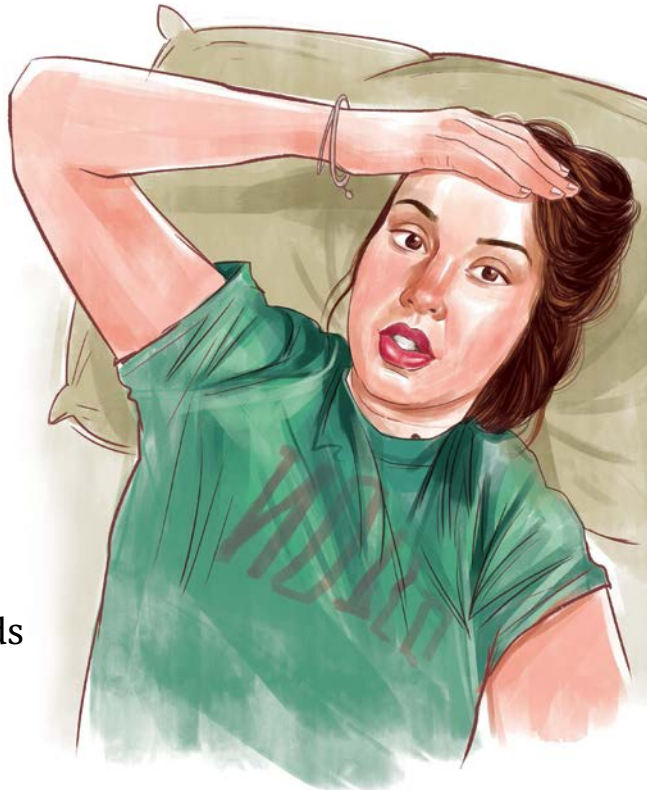




Don't be the blind follower

In light of the recent hospitalisation of a woman who followed an unrealistic fitness challenge and the death of an influencer who preached extreme diet; we speak to experts who tell us the dangers of hopping on to social media trends and following unsupervised dietary plans



Michelle Fairburn, a Toronto-based real estate agent and mother had to be hospitalised after following the 'The 75 Hard Challenge' on Tik-tok. She was diagnosed with water poisoning, a life-threatening condition caused by consuming excessive amounts of water. ILLUSTRATION/UDAY MOHITE



(Left) Tropical fruit salad; (above) Zhanna Samsonova, a vegan raw food social media influencer who died of starvation, promoted vegan raw food diet. PICS COURTESY/INSTAGRAM



(Top) In an online post Samsonova announced online sessions on raw vegan diet for her followers; (above) durian, her staple diet

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IN the world of social media, almost every other day new health fads, diet plans and fitness challenges are shared that are propagated as fun, interesting or new. Such fads get more popularised when social media influencers promote them among their millions of followers with gusto and confidence. But what people (influencers and followers) don't take into account, are the risk factors.

Take for example Michelle Fairburn, a Toronto-based real estate agent and mother, who had to seek medical help taking a Tik-tok challenge called The 75 Hard Challenge. This infamous challenge requires a person to follow a strict diet (no cheat meals), work out rigorously twice a day, drink roughly four litres of water daily, read 10 pages of a non-fiction book and take a progress photo every day.

After 12 days of this routine, the 40-year-old Fairburn had to be hospitalised, as she got diagnosed with hyponatremia, commonly known as water poisoning, a life-threatening condition caused by consuming excessive amounts of water.

Fitness challenges

"The 75 Hard Challenge, like many other intense fitness trends, can promote excessive exercise without adequate rest, leading to overtraining, injuries, and burnout. These challenges may not consider proper nutritional guidance, leading to imbalances in nutrient intake and potential deficiencies, apart from creating unrealistic expectations about fitness results and body image, leading to disappointment and dissatisfaction," said Shweta Shah, a nutritionist, whose client list includes actors and cricketers. She warns that extreme fitness challenges can also put immense pressure mentally that leads to anxiety, stress, and a negative relationship with exercise and body image.

"To engage in vigorous workouts without adequate nutrition, especially without consuming the optimum amount of protein, can have several negative consequences on your body and fitness goals. Proper nutrition, including sufficient protein intake, is essential for supporting exercise performance, muscle growth, and overall health," explains Neha Sahaya, nutrition consultant. She adds that muscle breakdown, decreased exercise performance, weakened immune system and loss of lean muscle mass are few of the potential issues one may face.



SOCIAL MEDIA FADS

Extreme food fads

Another tragic case in point is Zhanna Samsonova (who went by the name Zhanna D'art), a vegan raw food social media influencer, who reportedly died of starvation. The Russian influencer who lived in Thailand, had adopted fruit-based diets for the last decade; and some reports suggest that for the last seven years, she was only eating sweet jackfruit, and durian, a fruit that's known for its rotten egg-like odour. The 39-year-old influencer, who had 37.5K followers, promoted vegan raw food diet; and advertised recipes, special menus for it, and even conducted online classes. The death has made this a blind-leading-the-blind kind of lifestyle routine.

