

A Monthly News Magazine by AMITY SCHOOL of COMMUNICATION

# Expressions

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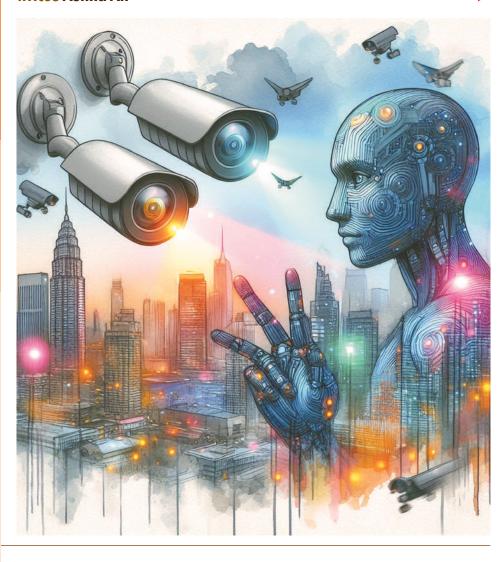
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# AICAMERAS

Revolutionising safety & security

Government taps into artificial intelligence for its Safe City Project, writes Ashna Ali



#### THE DAWN OF AI CAMERAS

ow, Artificial Intelligence (AI)-enabled camera surveillance systems across Lucknow will be monitoring citizens' safety at all times. This initiative is part of the Safe City Project.

The project is part of a government move at bolstering security for Uttar Pradesh. Hence, the State Government has only recently launched the project across UP. It aims at creating a safe haven for women in public places enabling them to pursue all opportunities without threat of gender-based violence or harassment. The Empowered Committee under Nirbhaya fund has approved Safe City projects in eight selected cities namely Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad and Lucknow among others.

As part of the project's initial phase,

a Home Department Press release had stated that 'the Home Department has identified more than 21,000 cameras for integration with the Smart City Control Room in 17 municipal corporations and Gautam Buddh Nagar.

Among them, 11,544 cameras have been earmarked for integration with the Integrated Command and Control Center (ICCC) in 10 municipal corporations, while 7,285 cameras have been designated for integration with the Integrated Traffic Management System (ITMS) in seven municipal corporations'.

Around of 1,000 Al cameras equipped with face recognition technology are being located at Lucknow's key locations.

Talking to Expressions, resident of Gomti Nagar Extension, Mohammad Irfan said, "I think this initiative will help in protection of women." As per the data suggested by Municipal Commissioner and CEO of Smart City Lucknow, Inderjit Singh, 53 crossings in Lucknow are covered with ITMS to streamline traffic and catch traffic violators.

A Tol report states that the system is equipped with PTZ (pan-tilt-zoom) and fixed cameras to aid the cops. The project will take 19 months to complete and cost Rs 96 crore, the report states. Additionally, hotlines and helplines will be integrated with the Al system to strengthen the process. The system is not without its detractors. A dedicated worker from the Municipal Corporation Chandu Yadav, complained, "I hope this initiative becomes operational. However, if, like in foreign countries, there are no dumps to clean, it may impact our earnings."

# When Bada Imambara made this academician become tour guide

#### ΜΔΝΙ ΒΔΝΙ

Bachelor of Journalism & Mass Communication

Professor Deepak Mehra whilst living in Lucknow had devoted decades to explore the city's history and instructing bright students at nearby colleges on Lucknow's vibrant past. His lectures were welcomed by one and all as knowledge in history books about Lucknow's past would come alive as he would weave that information into picturesque storytelling sessions.

But when retirement came round the corner, Mehra looked forward to a calm, book-filled existence with a peaceful garden and a cozy rocking chair. But behind the surface of academic regularity, a passion for history awakened, irrespective of textbooks and assessments. When retirement finally arrived, he did not enjoy the peaceful life he had envisioned. Taking a different path, Mehra, motivated by his enduring interest in Lucknow's abundant past, made a decision to embark on a

new journey as a tour guide at the Bada Imambara. Professor Deepak's metamorphosis amounted to a spiritual rebirth for him. The striking architecture and the legends etched in each brick stoked his inner fire once again. He drove headfirst into his study, combining the rigor of academia with the zeal of a storyteller.

Guiding tourists through the intricate Bhoolbhulaiya became his forte. He wove tales of political intrigue, Lucknow's cultural heritage and the majesty of the Nawabi people with every turn and twist. He had moved his lessons out of the classroom and onto the courtyards of the Bada Imambara.

