



# BIRLA FELLOWS UPDATE

A Newsletter of the GP Birla Fellowship for Women Leaders

The GP Birla Fellowship for Women Leaders is a unique programme that helps young women from Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities begin their leadership journey. It is different in that, besides helping women connect with their core values, it also intends to create a network of Fellows to act as a growth ecosystem for each other. The programme also has a strong mentorship component.

| **FEATURED** |

## A class apart



The second cohort of the GP Birla fellows graduated on the 18th of November 2019. A small ceremony at Taj Dwarka saw Mr CK Birla and Mrs Amita Birla see off 19 trailblazers on their journeys into uncharted waters. The evening was made all the more special by Mrs Birla who shared her own journey with the participants.

## Our Fellows spoke so that others could be heard



Four of our Fellows – Ashweetha Shetty, Shaheena Attarwala, Shriti Pandey and Vasanthi Veluri - addressed a session organized by Ananta's . This session was a part of Centre's The Woman Speaks Series and titled "Being a Young Woman in India: Narratives and Perspectives". These young ladies shared their personal stories, their struggles and what inspired them to keep going. Judging by the manner in which the audience responded, we can safely say they will go far.

## If you aren't happy and you know it but you don't really want to show it, read this book...



### Amrita Tripathi pens a book on depression

Urban India is learning to talk about depression. But there is some distance to go before we do away with the stigma associated with poor mental health and encourage the culture of openness. 'Real Stories of Dealing With Depression' by Birla Fellow Amrita Tripathi and psychologist Arpita Anand is a step in this direction. It features 10 stories – nine first-person narratives as well as a report on adoption and Heart Mothers. Simon & Schuster India, released the book to a packed audience in the India International Centre.

Amrita Tripathi is the founder-editor of The Health Collective, an online portal dedicated to stories of Mental Health and Mental Illness in India.



**All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small, all things wise and wonderful and a teacher to show them all**

**Rachita Sinha's Youcan launches the second cohort of the Earth Ambassadors**



The Earth Ambassadors Programme, only one of its kind in India, is designed to bring about a systems-level change to environmental education in schools and communities. It identifies and trains and supports promising young adults to connect children with nature. The adults known as Earth Ambassadors are required to create and lead eco-clubs in schools through experiential learning sessions. Five of these ambassadors have already started their sessions and are helping children gain insights into nature and conservation besides helping them build traits like empathy and teamwork.

Rachita runs the Youth Conservation Action Network which houses the Earth Ambassadors Fellowship.

**It's time to tell the little ones about the once-upon-a-time yaksha people**



**Priyanka K Mohan collaborates on a children's book on Yakshagana**

Priyanka Mohan's *Yaksha* is the first ever children's book on Yakshagana. The Yakshagana is a traditional Indian theatre form belonging to Karnataka that combines dance, music, dialogue, costume, make-up, and stage techniques to make for a unique theatre experience. This book, intended as the first in the series of many, is an initiative of Priyanka's organisation, Tvarita Foundation, to popularize lesser known performing art forms among the younger generation, support folk artists and help children benefit from performing art forms. The book will be adapted into a play as well.

Priyanka is a Yakshagana dancer and teacher as well as the founder of the Tvarita Foundation.

## A livelihood venture for the rural women that spells carefree with a K

**Ayeshna** launches a new venture for rural women



**Ayeshna** has launched a new venture called KSUTI with which she hopes to empower the lives of many rural women who hold unbelievable amount of potential. "Ksuti" (Haryanvi for Carefree) is a movement to provide rural women with a platform to create sustainable livelihood opportunities for themselves and work towards their economic and social independence. Currently, a group of 75+ women are involved in quilt-making (hand-stitched) as well as toy-making while 100+ women create garments, jeans (export) and patches on machines. Till date, the enterprise has sold close to 80 quilts through local exhibitions. The women completed a consignment of 400 quilts for a Gurgaon-based export house.

Ayeshna started Varitra Foundation to help people participate in the formation of an egalitarian and just society through collective efforts in their communities.

### | OTHERS IN THE NEWS |



**Prachi Singhal** was selected for the UK Government's "Chevening Scholarship" that enable future leaders to study in the UK, whilst joining a global community of professionals who are creating positive change around the world. She is one of the 1750 scholars chosen from 50,000+ applicants across 140 countries. Through it, she is currently pursuing a Masters in Public Policy and Management at SOAS, London





**Pooja**'s organization Anthill has received a grant of 1.2 cr from BPCL to build 60 playgrounds. Her team has grown from 4 to 12 people in the past 6 months. She was also selected for ChangemakerXchange summit in Singapore, held by Ashoka, on the theme of Disability.



**Shriti Pandey**'s Strawture Eco has won the the Rashtriya Swayamsiddh Samman by JSW Foundation for Entrepreneurship & Livelihood. They will be felicitated in December 2019.



**Khushboo Awasthi**'s Mantra4Change has entered into a state level MoU with the Department of School Education, Punjab, to design and implement a systemic education transformation project. This will impact 19,000 Government-run schools across the state.



**Dr Reshma Sagari** delivered awareness sessions on the occasion of Mental Health Day through her initiative Rida Wellness Talks

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