



Edition

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MAY 2024

Feminine Fortitude

Stories of Strength from Nashik's Leading Ladies



Feminine Fortitude

Stories of Strength from Nashik's Leading Ladies



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THANK YOU FOR YOUR UNDERSTANDING AND CONTINUED SUPPORT.

SINCERELY,

FEMME FORWARD EDITORIAL TEAM

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"Dear Readers,

As we prepare to embark on another captivating journey through the pages of Voice Vista magazine, I am honored to introduce you to our latest edition: 'Feminine Fortitude'.

As the Chief editor of this esteemed publication, it has been a privilege to witness the evolution of Voice Vista and the incredible stories we have had the opportunity to share. From our inaugural issue, 'Femme Forward', to the captivating narratives in 'Pedal Passion', 'Kankavali', and 'Vinayaki Gudde', each edition has been a testament to the diverse voices and experiences that make our magazine unique.



In 'Feminine Fortitude', we delve deeper into the lives of remarkable women who have overcome obstacles, shattered glass ceilings, and made a significant impact in their respective fields. From groundbreaking entrepreneurs to visionary leaders, this edition celebrates the strength, resilience, and unwavering determination of women everywhere.

As a Chief-editor, my role is to ensure that each story is crafted with care and precision, allowing the essence of each woman's journey to shine through. It is my hope that the stories featured in 'Feminine Fortitude' inspire you, uplift you, and remind you of the incredible power that lies within each and every one of us.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated team of writers, photographers, and designers, whose passion and creativity bring the pages of Voice Vista to life. And to you, our cherished readers, thank you for joining us on this journey and for allowing us to share these inspiring stories with you.

Here's to celebrating the indomitable spirit of women and the transformative power of feminine fortitude.

Warm regards,

Dr Anagha Naik

Chief Editor,

Feminine Fortitude



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"Dear Readers,

As we journey through the fifth edition of Voice Vista magazine, I am filled with an overwhelming sense of gratitude and excitement. Since our humble beginnings in March, each edition has been a testament to the incredible stories and voices that define our publication.

From our debut issue, 'Femme Forward', to 'Pedal Passion' showcasing the inspiring journeys of cyclists, and 'Kankavali' and 'Vinayaki Gudde' exploring diverse themes, our magazine has been a canvas for celebrating uniqueness and resilience.

Now, as we unveil 'Feminine Fortitude', I am thrilled to present a collection of stories that illuminate the strength and grace of women who have excelled in their respective fields. Through this edition, we shine a light on the remarkable achievements of these trailblazers, inspiring others to pursue their dreams with courage and determination.

'Feminine Fortitude' is more than just a title; it is a celebration of the indomitable spirit that resides within each woman. From entrepreneurs and artists to leaders and innovators, the women featured in this edition embody the essence of resilience and perseverance.

I am deeply grateful to our contributors, whose passion and talent breathe life into the pages of Voice Vista. To our readers, thank you for embarking on this journey with us and for allowing us to share these inspiring stories with you.

As we continue to evolve and grow, let us embrace the power of feminine fortitude and celebrate the extraordinary women who shape our world.

With warmest regards,

Pooja Prasun

Founder & Owner
Feminine Fortitude



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अध्यात्मिक, पौराणिक, ऐतिहासिक वारसा लाभलेले नाशिक शहर आता मेट्रो सिटी कडे वाटचाल करत आहे. 'गोल्डन ट्रॅंगल' चा भाग होत असलेल्या नाशिक नगरीतील स्त्री शक्तीचा नवनवीन क्षेत्रात स्वतःला सिद्ध करतानाचा काटेरी वाटेवरील सोनेरी प्रवास म्हणजे 'Feminine Fortitude' हे मासिक.