The breadth of Mehra's expertise and the individual touch he added to each tale set his trips apart. Instead of just hearing about history, visitors got to experience it through the eyes of a man who has devoted his whole life to solving its riddles. His eyes gleamed with his newfound happiness as he made his way through the maze-like hallways. The hushed lecture halls gave way to his tour



groups' raucous laughing and surprise. The monument's vivid spirit inspired him during his retirement years.

His transition from an academic to tour guide served as evidence that enthusiasm has no age restrictions. For him, the Bada Imambara became more than simply a place of employment; it was a haven where fulfillment and history came together. Mehra had learned the beauty of reinvention in the latter stages of his career, demonstrating that, on occasion, the most thrilling chapters of life begin when we have the courage to flip the pages.



# **Budh Bazaar**

### Marketing dynamics at play

**AMBIKA SINGH** 

Master of Arts in Advertising & Mass Media

traffic jams for company, the weekly Wednesday street market at Gole market crossing has been taking place with unwavering regularity and clockwork precision as far as memory can serve. This open-air market is a onestop shopping arena right from household articles to interior decor to clothes and what not.

Colloquially called Budh Bazaar, it is a flourishing hub of business, cross-cultural interaction and civic engagement exemplifying the spirit of traditional and modern-day commercial transactions.

As students of M.A. Advertising and Marketing went on a field trip to Budh Bazaar, to their delight they found that it was a treat to visit the market.

Talking to Expressions, students, while describing the market said, that it was divided into sectors specializing in selling particular commodities. Giving examples, they said that there were special sections for clothing, jewellery, spices, and street food.

They added that shopkeepers starting setting up shop around 11:00 a.m. The shops were set up using props like long bamboo sticks and installing lights, speakers, and boards.

With affordable prices attracting customers in droves, shopkeepers' marketing and selling techniques used to sell their wares were very practical, added students. They said as shopkeepers clearly understood customers' psychological buying behavior, they were clever enough to turn their customers into permanent buyers. Bargaining was prevalent spicing up the buying experience, they informed.

Budh Bazaar has a history of its own.





The slogans and phrases these vendors use, sets them apart from the competition.

Pictures: Ambika Singh

Students observed that many businesses have been there for almost 30 years while others have a family tradition of selling only one product and are following in the footsteps of their forefathers. Students told Expressions that they observed that the shopkeepers' selling methods, the language they used and the slogans and phrases they used set them apart from the competition.

All in all, it proved to be a learning opportunity for students to dissect the behavior of both sellers and consumers, which was insightful information for them. The experience helped them learn about the domains of marketing and advertising.

## It's more fun as age advances!





**AISHANI PURKAYASTHA** 

Bachelor of Journalism & Mass Communication

Then the Bard wrote age cannot wither her, nor custom stale her infinite variety, of course he was attributing it to Queen Cleopatra, a royal queen, famed for her beauty. But there is no denying the fact that ageism as a concept means different things to different people.

Even as stress is on the eternal fountain of youth, the warp and weft of wrinkles also cannot be ignored. But, when the eco-system emphasizes on remaining 'forever young', brainwashing is an obvious spinoff. Moreover, societal pressure to resist visible signs of aging, particularly for women, has created a complex land-scape where self-acceptance competes with societal expectations. Even advertisements for face creams use phrases like 'fight the early signs of aging' and 'get a younger look in just seven days' as they sell on insecurities of their customers.

According to World Health Organization, children as young as four begin to internalize culture's age stereotypes. Ageism has a negative impact on physical and mental health, and reports link it with early death too. But on the positive side, as per a study, people with a positive outlook on aging lived a median of seven and a half years longer compared to those who thought negatively. These

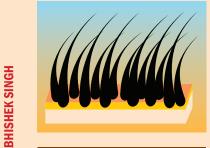
thoughts can translate to behaviors. For example, assuming everyone 'old' is not as capable, functional, or able to participate may lead someone to not heal as well, seek care, or involve themselves in physical activity. Ageism can apply to discrimination against any age, old or young, but most prominently affects older individuals. Talking to Expressions, Dr Bhavna Wal, Faculty at Amity School of Communication said, "I feel aging should be embraced gracefully. No woman should feel pressure of society; what will society think if they don't attempt to look young. A woman is an individual in her own right, and she is an empowered woman."

As advanced healthcare facilities take care of defying the aging process, many individuals are embracing lifestyles that challenge the conventional limitations associated with aging. Jaya Kothari, a housewife said, "They need to understand that everyone gets older, and everyone has to go through certain changes. You cannot really stop something which is natural. No one should feel pressured by unrealistic norms."

