



This ghazal singer (born this day in 1951), first performed on stage during the Sino-Indian War, when he sang *Aye Mere Watan Ke Logo*, and was given ₹51 by an audience member. He was awarded the Padma Shri in 2006.



In our first collection, eight people stepped forward and gave us pills. Later, more joined the initiative and in two weeks we received over 3,200 tablets from over 38 people

Supriya Malik with daughter Sahria

SHANTANU DAVID

WHILE many of us batted down the hatches and prepared to ride out the second Covid wave, this mother-daughter duo, like so many other newly minted heroes in the Capital, decided to do what they can to help.

Supriya Malik, founder of Indulgeo Essentials, and her daughter Sahria Malik, 11-year-old student of Pathways World School Aravali, have started an initiative called The Covid Medicine Recycle to help Covid-19 patients with medical supplies. Supriya's company uses all-natural and organic compounds to deliver custom made skin and hair care solutions. "My daughter helps me run the digital aspect of my skin care brand and is, therefore, allowed two hours a day on social media.

A couple of weeks ago, Sahria saw umpteen numbers of messages asking for medicines on social media. "She asked me if we could do something about it. I wondered how we could use our network and that's how we came up with this initiative," shares Supriya.

The duo then began picking up unneeded medicines from recovered Covid-19 patients and employed the logistics of Indulgeo Essentials to make the supplies available to people who needed them. However, they are not buying medicines to give to the people, but instead, collecting extra or leftover medicines from people all over India post their recovery, and facilitating it to reach the people in need. From Fabiflu to Medrol and Crocin to vitamin tablets, they have also received thermometers, oximeters and nebulisers.

"In our first collection, eight people stepped forward and gave us pills. Later, more joined the initiative and in two weeks we received over 3,200 tablets from over 38 people" says Supriya. Their first set of medicines was sent to a gurdwara in Agra that had been running oxygen langars. Over 900 medicines were also provided to a health camp for the underprivileged in Gurugram called Na-

CARING IS SHARING

The Covid Medicine Recycle initiative by this mother and daughter helps Covid-19 patients get medical supplies



Sanitising unused medicines from recovered Covid-19 patients before passing it on

grik Ekta Manch. In just two weeks, they have been able to collect medicines to provide for needy individuals in Delhi, Mumbai, and Hyderabad. The initiative has also received participation from students of St Stephens College, who collaborated with them to create a database of donors and beneficiaries.

"In these difficult times, no matter how privileged or underprivileged the person is, they should not struggle to find resources. Instead of just verifying leads for somebody, I

thought of providing them with what they need," says Sahria, adding, "Thankfully, with my mom and her entire team who is helping me with the logistics and the communications, we have been able to help many people who were struggling to get medications."

If you are a Covid survivor and you would like to donate your leftover medications, please contact on Instagram: covidmedication.recycle or WhatsApp: +917042780014 and the logistics will be managed for you.

Embracing gratitude in isolation

ON February 25, I had returned home from a three-day solo spiritual retreat. The same day I connected with all my clients to check upon their progress and found out that the client whose session I took last - a day before going to the retreat - was unwell. Soon, I had a fever and felt heaviness in my head.

Right after mini-isolation, I got into another round of isolation at home and waited to get tested on the third day, as advised by the family doctor. I knew it was Covid as the next day my client confirmed he had tested positive.

Apart from RT-PCR, I got a fever panel, urine test, CBC, IL-6, D-dimer, C-RP and LFT, done. Then, my report came positive. Luckily, no one else in my family got affected. By the fourth day, my sense of smell and taste diminished and then completely went away. This expanded my practice of gratitude for my senses and body. We often don't realise the importance of things till we actually lose them.

Being a psychotherapist and a coach, I put all my physical sessions on hold but offered to be there online or over call. As March began, I lost all physical strength and could barely keep my eyes open. I slept through four days and relied on a protein-rich diet with a lot of liq-



COPING WITH COVID 2021

COVID CHRONICLES

Day 8 - Day 9
Healing, chants, love, alternative therapies, care from family, friends, loved ones, clients - I feel better.

(From left) gifts from well-wishers for Tugnait; her Covid posts on social media; a get-well-soon card from her daughter



uid intake. Coconut water, curd, lemon water, yogurt and ORS always remained around me. Once a day, I ate a small portion of fruits - banana, apple, kiwi, strawberry and guava - and would conclude the day with turmeric milk.

My appetite had decreased but I kept myself nourished, and regularly took the prescribed medicines - Sinarest, Vitamin C, Limcee, Azee -150, Becapsule Performance, Vermikind 12, Vizylac and Codistar - DX 5ml. I was advised to inhale steam thrice a day. Fortunately, my fever and saturation levels were under control and I didn't have body ache.



Chandni Tugnait

I was swamped with gifts, flowers, love and blessings in isolation. But I missed my daughter immensely as for the first time in six years I had not seen or hugged her for 21 days straight. My mother-in-law cooked for everyone and took care of everything, my parents checked in on me regularly, and my husband Gaurav made sure that I took steam, and ate at regular intervals.

Being a healer, I continued to clear my aura and chakras and chanted for quick recovery whenever I could. My friend Shalini, also a healer, chanted and prayed for me along with my best friend, Piyush. Gradu-

ally, I started getting my energy back. I started posting my experience on social media in a light, fun way with a motivational lesson at the end of every post.

By March 10, my sense of smell and taste partially returned and the cough had subsided. When I tested negative on March 14, I immediately rushed to hold my little one, and it was the biggest joy in the world. I resumed supporting my clients actively from March 18 and with the alternative therapies, healing and energy work. I didn't face any side-effects, energy crisis or post-Covid symptoms.