"Vegan diet if not done correctly or without a nutritionist's guidance can be very harmful for one's health. If people severely restrict food groups or nutrients (which may have been a problem in Samsonova's case) may also mean that she missed out on the protective health effects that a balanced eating plan provides," shared Sayali Naik, a sports nutritionist. "I don't recommend such fruit-only diets for anyone, as it may lead to severe health conditions due to deficiencies of many essential nutrients like Omega 3, vitamin D, calcium, protein, etc.," she adds.

Echoing Naik's thoughts, Sa-

'Vegan diet if not done correctly or without a nutritionist's guidance can be very harmful for one's health.'

Sayali Naik

Sahaya points out that while the challenge has gained popularity for promoting discipline and mental toughness, it's important to be aware of potential side effects and consider individual factors before taking it on. Overtraining, nutritional imbalances, mental stress, unsustainability and disordered eating patterns are some of the possible side effects that one needs to consider.

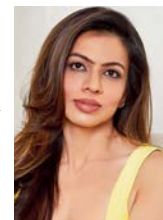
It is absolutely necessary to understand what these social media trends and challenges are, before trying them. A sustainable and balanced approach to fitness and nutrition would be the one that suits an individual's unique needs and goals. It's essential to focus on creating healthy habits rather than short-lived and fatal fads

haya shared, "Zhanna's choice to consume only exotic fruits led her down a pointless path, depriving her body of essential nutrients. Proper nutrition is crucial to sustaining a healthy body, and depriving oneself of vital nutrients can lead to severe health issues." She points out that all macronutrients (protein, carbohydrates, fat and fibre) and micronutrients (minerals and vitamins) are required for the healthy functioning of the body. Each plays an important role.

The 'following' frenzy

"What worries me the most in today's social media's influential world is that people just start following any random eating patterns, as and when it's trending, or after seeing someone else following it. People should focus on their individual goals and then step forward healthily and not hop on to diet trends," Naik shared.

It is important to know what trends and challenges a person is getting into. "I encourage evidence-based nutrition and advocate for sustainable and balanced approaches to fitness and nutrition, tailored to each individual's unique needs and goals. It's essential to focus on creating healthy habits that can be maintained over time, rather than following short-lived and potentially harmful social media trends," Shah explained, adding that it's necessary to approach the transition mindfully, educate oneself about proper nutrition, and consider individual circumstances to ensure the diet meets one's nutritional needs and aligns with the lifestyle. "Prioritising overall well-being and seeking professional guidance can lead to more positive and lasting results in health and fitness journeys," she summarised.



Neha Sahaya



Shweta Shah



Tandoori nights

Good portions and VFM dishes might make this Bandra eatery your favourite late-night adda



DHARA VORA SABHNANI
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THIS writer has a weakness for all things tandoori, be it paneer or chicken. And one often craves a greasy roll, especially after or before (depending on what kind of a drinker you are) a late night at a Bandra bar. And we are aware of many other foodies who belong to our tribe. Take for example, the fact that we often see the same crowd from the rooftop bars in the KFC lane make a beeline for the rolls at Mini Punjab. So we get excited when we spot Miya Kebab down the road on one such night. It happens to be open till three in the morning. The cosy corner restaurant is open for dining and delivery, and offers rolls and shawarmas, kebabs and other appetisers, tandoori breads with dips, as well as main course options.

We find a corner table at the busy eatery, and decide to get our order parcelled. Our waiter politely informs us that everything is grilled fresh, and so we will have to be a bit patient with our order. We wait for a good 30 minutes to collect our order, but every dish is worth it, despite us having our meal after a few hours. We first fulfil our hummus craving and their zattar naan with hummus (₹375,



(Clockwise) Changezi tikka; angara paneer tikka; and zattar naan with hummus. **PICS COURTESY/ DHARA VORA SABHNANI**

FOOD REVIEW

FOOD/TASTY
 AMBIANCE/STREETSIDE
 SERVICE/REGULAR
 COST/REASONABLE
 VERDICT/👍👍

all prices exclusive of taxes) is super soft, stuffed with cheese, and we need to stop ourselves after several bites to divert our attention to the rest of the dishes. The Changezi tikka (₹385) comes with a naan and is a meal on its own rather than an appetiser. Marinated in an aromatic, nutty red gravy, the kebabs are beautifully spiced and succulent. The angara paneer tikka is made in a red

tikka marinade that is slightly spicier than their Changezi spice mix. The paneer cubes are perfectly grilled and melt in our mouth. For those who like kebabs minus the heat, try their arbi tandoori (₹325), which has heady aromas of earthy spices such as black and white pepper, and is cooked perfectly to the bone.

We finish with their shawarmas, banjara paneer (₹205) for

a vegetarian option and classic chicken (also ₹205). Both are runaway hits, the paneer prepared in a yellow tikka base and the classic chicken shawarma, are exactly what you would expect from a good grill place (and not chicken grilled in a rush, which is our pet peeve with many shawarma joints in Mumbai).