In general, while navigating the age paradox, it becomes crucial for society to embrace a more nuanced understanding of age. Rather than adhering to rigid stereotypes and expectations, it is important to embrace diversity of experiences and perspectives that individuals bring to the table.

#### **COSMETIC SURGERY IN INDIA**





HAIR TRANSPLANTS

30,000 results per month
Statista



COSMETIC PROCEDURES

8-10 lakh with 10% foreign patients
The Times of India

### Happiness card and fine dining







#### **KHUSHI GULATI**

**Bachelor of Journalism & Mass Communication** 

ome Monday or Tuesday and despite weekdays, the week may not seem heavy. Why? Simply because a whetted appetite appears on the horizon specially if a budget meal is on the cards.

Welcome to the world of Barbeque Nation! A restaurant with the tag line 'Let us serve you better' is a dining experience which offers its own happiness card. That happiness can be felt as the diner offers 'over the table barbeque, live grills embedded in dining tables, allowing guests to grill their own barbecue's right at their tables'.

Founded in 2006 with a simple vision of offering a complete dining experience at affordable prices, the chain currently owns and operates 200 outlets in India, four in UAE, one in Malaysia and one in Oman. Indian cuisine is a natural part of the diet in the markets in which the Barbeque Nation operates.

With buffet the most in thing, Barbeque Nation tops. Customers opined that they go to this place with their friends for birthday celebrations or any other occasion one can think of. Talking to Expressions, Rishabh, a regular customer said, "This place is my favorite as they never disappoint me with their wonderful taste and variety." The eatery puts customers first - from reserving tables and customising the level of spiciness to creating in

house live entertainment and taking feedback from customers and this customer driven strategy is enough to expand its chain. With the avid practice of DIY, 'Do it Yourself' policy, the restaurant offers a vast variety of veg and non-veg options.

The non-veg options have attracted more customers. The ambience is surreal and many people come to unwind themselves there. "We try our best to have a customer-oriented strategy and want to treat the customer as the king because, says Arun Singh, Manager, Barbeque Nation.

#### ALUMNI CORNER

ANU MISHRA
Team Lead
Voicelogue Private Limited
BJ&MC - 2011-14

#### At ASCO, there's learning about exploring oneself

As I reflect on my journey with ASCO, I am joyfully immersed in the hectic coursework with detailed assignments and my necessity to excel in almost all of it to keep the scholarship running. As much as I tried to ace my examinations, there was also hopeless hiding in photography and animation classes because it was all too 'technical' then.

The most significant contribution of understanding mass communication from a diverse lens was igniting

the journey of self-exploration. I remember receiving late (and often random) requests to write advertisement copy for friends, thinking over chai about the concepts for the radio shows, pausing mindfully during our behavioural science classes and creating tangible assignments that gave us the confidence of 'yes we can'. To be constantly in a zone of

creative brainstorming needed not just information but also real hands-on experience to see one's production live.

The RJ Hunt competition, our visit to Narora Nuclear Power Plant and the CSR projects of Tata Chemicals gave me insight into research and development communication.

'Learning to learn' is a necessary mindset my professors tried educating us back then. Picking up forum theatre and storytelling as a development and learning facilitator today, I credit my restlessness to fuse creative communication in whatever I do to my training at ASCO. My most rewarding experiences of directing plays around mental health, workplace harassment and embracing change in learning organizations have been a blending of my education as a communicator and a development practitioner.

I am grateful for all the love, support and encouragement I have received in ASCO, because it not only gave me a conviction to build a career on one strength but also encouraged many other younger girls from my township to choose this career as a 'mainstream' form of livelihood.



### Social Media: A double-edged sword?

#### **SHRUTI KAPOOR**

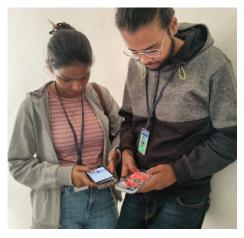
Bachelor of Journalism & Mass Communication

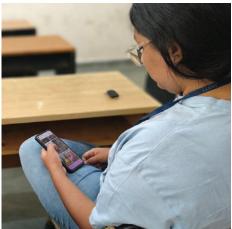
Social media can be described as a form of electronic communication via which users create online communities. These communities are used to then share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content with one another. Having stated this, it is not difficult to guess that this format's impact on lives of college goers is immense. The effect of social media is so deep that it has led to disruptions in the lives of these young minds.