प्रतिकूल परिस्थितीवर धैर्याने मात करत पारंपारिक क्षेत्रासह आधुनिक क्षेत्रात स्वतःचं वेगळं स्थान निर्माण करणाऱ्या महिलांचा हा सन्मान. या कर्तृत्ववान महिलांनी प्राप्त केलेलं यश याचंच फक्त सेलिब्रेशन न करता या महिलांनी त्यांच्या अंगी विकसित केलेलं धैर्य, बुद्धीचातुर्य, करूणा असे अनेक गुण यासह सामाजिक बांधिलकी जोपासण्यासाठी जाणीवपूर्वक केलेले प्रयत्न समाजासमोर मांडण्याचा आमचा छोटासा प्रयत्न. येणाऱ्या पिढीसाठी 'Feminine Fortitude' चा हा अंक नक्कीच मार्गदर्शक ठरेल अशी आम्ही आशा बाळगतो.

The Voice Vista Portal च्या माध्यमातून दर महिन्याला आम्ही विविध संकल्पना आणि विषय घेऊन नियमितपणे आपल्या भेटीला येत आहोत. 'Feminine Fortitude' हा पाचवा शब्दगुच्छ आमच्या वाचकांच्या हाती देताना आम्हाला मनस्वी आनंद होत आहे.

जर्नलिस्ट सुनिता चौहाण
संपादिका (मराठी अंक),
Feminine Fortitude



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RUCHITA THAKUR

In the heart of Nashik, amidst the vibrant tapestry of its communities, there shines a beacon of hope and empowerment: Ruchita Thakur. With a passion for community engagement and a vision for positive change, Ruchita stands at the helm of Radio Vishwas, a transformative force in the lives of countless individuals. Her dedication, compassion, and unwavering commitment to uplifting others illuminate the path towards a brighter future for all.

1. What inspired you to continue your father's legacy by running the community radio, and how has the journey been so far?

My name is Ruchita Jyoti Vishwas Thakur. I grew up in Nashik, and my educational journey has taken me across borders, from Symbiosis School in Nashik to Kodaikanal International School and then to various universities abroad. However, amidst this global exposure, I always felt a pull to return to my roots and make a difference in the community, much like my father, Vishwas Jaydev Thakur.

My father is a revered figure in Nashik, known for his unwavering commitment to social causes and his tireless efforts to uplift the underprivileged, particularly through Vishwas Bank. Inspired by his example, I felt compelled to utilize my education to contribute meaningfully to society.



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Thus, Radio Vishwas was born in 2012 with a vision to empower the local community and amplify the voices of the marginalized.

Upon my return to India, I embarked on an internship journey that eventually led me to Radio Vishwas 90.8 Community Radio Station in mid-2020. Initially, I immersed myself in learning the fundamentals of radio operations, from recording to editing to mixing. As time went on, I delved deeper into the workings of a community radio and discovered its immense potential to reach the grassroots and empower those in need.

Since then, my journey with Radio Vishwas has been nothing short of fulfilling. I find immense satisfaction in knowing that through this platform, we are effecting positive change and touching lives in profound ways.

2. Can you share some of the most memorable moments or experiences you've had while working with the community through the radio?

Every day at the community radio brings with it moments that are etched in my memory forever. One particularly poignant experience revolves around our program 'Hinsa Ko No,' a collaborative effort with SMART and the Azim Premji Foundation addressing domestic violence in Nashik's slum areas.

On Women's Day this year, we decided to treat the women from these communities to a picnic—an outing they had never experienced before without the presence of their husbands or families. Witnessing their joy and liberation as they embraced this opportunity was truly heartwarming. More than half of them were venturing out on their own for the first time, reveling in the simple pleasure of a day dedicated solely to their happiness.

Their gratitude and joy affirmed the impact of Radio Vishwas in their lives. It was a humbling reminder of the importance of our work in not only broadcasting but also understanding and addressing the pressing issues faced by our community. Through moments like these, we reaffirm our commitment to making a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.

3. How do you envision the role of community radio in fostering communication and unity within local communities?

Community radio plays a vital role in nurturing communication and unity within local communities through several key avenues:

Local Representation:



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By focusing on local issues and perspectives, community radio ensures that diverse voices within the community are heard and represented.

