword, Juhu. Her book 'So What?' - A Women's journey from Turmoil to Transformation. This is her second book after "Comma". Sonal Sonkavde is also a versatile singer and actress. She has also launched her short film and music videos.

So What? Blur:

- Pari's life couldn't have been better. Admission into a prestigious academy, dotting parents, a bright career and her beloved by her side.

- But deep within this idyllic exterior, is a volcano, waiting to turn her life into an avalanche of unavoidable events: A tormenter who plays with her dignity, a set of obscene videos, a volley of

court cases and constant public scrutiny.

- The more life challenges her, the stronger Pari becomes. Against the consent of her relatives, Pari goes ahead with a legal case, more to set a precedence for thousands of women who suffer in silence, taking the matter to its logical conclusion, passing through mental turmoil and social pressures.

- The book poses a question that every troubled woman - nay, every human being - must answer. So what if life didn't turn out as expected. There's still more to life... beyond the trouble, trauma and even social stigma.

- Fast paced, with suspense unfolding in its initial pages, the book traces Pari's life from a dreamy girl to a determined and decisive woman of substance. Based on true

events, So What? is a must read for not only women, but all those who value human dignity and character.

During the launch event, the authoress mentioned of rising number of suicides because of heartbreaks. She advocated the youth to read the book inspired by a true story and hopes that every reader will turn out to be an independent decision maker, lives for oneself, and does not let her or his dreams die because of societal pressures and stigmas.

She categorically stated that a woman's dignity doesn't lie in her body parts, but it lies in her attitude and aura. She cited examples of Gautam Buddha visiting Amrapali; significance of Khajuraho and Kamasutra scriptures to make her point that it's not Indian culture which has linked dignity of women to her body parts.

Indian culture was always liberal, and sex was not a taboo subject. But over the period, some elements did a planned social and cultural plunder. The patriarchal mindset aimed at putting women within the confines of four walls.

The status of women was reduced significantly, and they were subjected to all types of exploitation and subjugation. Ironically, this is not the legacy of Indian culture or tradition. In ancient Indian culture, women had an exalted status and they were revered and worshipped.

The authoress further emphasised that it's an unfortunate irony today that rape victims don't come out in public because it is presumed that she has lost her dignity and not the perpetrator. She suffers in silence and escalates her victimisation. She feels socially disempowered and disowned and fails to understand that the journey from a victim to survivor lies in the mind only. It's within and not without. My Pari, the protagonist has a distinct attitude. She not only has the courage to fight her battle for dignity but also the strength to face the society even when her sex tapes get leaked in public.

Authoress further questioned why the counterpart involved in crime of rape never has loss of dignity?

There was an intense discussion on different social

issues during the book launch. Pari's journey from clinging to the troubled relationship to 'let go' of her husband who deserted her is the essence of the book. Ms. Sonal Sonkavde raised significant issues related to the upbringing of the girl child in India. Right from her childhood, she is brought up in a very protective way. She is taught lessons on household prudence but not individual independence. Their sole journey of life lies between father's abode to husband's home as if there is nothing more to achieve in this world. They don't know how to stay alone.

They are never exposed to loneliness and hence they can't handle desertion. They are not able to handle their finances well as if financial wisdom is only the domain of men. They don't know how to enjoy their own company. They don't know how to travel alone, eat alone in a restaurant, enjoy a movie alone and hence they suffer miserably when left alone.

She highlighted these issues so that women must know the importance of themselves and can enjoy their life on their own terms. This is very important in the present scenario because of the significant increase in the number of cases of desertion as marriage is no longer considered a sacrosanct institution.

She further said that though times are changing, and many women today are making their

mark in the society but still much needs to be done. In urban areas, there is a stupendous paradigm shift in raising a girl child, but at the grass root level things are still the same.

She emphasised the need to make Indian women more independent in all areas of life; where they can take their own decisions independently and more holistically. If something untoward happens, they should be able to handle it by themselves so that they do not have to rely on others.