Talking to Expressions, Adarsh, an engineering technology scholar says, "I use Instagram to keep in touch with my high school friends and see what's going on around campus. He added that if it hadn't been for social media, he would have not been able to keep in touch with his school friends. It is estimated that today's college students average 4.5 hours daily on social media. The same behavior applies to relationships amongst college students. Dikshant says, "I think social media has made it harder to meet people in person." Divya, a law student, adds, "It's easy to compare your life to what you see online."

Social platforms also serve as a double-edged sword, offering connectivity while fostering self-comparison. "I try to be authentic on social media, but it's definitely a challenge," Ziana from BCA says. In a survey conducted by Expressions with the intervention of social media and lifestyle, respondents talked about how they navigate the social media landscape and grapple with impact of the media on their mental well-being, recognizing both positive and negative effects.

Despite the negatives, respondents said that they had not encountered any cyberbullying related to their university experience on social media. The findings provide insight into the complex experiences of students in the digital age and encourage continued discussion about the responsible use of social media in education.







33%

As per an estimate more than 33% of the users of social media are the college students

With the ease of internet access, the number of social media users in India stood at 518 million in 2020

518 Million

1.5 Billion Social network users in the country are expected to be almost 1.5 billion in 2040

Facebook remained the popular choice among the social media platforms as of 2020

MOST POPULAR

# Vishalakshi Foundation: Making dreams come true



#### **SUPRIYA SRIVASTAVA**

**Bachelor of Journalism & Mass Communication** 

he NITI Aayog has stated in a new paper that multidimensional poverty (MDI) has declined from 29.17% in 2013-14 to 11.28% in 2022-23. Additionally 24.82 crore people have 'escaped' from multidimensional poverty during this nine-year period.

Although this news may be uplifting for many, there are still many individuals, including children, who have been left out of the ambit. They need to be elevated from their state of poverty and illiteracy. Thus, as these children of a lesser god wait for a tug at their lives, Vishalakshi Foundation has started making inroads into lives of some individuals.

Vishalakshi Foundation is a non-profit organization working on the mission of eradicating hunger and promoting literacy. Based in Lucknow, it was established in January 2019 by Nilay Agarwal, a philanthropist, currently working at Google LLC.

A unique dream school, built on a former Lucknow dumpsite near Janeshwar Mishra Park, thrives on weekend volunteers. The foundation has distributed over 40,000 free meals, provided ration kits to more than 52,000 families, conducted dental check-ups, counselling sessions, and blood donation drives, and

initiated slum adoption and free education programs for children.

Talking to Expressions, Alind Agarwal, Nilay's brother said, "The reason my brother started this organization in the memory of his best friend late Vishalakshi Sharma. She was a social worker and wanted to open a school for poor children. Since then, he has burnt all bridges behind to make her dream come true!"

Dedicated volunteers teach primary students and community members. All children within the neighborhood are welcomed. Muskan Pal, a 10-year girl, daughter of a sweeper says, "My family did not have enough money to support my education, but when this dream school started near our slum in Gomti Nagar, I got good food to eat, books to study and clothes to wear."

The founder utilizes funds for children's meals and provides age-appropriate study materials. Raj Mishra, another student of the dream school explains, "On weekends, Alind bhaiya arranges tasty food for us and distributes gifts."

Even self-funded, in its early stages, the foundation makes impressive strides, focusing solely on underprivileged education, setting it apart and unique.

Together, let us walk with Vishalakshi Foundation towards a dawn where hunger and illiteracy are mere fragments of a bygone era, replaced by the harmonious chords of prosperity and knowledge.





### Revisiting

# LUCKNOW LEGACY

# through Sanatkada

This year, Sanatkada showcased over 100 accomplished weavers and handicraft artists from both the country and outside. The exhibition attracted a significant influx of visitors, surpassing 5000 attendees This massive audience underlines Sanatkada's position as a cultural hotspot and must-see tourism destination.



Sanatkada didn't disappoint with its splendid performance, resonating the rich legacy that the city is renowned for

> Madhavi Kuckrejam Founder of the Festival

Everyone is delighted to eat, gossip, hear *qisse* (stories), watch performances and this is exactly what we are giving through this exhibition but with a touch of diversity of our cultures

Michael Jo Social Cultural Activist

#### MARIA SIDDIOUI

**Bachelor of Journalism & Mass Communication** 

uring times when nobody knew about my shop Charkhi, exhibitions like Sanatkada helped me. They not only gave recognition to my shop, but turned my hardships into opportunities," said Kailash Patwa while talking to Expressions. Patwa had a stall at the recently held expo Sanatkada.