Promoting Dialogue and Participation: Through interactive shows and forums, community radio encourages active participation from community members, fostering dialogue, and exchange of ideas.

Cultural Preservation: Celebrating local traditions and heritage through cultural programming helps in preserving the unique identity of the community.

Community Empowerment: By providing a platform for information sharing and advocacy, community radio empowers individuals and groups to address issues and drive community development initiatives.

Building Trust and Solidarity: Through transparency and responsiveness, community radio builds trust with its audience, fostering solidarity and a sense of belonging among community members.

In essence, community radio serves as a powerful tool for amplifying local voices, strengthening social bonds, and promoting unity within local communities.

4. What are some of the challenges you've faced in managing the radio station, and how have you overcome them?

Managing a community radio station comes with its share of challenges, including:

Limited Funding: Overcoming financial constraints by diversifying revenue streams through events, merchandise sales, and partnerships with local businesses and organizations.

Volunteer Recruitment and Retention: Addressing volunteer recruitment and retention challenges through training opportunities, recognition of volunteer contributions, and fostering a supportive environment.

Technical Maintenance and Upgrades: Ensuring smooth operations by implementing regular maintenance schedules, investing in essential equipment upgrades, and providing technical training to staff and volunteers.

Competition and Relevance: Differentiating the station through unique content and leveraging partnerships to remain relevant in the face of competition from other media outlets and online platforms.

By proactively addressing these challenges, we ensure that the radio station continues to serve as a valuable asset to the community, fulfilling its mission of communication, unity, and empowerment.





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5. Could you highlight some of the key achievements or initiatives of the radio station that you're particularly proud of?

Radio Vishwas 90.8 Community Radio, under the umbrella of its parent NGO Vishwas Dnyan Prabodhini & Research Institute in Nashik, has embarked on several impactful initiatives that stand as pillars of pride:

Shikshan Sarvansathi (Education for All): In response to the educational challenges exacerbated by the pandemic, Radio Vishwas launched "Shikshan Sarvansathi." This initiative provided free audio lectures to students from 3rd to 10th grade, especially those without access to smartphones or the internet. With the help of 150 dedicated teachers, these lectures were aired through Radio Vishwas, reaching students in Zilla Parishad and Nashik Municipal schools. The initiative garnered national recognition, earning two National Community Radio Awards in the thematic category of Education for All, as well as recognition as the most Sustainable Community Radio Station in 2021.

OMG National Record: Radio Vishwas achieved an impressive feat by being heard for over 3,18,255 hours in the year 2021, securing its place in the OMG National Record.

Flagship Program "Aarambh": A testament to Radio Vishwas's commitment to community engagement is its flagship program "Aarambh." This program, airing every Friday, has received accolades from listeners and professionals alike, including gynecologists and doctors. By focusing on the largest slum in Nashik, Bharatnagar, and collaborating with local musicians, Radio Vishwas has enriched its programming with authentic local flavor. Noteworthy impact stories, like those of Sunita Sunil Ingle and Asiya Anas Sheikh, underscore the program's effectiveness in imparting crucial knowledge and inspiring positive behavioral change in the community.

These initiatives have not only brought local issues to the forefront but have also garnered national and international recognition, with Radio Vishwas's interventions being featured in UNICEF-produced films and international journals. Such achievements are a testament to the radio station's unwavering dedication to serving its community and effecting meaningful change.



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6. As a young leader, how do you engage with the community to ensure that the radio station reflects their needs and interests?

Engaging with the community lies at the heart of our mission at Radio Vishwas 90.8 Community Radio. Here's how we ensure that our programming resonates with the needs and interests of our audience:

Active Listening: We prioritize active listening, attending community events, and hosting gatherings to hear firsthand feedback from community members. Through call-in shows, surveys, and workshops, we encourage open dialogue to understand their needs and preferences.

Building Relationships: By forging strong relationships with local organizations, businesses, and government agencies, we collaborate on joint initiatives and events. This collaborative approach helps us leverage resources and address community needs effectively.

