



We, my brother Saqib (Saleem) and I, are different actors, we both have different energy levels and we both are very different human beings. So, to work with him will be very enjoyable

— HUMA QURESHI



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Argentinian-born model Belen Rodriguez

Provocative billboards distract drivers

Commercial billboards with erotic images and highly emotive words distract drivers and may consequently lead to road accidents, says a new study.

A comprehensive study by the Metro Manila Development Authority found that "sexy" outdoor commercial displays could affect the driver's speed and behaviour and cause road accidents.

The findings showed that such billboards have many negative impacts including endangering public safety, increased crash rates and traffic slow down.

"These will lessen travel speed because people slow down to get a good view of the sexually explicit billboards. In the thick of traffic, a split-second distraction can mean slowdown, if not accident," said Melvin Navarro, former director of the department of public works and highways.

Earlier, researchers from the University of Alberta found that highly emotive words and provocative images on commercial billboards could affect driving behaviour.

Recently, a giant billboard that featured Argentinian-born model Belen Rodriguez was removed by Milan police in Italy after it was found to be too distracting for drivers, the report added. *IANIS*



"Once I had left a folder with all my certificates and cash amounting to Rs 30,000 at a phone booth in Mumbai's CST. Realising my mistake I quickly rushed back to the booth but the folder wasn't there. I was in shock. But soon, a coolie came by and handed me my folder. Before I could thank him, he disappeared in the crowd. From that day, I decided to dedicate my life to help others," says Darshana.

Pic: Parag Jadhav



Darshana Shah-Ubl, CEO of Entrevo, UK, helped her organisation get into the Guinness World Records for bringing together 487 people to attend a business speed-networking event at a single venue. **Meeta Ramnani** caught up with her during her recent Pune visit

Building bridges

There comes a time in your life when you have to take a calculated risk and go ahead and trust your instinct to start a business. I did exactly that," says Darshana Shah-Ubl, CEO of Entrevo, UK. Under her leadership, the organisation secured a place in the Guinness World Records for bringing together 487 participants and breaking the record of 'Most people attending a business speed-networking event — single venue' at the Mermaid Theatre, London, in October 2014.

Darshana, along with her team, helps small and micro businesses grow. More importantly, thrive. *BBC News Live* frequently features her as an expert on small business. She was invited as the ambassador for Britain's Small Business community. Last year, she gave 34 talks on business strategy, partnerships and personal branding.

We caught up with the Fergusson College alumna during her recent Pune visit to know more about her journey, experiences and challenges. Excerpts:

GAINING SKILLS

Darshana did her Bachelors in Economics from Fergusson College, Pune, and was determined to pursue her Masters even though she did not have enough funds. So she took up a night job at a call centre. "It was very stressful working at night and attending college during the day," she says.

However, the call centre job was for a short stint, after which she decided to upskill. "I did a course in Advertising and Public Relations from Symbiosis College," she informs adding, "Following which I took up a job with an FM radio channel. During my short time in Pune, I even had my own kurti line called Diva Creations."

Conducting small exhibitions for her kurti line taught her a lot about business.

A TRUE LEADER:
Darshana Shah-Ubl

OWNING A VENTURE

Darshana never stopped learning. She went to Singapore and worked in a few companies in sales division and as a General Manager. After which she gained confidence to start her own business venture in London. "I used all my savings to start a daily deal company (like Groupon) in 2011. The initial days were tough. The cost of running a business in London is very high. It took time for the company to start earning good profits. Till then, I had to pay my staff and other bills from my own pocket," says Darshana who had to work 12 to 14 hours a day.

But she still believes that investing in her own company was the best decision that she took. Within two years, her company reached 42 cities and more than 3 lakh people were connected with it. "My grandmother, who had participated in India's freedom struggle, was really proud of me making a mark in London which made my success even bigger," recalls Darshana.

After having exited that business Darshana got an opportunity to join Entrevo as the CEO. Her views on business are very positive. "A lot of people look at business in a competitive manner, where you win and the others lose. But this is the 'age of collaboration' where business partnerships can prove to be more beneficial," says the young visionary entrepreneur.

HER STORY

Meet **Sarojini Damodar Pujari** who has been running her tea stall for more than a year now

Pic: Jinisha Bhanushali



Sarojini at her tea stall

The chai lady

Sarojini Damodar Pujari wakes up at 4 am everyday so that she can begin operations at her tea stall at 5.30 am. The masala chai and a few delicious snacks at her store draw a lot of clients. Visit the stall in a lane near The Pride Hotel in Shivajinagar and you'll find it crowded.