Exhibitions like Sanatkada preserve and celebrate traditions. Ashiqana Lucknow, the theme of the 15th edition of Mahindra Sanatkada Cultural Festival was held at the two heritage properties of Safed Baradari and Salempur House in Qaiserbagh. The five-day festival saw a plethora of culture and food walks across the city, where myriad artists displayed their creations at a crafts bazaar and Bawarchi Tola nestled amidst the lushy lawns of Salempur House.

But what sets Sanatkada apart from the other exhibitions? Qissa Khan, a visitor at the exhibition said artisanship is on display under one roof at this exhibition. Sanatkada shows a cultural immersion and fosters deep connections between visitors and exhibitors, irrespective of nationality. For example, Afghani jewellery was on full magnificent display.

"Everyone is delighted to eat, gossip, hear qisse (stories), watch performances and this is exactly what we are giving through this exhibition but with a touch of diversity of our cultures," said Madhavi Kuckreja, founder of the festival. The century old Budakki ka Mela on the banks of the Gomti, was the model which she wanted to emulate. "The Mahindra Sanatkada Lucknow Festival is dedicated to industrialist Anand Mahindra's mother, who was from Lucknow and therefore an emotional connection is important for such a fest," she added. From poetic kathak to qissagoi (storytelling), book launches, film screenings, mushairas and ghazals, the festival had something for everyone.

Michael Jo, a social cultural activist and an intrepid explorer added that 'Sanatkada didn't disappoint with its splendid performance, resonating the rich legacy that the city is renowned for'.

# Stakeholders face dilemma over age curb at coaching centers

#### **SHAHIDA KHAN**

**Bachelor of Journalism & Mass Communication** 

t was in January this year that the Indian Government issued new guidelines for private coaching centers. One guideline highlights that now no coaching center will provide admission to students under 16 years of age.

With this guideline now in place, it has sparked a debate among educators, parents and owners of coaching centers.

Talking to Expressions, Afsha Khan, who cleared NEET exam in 2023 and is studying at KGMU, commented, "I believe it's beneficial for students who have yet to explore their interests. However, for those who have already mapped out their future plans and are determined to succeed in tough exams, it may create additional pressure as school syllabi may not adequately prepare them for such



exams." "For me, coaching was instrumental in qualifying for exams. Coaching provides extra guidance which is very important to clear exams," she said.

This regulatory change has significant implications for teachers of coaching centers. Many educators rely on coaching centers as a primary source of income and now perhaps their livelihood will be

impacted. Nitesh Singh, a biology teacher in Lucknow, said, "The recent regulatory change has had a significant impact on both my teaching schedule and income from coaching centers."

Parents, on the other hand, face a different set of challenges resulting from the age restriction. With the age restraint guideline now in place, their anxiety is hitting a fresh crescendo. Najma Khan, a working woman, said, "It was a bit easy till tuition and coaching were an option but now I don't have any other option left either I give time to my kids or give them support for online classes." Now parents may either have to get their wards enrolled for online classes or hire private tutors.

While age restriction on coaching centers aims to alleviate academic pressure on young students, its implementation poses significant challenges for teachers and parents alike.

### It's important to break the cocoon

#### **ARYAN SINGH**

Bachelor of Journalism & Mass Communication

he recently occurred global pandemic taught humanity one thing, the importance of social connect. In fact, social interaction can be stated as the way people behave when they meet or spend time together. This involves verbal or non-verbal communication.

But social interaction also categorizes individuals as introvert, extrovert or ambivert.

Introverts are often described as reserved, reflective individuals who recharge their energy through solitude and introspection. They tend to prefer smaller social gatherings or one-on-one interactions, feeling drained by prolonged exposure to large groups or noisy

environments. Talking to Expressions, Abhinav Verma, a student of media comments, "Introverts often excel in areas such as deep thinking, problem-solving, and attention to detail. These strengths are showcased when they volunteer for projects where these skills are valued. When we consistently deliver high-quality work, our visibility will naturally increase." But then, most often, introverts are ignored too.