Hosting Community Events: Organizing regular community events and workshops provides platforms for meaningful interactions. These gatherings foster dialogue, allowing community members to contribute ideas and voice their opinions on radio programming and community initiatives.

Involving Volunteers: We actively involve volunteers from the community in various aspects of station operations. By empowering volunteers through training and support, we ensure that the station remains rooted in the community's interests and aspirations.

Promoting Diversity and Inclusion: Reflecting the diversity of our community in our programming is essential. We seek out voices from underrepresented groups and create an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and welcomed.

Utilizing Digital Platforms: Leveraging social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube helps us promote our initiatives and engage with the community, especially the younger population. These platforms enable us to showcase our work and invite involvement in our activities.

Adapt and Evolve: We continuously assess and adapt our programming based on community feedback and evolving needs. Staying informed about emerging issues ensures that we remain relevant and responsive to the changing interests of our audience.



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7. Can you discuss the impact of the radio station on the lives of people in the community, especially in terms of education, awareness, and social change?

Radio Vishwas has profoundly impacted the lives of people in our community, particularly in education, awareness, and social change. Through informative programming spanning health, agriculture, literacy, and vocational skills, we've served as a vital educational resource, empowering listeners to acquire new knowledge and enhance their quality of life. By disseminating awareness about local issues, events, and initiatives through news bulletins, interviews, and public service announcements, we've kept the community informed and engaged, empowering citizens to make informed decisions and actively participate in civic affairs. Moreover, our radio programs have addressed sensitive topics like gender equality, environmental conservation, and minority rights, sparking dialogue, challenging stereotypes, and mobilizing community action towards positive social change.

One notable initiative is our collaboration with SMART and Azim Premji Foundation on "Hinsa Ko No," addressing domestic violence in Nashik. This specialized radio program raises awareness among young women in slum areas, providing crucial information, advice, and support. Additionally, dedicated groups offer safe spaces for women to share experiences and learn about steps to take if they encounter domestic violence. Such initiatives play a pivotal role in impacting the lives of women, offering them support and resources they urgently need.

8. How do you stay innovative and relevant in an age dominated by digital media, while still maintaining the essence of community radio?

In navigating the dominance of digital media, our community radio station remains innovative and relevant while preserving the essence of community radio. We embrace technology while upholding core values of community engagement and local focus. Leveraging digital platforms, we expand our reach and engage with audiences online while maintaining intimate connections with our community. Our programming, like 'Aapki Farmaish,' where listeners actively participate, keeps the essence of community interaction alive. Radio Vishwas has become a household name in Nashik, reaching globally with 5 lakh listeners through our online application, yet still serving as a local, grassroots medium. We remain a radio by the people, for the people, breaking barriers of illiteracy and isolation, making community radio accessible to all.





9. What advice would you give to other young individuals who aspire to make a difference in their communities through media and communication?

Embrace your passion and purpose, identifying issues close to your heart. Actively listen to your community, understanding their needs and perspectives. Stay adaptable and open to learning, keeping up with emerging trends and technologies. Foster collaboration and build partnerships, recognizing that meaningful change requires collective action. Finally, persevere in the face of challenges, remaining resilient and advocating for positive change with determination and compassion.