Sarojini has been running the tea stall for more than a year now after her husband suffered a paralytic attack. He has been bed-ridden since then. Running the business and caring for her husband at the same time has been tough. "It was quite challenging running the business alone so my brother started helping me. He too earns his share from the business," says Sarojini, who hails

from Khairwadi, Pune.

Most of her earnings are spent on her ailing husband and his medicines, and the house rent. "Whatever remains, we survive with that money," says Sarojini who has been married for the past 17 years.

Her rigorous work schedule keeps her busy six days of the week except on Sundays when she takes off from work. "Sundays, I am at home doing household chores and taking care of my husband. With nobody to look after him, I feel guilty to leave him behind at home on other days, but then I have to also earn a livelihood," says the frail Sarojini with a warm smile that spreads across her face and camouflages her worries for the moment.

We ask her if she has any fervent wish for the immediate future and she promptly replies, "I just want my husband to get well. With course of time, he has started moving around the house and even does a few things on his own, but I want him completely healed."

—AS TOLD TO
JINISHA BHANUSHALI

(Starting today, She will carry a new fortnightly column called 'Her Story'. It will chronicle the stories of hardworking, determined and courageous women, who fighting all odds, manage to earn a livelihood for themselves and their families.)

BITS

App to insult you into losing weight

If you have set your sight on losing weight, here is a calorie-counting app that insults you for all the extra calories you consume in a day.

This app, called Carrot Hunger, makes you feel bad about your weight and if you exceed your daily calorie limit, it asks you to pay a price, literally, by buying a product from the advertisers in the app.

"Not only will the omniscient supercomputer tell you what you're consuming, but it will also warn you that you're approaching your daily calorie goal if you open the fridge," the app's website read. And if you dare to overindulge, it will punish you financially, aesthetically, and socially.

To set up the app, users need to share information about their height, weight and gender.

This data helps the app to generate your limit for the



day. Users can feed the app with the food that they eat to help it count the calories.

Each time you add something, the app indicates how much you have eaten towards your limit and generates an insult to make you feel bad for what you have just had.

When you start going overboard, the app will accept a bribe of an in-app purchase to pretend it never happened. If you decline, you are shown more ads as punishment. *The Next Web* reported.

The app is available for free at the App Store. *IANIS*

GLAM GALS

'I GET SCARED OF BEING ALONE'

Bipasha Basu, who has been linked with her *Alone* co-star, **Karan Singh Grover**, clears the air about the so-called affair and speaks about the challenges of playing a conjoined twin

Rumours are rife that you are in a relationship with your *Alone* co-star, **Karan Singh Grover**. How do you handle such talk?

I don't 'handle' my link-ups. I just have to say that I have got two great friends from this film — Bhushan (Patel, the film's director) and Karan. We were like a trio right from the beginning. It's very rare that you connect with the right set of people. What I like about Bhushan and Karan is that they don't do stuff to impress people. Both of them are very honest. And I like people who are no-nonsense and honest like me. Karan and I socialise a lot, and I cherish that.

What convinced you to star alongside a TV actor like Karan?

He is talented and has a lot of potential. He can be an A-list actor in our business because he looks great, he can dance, and emotional scenes are his strength. He is an easy fit for the films we make.

I have no qualms about doing a film with a TV actor like Karan because he is not a newcomer. He has been in the industry for the last 10 years and has a strong fan following.

How did you feel while shooting the intimate scenes with Karan?

He is a brat and a chatterbox, which is a good thing because all the ice broke on Day One. The question of discomfort is not there as you already have a rapport. Both of us had developed a friendship before we went to Kerala to shoot the intimate scenes and the *Katra* song.

How 'alone' are you in real life?

I don't want to be alone in my life; I get scared of being alone. I always want to be surrounded by people.

Was it difficult to play conjoined twins?

The shooting was difficult as I had to be joined with my body double; first as Sanjana, and after a change of hair and makeup as Anjana. Shooting for *Alone* was a unique experience as we had to take care of the distances and other technicalities while shooting the conjoined twins.

What kind of supernatural makeup did you put on for the film?

This is the first time I am enacting a ghost. There is no benchmark for such a role... how will a ghost react or act? That said, I was apprehensive of putting on 'scary' makeup. I told my director that he could opt for a different heroine but I would not put scary makeup on my face. I don't want to be scarred for life. Bhushan was nice and has done a lot of special effects instead.

—ANITA BRITTO,
BOLLYWOOD NEWS SERVICE