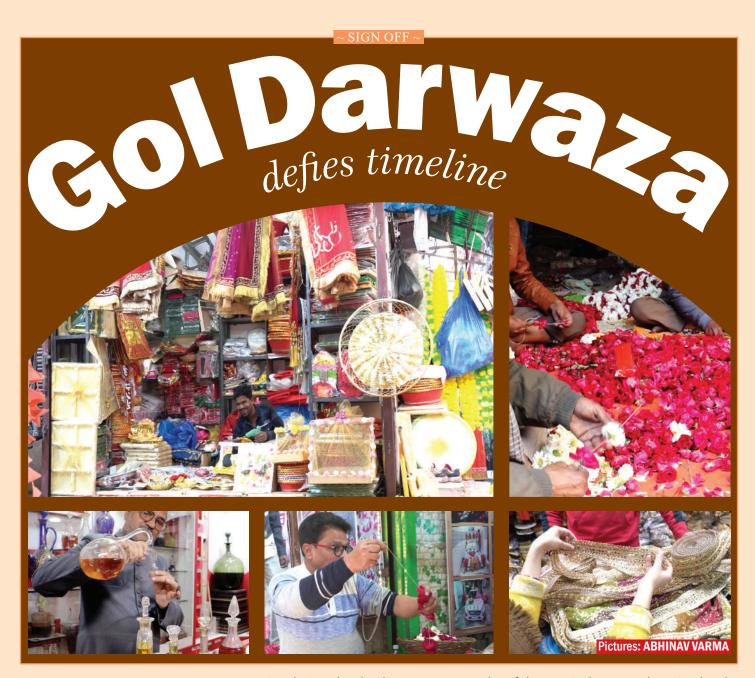
So for introverts to come out of their shell, they need to focus on making impactful contributions. Volunteering for leadership roles or leading small projects can help introverts demonstrate their abilities and gain recognition. These opportunities allow then to showcase their organizational skills, decision-making abilities and capacity to motivate others.

Introverts often excel in written com-

munication, so they can take advantage of this. Clear and articulate written communication can help them stand out whether it is online or offline.

Additionally, they need not be afraid of any feedback from their colleagues. Positive feedback can help boost their confidence while constructive criticism can provide valuable insights for improvement. Aadvik Bhardwaj, a student of BTech second year says, "While introverts may prefer smaller, more meaningful interactions, it's still important to build relationships with colleagues and managers. It's important to find common interests or topics to discuss, and take out time to listen actively to others."

Last but not the least they should embrace their personality and respect their feelings irrespective of whether they are an introvert or extrovert.



#### **ABHINAV VARMA**

**Bachelor of Journalism & Mass Communication** 

s the churlish chiding of the winter season ebbs and malai makhan, a famous purchase at Lucknow's Gol Darwaza sees its last tidings for this chilly season, the age old monument defies the timeline.

Located between Koneshwar temple and mandi crossing, Gol Darwaza in Chowk has witnessed generations come and go. This famous gateway which came up during the reign of Nawab Asaf-ud-Daula was 'a typical Indian bazaar street replete with unbelievably narrow houses and large markets... centre of Awadh. The imposing darwaza dwarfed all and gave some semblance of structure to the area' to quote noted historian Yogesh Praveen.

As a busy marketplace not only in

its glorious heyday but even now, Gol Darwaza reflects the old world Lucknawi charm.

Talking to Expressions, Imran owner of Izharsons Ittar Shop (established in 1928) said, "As years pass by, from selling flowers to spices, this market has become a collection of all the Awadhi memories which are fading rapidly." He explained the process of ittar manufacturing. He lamented his act of killing flowers while expressing his gratitude for his father, who taught him the craft of spreading fragrance in people's lives. What is outstanding is that through the narrow-gauged streets, hospitality runs wide.

Breathing life into shared history of the place, vendors adorn the streets spreading love with their cups of warm tea. A little ahead, Mansoor Chapai Art has been an emporium for printing designs on Chikan clothes. The speciality

of the area is that most shops in Chowk are ancestral.

This is not all. Flowers abound here in phool mandi. "Garlands made here, are supplied throughout Lucknow. I have been doing this work since 1970," said Ajay Kumar Saini, a flower shop owner. Focusing on the obsolete tradition of wearing 'Nagra' shoes, there is also the Nawabi Nagra, a feast for the eyes. Additionally, Mahmoud Ahmed Chikankari's shop also highlights intricacies of Chikan art work. A worker in the shop explained, "There is Zardozi, a kind of metal embroidery. It was used by kings and royals in the old days," pointing to another lehenga, he said. "That is chata-pati, the individual pieces are first stitched and embroidered and then combined," the worker added

Tunday Kababi, the titan, stands in the middle of the road and is quite influential.