Editors Dr. Gazal Goyal, Rajesh Aiyer also were present during the book launch and they both elaborated on the philosophy the book lays down. Love lies in letting go; communication is the essence of every relationship; law of attraction; chose what you fight for; stop owning problems; draw a bigger line in life if you want people to forget smaller line; change in thought pattern leads to change in aura and energy levels were the key points emphasized by them.

They said, "If you are put to extraordinary situations, you are lucky as you evolve more. Most painful times lead to ultimate growth. Many achievers have gone through a lot; from trouble to trophies; from tribulation to triumph and from turmoil to transformation". They also spoke on healing, Forgiveness, self-victimisation and reformative justice.

## Women Icons Team up for Malnutrition & Menstrual Hygiene

**New Delhi:** Malnutrition and lack of Menstrual Hygiene together makes a reason every year for a large number of deaths and diseases. Taking the cause head-on, Inner Wheels-an International organisation works on women's economic and



social empowerment aims to bring the millions of women and girls in India out of malnutrition. A one day power packed conference was organised to take up these two important issues by Innerwheels Dist 301. The conference was attended by over 500 women across the sections including Bollywood diva Kalki Koechlin, Tisca Chopra, veteran actress Shabana Azmi and Preeti Gugnani Distt Chairman Innerwheels. In Presence of Bollywood celebrities Preeti Gugnani also awarded many women for their contributions in the project.

Speaking on the occasion, Inner wheels District Chairman Ms. Preeti Gugnani said "In India, there is lack of menstrual hygiene primarily due to lack of knowledge and access to amenities to ensure proper health and hygiene. Many women suffer from infections due to lack of proper menstrual hygiene, result-

ing in poor health, and adding to healthcare burden. We believe it's a time to change and we are at forefront to bring this change. In endeavor to educate and make women and adolescent girls aware about importance of menstrual hygiene.

Ms. Preeti Gugnani also celebrates the success of her signature project Asmita, that she has started last year to improve the standard of living of woman by making them well equipped with varied skills. Self Defense technique, Driving, computer training, stitching and tailoring to enhance vocational skills along with increase awareness of health and hygiene. Asmita has increased the self confidence of hundreds of woman and provided them a better Life.

Describing about the International Social Project 2019-2021 District Chairman Preeti Gugnani said, "Time is up for crediting just our forefathers, it's time to recognize the sacrifices of our foremothers also. Women are more likely than men be poor, hungry, victims of violence. We need to ensure that the basic needs of women & girls are met for their well being and secure future."

Addressing a converges of 500 women Bollywood Veteran Actress Shabana Azami said, I am happy that through this conference we are trying to break the taboo around menstruation and raising our voice to educate women for maintaining menstrual hygiene."

Congratulating woman achievers and District Chairman Preeti Gugnani for her great initiative Bollywood diva Kalki Koechlin Said, "Empowering woman isn't about making women strong. Women are already strong. It's about changing the way you recognize the strength of woman. We Should take care ourselves and our daughter along with son and husband equally."

## Toyota Kirloskar Motor forays Toyota Glanza

**Udaipur:** Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) marked its entry into premium hatchback segment with the official launch of Toyota Glanza. Designed to cater to the needs of the youth car owners, this newest premium hatchback is sophisticated with a suite of intuitive features and intelligent design that comes together with unmatched comfort and safety. The name Glanza is derived from a German word which means Brilliance/ Radiance/ Sparkle. True to its name, this new hatchback is specially designed