Psychotherapist Dr Chandni Tugnait is the Founder of Gate Way of Healing - As told to Nikita Sharma

B'TOWN NEWS

Ahaan to stream on Netflix from May 15

EXPRESS FEATURES

EARLIER this year, Director Nikhil Pherwani's *Ahaan* released in theatres. Starring debutant Abuli Mamaji and Arif Zakaria, the film highlights the friendship between a young man with Down Syndrome and a middle-aged man suffering from OCD. Following its big screen release, *Ahaan* will now stream on Netflix from May 15. Speaking about the digital premiere, Nikhil said, "The entire team is over the moon with this announcement. OTT platforms have paved a way for niche films to find their audience. It was such an honour to know that our slice-of-life movie will find its own lovable audience."

Ahaan also features Niharika Singh, Plabita Borthakur, and Rajit Kapur. It's the debut film by Abuli Mamaji, a young actor with Down Syndrome in the titular role.



Poster of Ahaan

NIKITA SHARMA

IN April, over 60 Proveda entrepreneurs earned over ₹1 lakh; the highest earned was ₹20 lakh. Started in 2019, the direct selling company Proveda India gave full-time business opportunity with equal profit share to over one lakh people in 2020, touching ₹31 crore with a growth of 300 per cent from 2019.

"When the country went into lockdown, we moved towards digital direct selling business and ensured at-home deliveries. As we are selling nutritional supplements and essential goods, we have not been affected," informs Aseem Sood, 38, Managing Director, Proveda India that runs supermarkets in Rajokri, Seelampur, Najafgarh, Chauhan Patti in Delhi-NCR.

Social media must have boosted sales, but it can never replace the one-on-one trust factor; feels Sood. "Many people lost their jobs due to the pandemic and direct selling gave them the chance to become a part of full-time and part-time business models," he adds.

At present, 5.1 million people in India are associated with direct selling. Of these, 60 per cent are women. Sood says, "We are seeing a growth in terms of direct sellers in India. In 2016-17, there were 5.1 million direct sellers that rose to 5.7 million in 2018-19. This figure indicates that almost 800 people join the industry every day.

This business model is one of the major contributors to the economic development of most of the developed countries majorly in India. The key factor 'low investments and high returns' makes it the key driver, and it is estimated that by 2025, the direct selling industry in India will be worth ₹645 billion."

The Proveda journey began when Sood, then 25, started Proveda Herbs, manufacturing personal care products for over 140 companies, and exporting to 14 countries. Its in-house brand TBC By Nature offers products ranging from bleach, face cream, face wash, massage cream, hair remover cream, scrub, masks, and soaps, etc. "After completing an MBA from Coventry University, UK, I worked in the corporate world for five years,

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES WITH EQUAL PROFIT SHARE



Proveda offers a variety of agro, home care, personal care, nutrition and FMCG products

with companies such as WIPRO Infotech (India), Peugeot (UK), and Barclay Bank (UK). As India was a growing market and fastest economy then, people were shifting towards natural and Ayurvedic products. I believed that this was the right time to take Ayurveda forward," he shares.

Proveda India believes in creating a strong platform for leadership. "Our idea is to build a direct selling company that is 'of the people' and 'for the people'. With the manufacturing capacity of over 500+ products our strongest pillar is our mass to class products, and our strong education system: Edu-Veda. As part of it, we have an intensive plan for offline and online training every month which leads the entrepreneurs towards their goals," he adds.

Proveda India offers a variety of agro, home care, personal care, nutrition and FMCG products. But the journey wasn't easy. "Some people assume that a career in direct selling is tough and not a good option. Helping people overcome these thoughts was a struggle, but Proveda India did a great job at changing this mindset," adds Sood.

Doesn't Proveda view other direct selling companies as their competitors? "The market size is so big, every com-

pany can do well and evolve with time.

Going forward, we aim to have over 10 lakh Provedians with a turnover of ₹500 crore by 2025," he concludes.



Aseem Sood

EXPRESS FEATURES

AMAZON Prime Video's critically-acclaimed series *Paatal Lok* has completed a year. Created by Sudip Sharma, the investigative thriller boasted an array of powerful performances, from Jaideep Ahlawat's wash-up cop to Neeraj Kabi's primetime journalist. Also lauded for his performance was actor Abhishek Banerjee, who played the menacing Hatoda Tyagi.

Looking back on the show's journey, Banerjee says, "Sudip sir went to watch *Stree* in theatre one day and he called me next day saying that he wanted me to try for Hatoda Tyagi!! He said, 'He saw a maniac in my eyes'. It was a shocker, I didn't expect that, I stared at myself in the mirror looking for the maniac in me."

Banerjee, who was also a casting director on the show, says he initially did not find the role exciting. "Tyagi didn't have many dialogues, even the screen

Abhishek Banerjee on one year of his role in Paatal Lok



time was less compared to other characters! I was half hearted about attempting the audition plus I was the casting director too so didn't want to be in an embarrassing situa-

tion where I get to hear the news of my own rejection from the team."

However, producer Karnesh Sharma and Sudip convinced him to take the part. "They

were not liking the other options I presented to them for Hathoda's role! Finally after a long internal duel I gathered courage and gave the audition! I gave it my all but still was nervous when I finally sent them the test. Next morning Karnesh sir called, I picked it up anxiously and then I was told that they really like my audition and I am on for the part! Phew! That was such a relief. It was only the beginning of a difficult yet beautiful journey," Banerjee recalls.

Abhishek was recently seen in the anthology film *Ajeb Dastaans*. His upcoming projects are *Rashmi Rocket*, *Bhediya*, *Aankh Micholi*, *Dostana 2* and *Helmet*.



Interiors of a Proveda store