10. Can you share any upcoming projects or initiatives that the community radio is working on?

- Skill Development Training: Offering free tailoring classes for women in slum areas, empowering them with skills for employment or entrepreneurship.
- Digital Rights Campaign: Raising awareness about online safety and responsible digital citizenship through radio programming and community engagement.
- Community Reporter Workshops: Enhancing communication and public speaking skills while involving participants in radio production.
- Clothes Distribution: Collecting unused clothes and distributing them to those in need, reducing waste and supporting vulnerable communities.
- Eye Check-up & Glasses Distribution Camps: Providing free eye check-ups and distributing glasses in slum areas, addressing healthcare accessibility.
- World Immunization Week Awareness: Conducting streetplays to promote vaccination and raise awareness about its importance.
- Science Awareness Program: Organizing engaging activities to foster interest in science and technology among students in tribal areas.
- Crèche for Children of Women Prisoners: Offering a nurturing environment for the holistic development of children in Nashik Central Jail.
- Granth Tumchya Daari (Books at your doorstep): Distributing books to underserved areas, promoting literacy and access to knowledge.
- Sur Vishwas: Showcasing local musical talent through a monthly classical music program.
- Arthik Saksharta Campaign (Financial Literacy): Promoting financial literacy and empowering women through self-help groups and awareness campaigns.
- Community Radio Awareness Workshops: Conducting workshops to raise awareness about the importance and impact of community radio.
- Ending Child Marriage Program: Addressing child marriage through targeted radio programming and community engagement initiatives.

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11. How do you balance your personal life and professional responsibilities as the head of the radio station?

Balancing personal and professional responsibilities involves effective time management, setting boundaries, and prioritizing self-care. Clear work hours and communication with the team help establish boundaries, allowing dedicated time for both work and personal activities. Delegating tasks empowers the team and lightens the workload, fostering a supportive work environment. Prioritizing self-care activities and spending quality time with loved ones ensures well-being and maintains a healthy work-life balance.

12. What motivates you to continue your work despite the challenges you may face in the field of community media?

The transformative impact of media on empowering individuals and communities, along with the sense of connection and solidarity with the community, serves as a driving force. Witnessing the power of storytelling and advocacy to inspire change and foster understanding fuels my passion and determination. Believing in media's potential to address pressing social issues and promote social justice motivates me to persevere despite challenges.

13. How do you see the future of community radio evolving, and what role do you hope to play in shaping that future?

I envision community radio becoming more inclusive, interactive, and interconnected, leveraging digital platforms to expand reach while preserving its grassroots, community-focused approach. I aim to champion innovation, collaboration, and community empowerment, leveraging emerging technologies and digital platforms to enhance engagement and impact. By fostering partnerships and advocating for the value of community radio, I aspire to contribute to its continued growth and relevance as a force for positive change.



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14. Can you discuss the importance of recognition and awards in acknowledging the impact of community radio initiatives?

Recognition and awards validate efforts, increase visibility, enhance credibility, and facilitate learning and improvement. They amplify the station's voice, advocating for community needs, and priorities more effectively. Awards provide a platform to share success stories, raise awareness about pressing issues, and advocate for policy changes or increased support for community media.

15. Finally, what legacy do you hope to leave behind through your work with the community radio, and what mark do you aspire to make on the world?