keeping the youth customer in mind "who likes to outshine in the society". The new Toyota Glanza is just as stylish on the inside as it is on the outside. Plush and comfy Ergonomic Design, swanky one-of-a-kind Dual-Tone interiors, and irresistible Smoke Silver accents blend perfectly to create a cabin that's truly a class apart. Equipped with a powerful yet fuel efficient K-series petrol engines to deliver superior driving experience with exceptional power and low-end torque with seamless CVT/MT transmission, this latest offering from Toyota comes with BS-VI compliant engines. In order to further enhance customer delight, the company is offering superior warranty of 3year/100K Kms & extended upto 5year/220K Kms along with the 'Toyota ownership' experience, Q-Service app utilization and Toyota Connect facilities, apart from attractive finance schemes. Present at the launch Mr. Masakazu Yoshimura, Managing Director, Toyota Kirloskar Motor said, "The Automotive Ecosystem is witnessing a transition with rise in income levels, increased awareness about products & services, rapidly evolving customer requirements, new technologies and innovation, changing mobility infrastructure. Customers are the center point and we have to constantly upgrade and innovate to cater to the changing aspirations. "To put a smile on our customers' faces" We will continue to create mobility that is valued and cherished. Speaking on the new offering, Mr. N. Raja, Deputy Managing Director, Toyota Kirloskar Motor said, "We are happy to announce our entry into the premium hatchback segment to cater to the growing demands of our existing and prospective customers. At Toyota, we truly believe in 'Customer First' philosophy, constantly striving to evaluate the evolving customer expectations & dynamics of the market. With the fast growth of the Indian economy, customer lifestyles have evolved due to higher disposable incomes. The market potential is expanding with the growing aspirations of the Indian middle class, especially in the non-metros. We have been capturing customer voice at all touch points to give them what he or she wants.



## Airtel Payments Bank enables BHIM

**Udaipur:** Airtel Payments Bank said that it has enabled open loop BHIM UPI based payments at over 500,000 merchant points across India, allowing consumers to make digital payments for good and services by using any BHIM UPI enabled bank or payments app over their mobile phones.

Airtel Payments Bank's payment solution for merchants allows consumers to make instant cashless payments from their mobile phones, directly through their savings bank accounts by just scanning a merchant QR code through their preferred BHIM UPI enabled app. Airtel Payments Bank users can also use this QR to pay directly through their Savings Bank account or wallets using the Airtel Thanks app. Consumers no longer need to go through the hassle of downloading and maintaining numerous payment apps, and can pay with any BHIM UPI enabled application of their choice. Making digital payments seamless as well as secure, Airtel Payments Bank powered BHIM UPI payments will enable customers to pay anywhere, anytime through a single interface. Airtel Payments Bank powered BHIM UPI based payments are also beneficial for the merchants since they can now easily receive payments



directly into their bank account, reducing the risk of cash management for them.

Further, instead of cluttering the counter with multiple modes of payment acceptance, the merchant can now have a single QR code at their shop, making it convenient for them as well as consumers.

Even at the back end, the merchants now only need to manage a single application over having to manage the applications of multiple vendors. Airtel Payments Bank merchants are a mix of small merchants as well as Large Format Retail outlets and covers almost all consumer categories such as food, lifestyle, electronics and more.

Airtel Payments Bank plans to significantly ramp up its offline merchant base and plans to power at least one million offline merchants with its payment solution over the coming months. Anubrata Biswas, MD & CEO - Airtel Payments Bank said, "We are committed to the vision of creating a cashless Indian economy by providing innovative and intuitive solutions with equal focus on consumer and merchant convenience. We are delighted to partner with NPCI to bring BHIM UPI powered payment solutions at millions of merchants across India, enabling seamless and secure digital payments.

This is an important step towards our aim of creating a ubiquitous digital payments ecosystem for all consumers." Dilip Ashbe, MD & CEO, NPCI said, "We are happy to collaborate with Airtel Payments Bank for BHIM UPI based payment solutions as it brings us closer to our mission of covering every citizen of the country through one or the other mode of digital payments. We believe that there is already a significant shift to a mobile-first strategy with consumers using functionality rich and user-friendly apps for P2P (peer-to-peer) or P2M (peer-to-merchant) payments.

Our partnership with Airtel Payments Bank has currently enabled over half a million offline merchants to receive payments through UPI QR Code. This will help consumers to make instant and hassle free transactions digitally thereby adding to seamless customer experience."