TIME Tuesday to Saturday, 6 pm to 3.45 am; Monday, 6 pm to 2 am **AT** Luis Belle Building, 16th Road, Bandra West. **CALL** 8591431992

★★★★ EXCEPTIONAL, ★★★ EXCELLENT, ★★ VERY GOOD, ★ GOOD, ☹️ AVERAGE. Miya Kebab didn't know we were there. The Guide reviews anonymously and pays for meals

Through the eyes of an artist

Dive into this ongoing exhibition of nearly 300 artworks by 22 artists for new perspectives and thoughts about our changing world

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APART from the sheer volume of artworks that make up gallerist Saloni Doshi's Lost Fragrance of Infinity at Space 118, it is the umbrella theme that presents an exciting opportunity to relook at our surroundings from multiple new perspectives through art. Comprising the work of 22 artists from across India, Lost Fragrances, captures the artists' individual responses



Staryln D'Souza; (right) Saloni Doshi. **PIC COURTESY/BOSE KRISHNAMACHARI**

to the changing global environment including societal, cultural, ecological, and spiritual themes. In a poetic sense, Doshi notes that the artists' considerations also move into 'Infinity' or infinite lines and abstraction where we cannot comprehend the future.

Taking us through a few pieces in the exhibition, Doshi begins with artist Deena Pindoria's work that picks up history and textiles lost in the past. This includes a series of frames placed together that showcase Pindoria's experimentations with Ajrakh block printing found in the Kutch district along with documenting historical occurrences and traditional customs from familial archival photos.

Artist Raka Panda's The Carpet, ink, acrylic and Nepali paper on canvas, empathises with and explores the stories



The Carpet by (below) Raka Panda

of people that often get 'dusted under the carpet'. Her work, which was also inspired by the term carpet area, speaks particularly about those who were



forced to walk back to their hometowns and villages during the COVID-19 lockdowns.

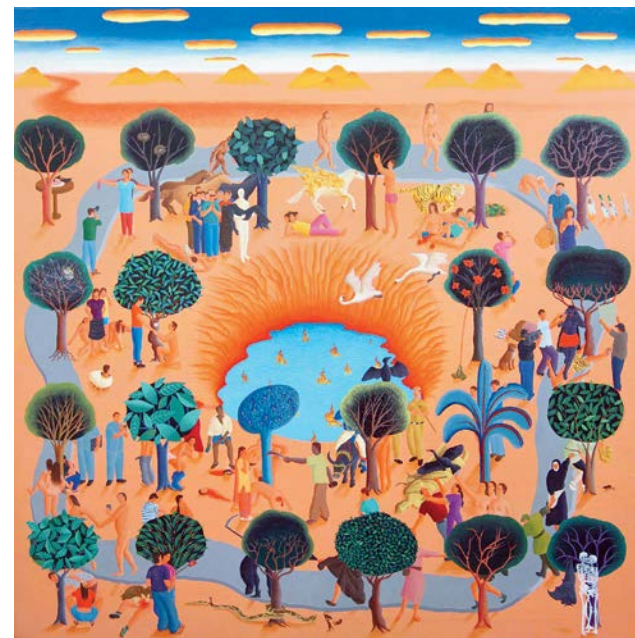
Challenging religious dogma and blind faith in societal practices, artist Bhaskar Bordoloi paints a portrait of an elusive world of mysticism and dystopia. Doshi explains

LOST Fragrance of Infinity is the umbrella theme that presents an exciting opportunity to relook at our surroundings from multiple new perspectives

that Bordoloi's acrylic on canvas work titled Lovers shows how lovers and public displays of affection are looked at through a lens of shame and disgust in society.

Speaking about artist Staryln D'Souza's three-dimensional glass cases with an assemblage of biological detritus including dead insects, plants and other fragments found along Indian coastlines, Doshi remarks how the works that look almost like human lungs in some aspects, breathe life into things that have already met their expiration date.

Finally, moving into the realm of abstraction through art, Doshi highlights Jyotiprakash Sethy's work that expresses the artist's ideas on



Lovers by (below) Bhaskar Bordoloi

urbanisation and the bustle of monotonous routine. The gallerist remarks, "It is very difficult to control the line, and Jyotiprakash has mastered control beautifully by letting go of control itself."

The exhibition, which doubles up as a fundraiser for the budding artists, puts seemingly ordinary or forgotten things into extraordinary perspective by placing them on canvas



through an artistic response. The works are also priced reasonably from ₹5,000 onwards making them accessible to those who would like to carry home a favourite. "Because of the artists' unique responses, the show itself brings in unique energy," Doshi signs off.

TILL August 23; 11 am to 5 pm (open on Sundays) **AT** Space 118, Wadi Bunder, Mazgaon. **LOG ON TO** @space.118