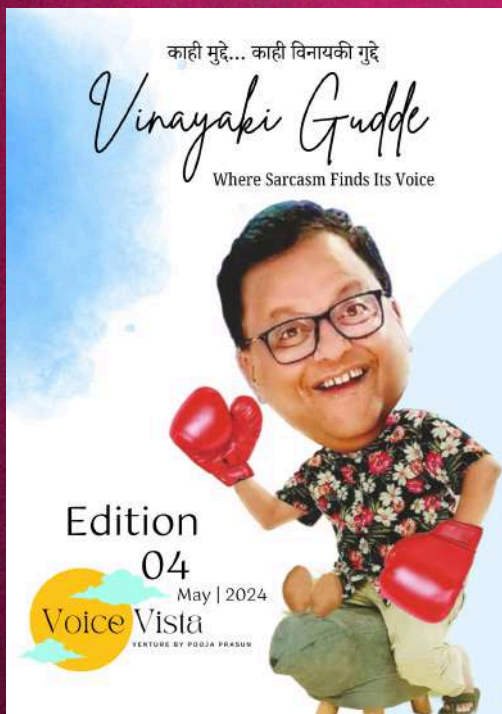
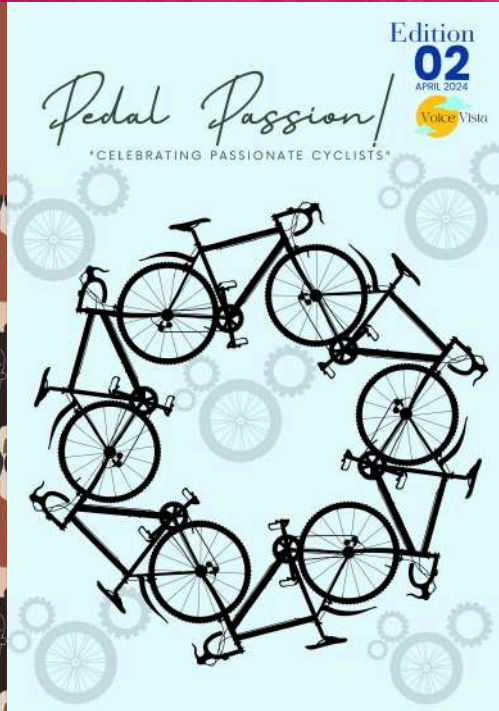
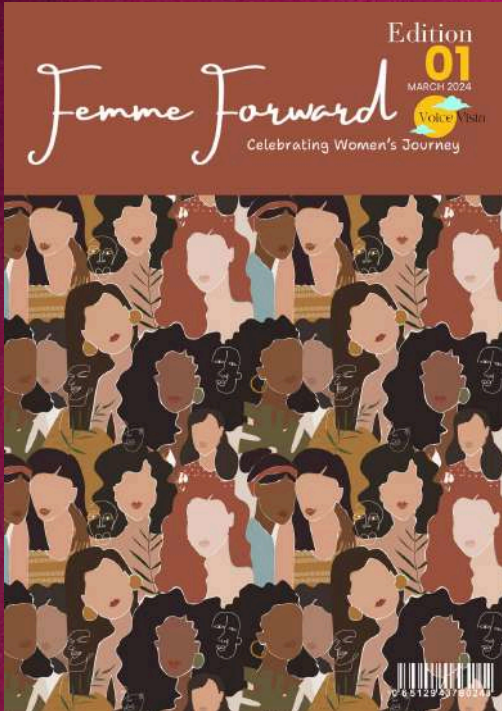
I aim to leave a legacy of empowerment, connection, and positive change, remembered as someone who amplified diverse voices, fostered dialogue, and drove meaningful impact. Through storytelling, advocacy, and community organizing, I aspire to address social issues, promote justice, and uplift marginalized voices, leaving behind a vibrant hub of community engagement and collaboration. My goal is to contribute to building a more inclusive, equitable, and compassionate society, inspiring others to join me in creating a brighter future for all.

As the sun sets on another day in Nashik, the echoes of Ruchita Thakur's tireless efforts reverberate through the city. Her legacy of empowerment, connection, and positive change continues to inspire and uplift, shaping a tomorrow filled with boundless possibilities. With gratitude in our hearts and hope in our souls, we bid farewell to another day, knowing that Ruchita's light will continue to shine brightly, guiding us towards a better, more inclusive world.



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Introducing "Feminine Fortitude" - a testament to the powerful female faces of Nashik who have not only excelled in their respective fields but have also set a benchmark in their domains. These remarkable women are the embodiment of commitment, dedication, and resilience, and their inspiring journeys serve as a beacon of hope and motivation for others.

"Feminine Fortitude" delves deep into the remarkable stories of these trailblazing women, uncovering the challenges they have overcome, the triumphs they have celebrated, and the lessons they have learned along the way. Through captivating narratives, insightful interviews, and stunning visuals, this magazine provides a platform to celebrate the indomitable spirit of women who have dared to dream and achieved greatness against all odds.

Each issue of "Feminine Fortitude" is a celebration of strength, perseverance, and empowerment, showcasing the diverse talents and accomplishments of women from all walks of life. Whether it's in the fields of business, arts, education, or social activism, our magazine shines a spotlight on the unsung heroes whose stories inspire and empower generations to come.

Join us on this extraordinary journey as we honor the resilience and fortitude of Nashik's formidable women, and celebrate their unwavering commitment to making a difference in the world.