MANIPAL
ACADEMY of HIGHER EDUCATION
(Institution of Eminence Deemed to be University)

Online
MANIPAL

THE LIGHTHOUSE

August 2026 | Volume V

Guiding Your Journey Through Progress, People, and Possibilities

Every milestone is a step towards something greater. From global rankings and industry-leading partnerships to transformative learner experiences and career opportunities, this edition celebrates the people, achievements, and innovations that continue to expand the horizons of MAHE Online.

Institute of Analytics
Recognized Programme
irm Institute of Risk Management
MANIPAL Online MANIPAL
PANORAMA 2026
LAUNCHPAD 2026
SOAR INTO SUCCESS

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DECK

Dear Learners,

As we reflected on India's Independence Day earlier this month, it reminded us that freedom is more than a national milestone. It is the freedom to dream bigger, embrace change, and continuously redefine ourselves.

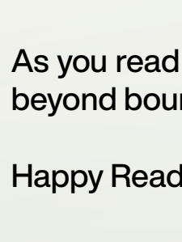
At MAHE, we see this spirit reflected in every learner who chooses to upskill, pivot careers, or pursue a long-held aspiration. Every milestone, whether personal or institutional, is built on the courage to move beyond comfort zones and embrace new possibilities.

This edition celebrates that journey. Over the past few months, our institution has earned recognition in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2026 and The Week–Hansa Research Survey 2026, reaffirming our commitment to academic excellence and meaningful impact. We have also strengthened our academic offerings through collaborations with the Institute of Risk Management (IRM), UK and the Institute of Analytics (IoA), ensuring our learners benefit from globally relevant knowledge and professional exposure.

This edition also celebrates initiatives that bring our community together. Events like Launchpad 2026 and Panorama 2026 reflect our continued focus on learner success, industry engagement, and building connections that extend well beyond the classroom.

As you read this edition, I hope these stories inspire you to keep learning, embrace new opportunities, and continue moving beyond boundaries.

Happy Reading!



Warm regards,
Dr. Manojkumar Nagasampige
Director (Directorate of Online Education)

CLICK HERE FOR A BETTER EXPERIENCE

BEACON MOMENTS

Shining a light on key milestones, events, and university highlights from the last quarter.

May 26, 2026: MAHE Ranked Among India's Best Multidisciplinary Universities

In The Week–Hansa Research Survey 2026, MAHE secured the #5 rank among India's Best Multidisciplinary Universities. It also emerged as the highest-ranked private deemed multidisciplinary university in India and the #1 multidisciplinary university in South India.

These recognitions underscore MAHE's leadership in delivering multidisciplinary education, fostering academic excellence, and creating a future-ready learning ecosystem that continues to earn national acclaim.

Jun 13, 2026: Panorama 2026

Panorama 2026 welcomed learners to the MAHE campus for a day of learning, networking, and celebration. The event featured an inspiring keynote by **Raghav Gupta**, Head of Education – India & Asia Pacific, OpenAI, along with engaging campus experiences and cultural performances.

A key highlight was the panel discussion on The Future of Work in the Age of AI, where industry experts explored how AI is transforming careers and the skills professionals need to succeed in the evolving workplace.

PANORAMA 2026

Jun 18, 2026: IoA Accreditation for Analytics Programs

MAHE's Online MSc in Data Science, MSc in Business Analytics, PGCP in Data Science, and PGCP in Business Analytics programs are now Institute of Analytics (IoA)-accredited, a globally recognized professional body for analytics and data science.

Through IoA Student Membership, learners gain access to professional development resources, exclusive webinars, networking opportunities, analytics communities, and 350+ online learning courses through DataCamp and the IoA learning portal.

Aug 07, 2026: Celebrating the Spirit of Aati

The Directorate of Online Education proudly participated in Aati Da Porlu, a fashion show celebrating the rich traditions and cultural heritage of the Tulu region, held as part of MAHE's Aati festivities. The event brought together faculty and staff in a vibrant showcase of traditional attire, community spirit, and regional pride, reflecting MAHE's commitment to celebrating India's diverse cultural traditions.

Aati is a traditional monsoon festival celebrated in the Tulu region of coastal Karnataka, marking a time of cultural rituals, gratitude, and community celebrations rooted in local heritage.

Aati da
TULU PARBA
2026

Nov 19–22, 2026: Save the Date – 4th Convocation of MAHE Online Education

The 4th Convocation of MAHE Online Education will be celebrated as part of the 34th Convocation of MAHE, bringing together graduates to celebrate their academic achievements at KMC Greens, Manipal. Scheduled from November 19 to 22, 2026, the convocation will mark a memorable milestone as learners join the wider MAHE community in celebrating their success.

Mark your calendars. We look forward to celebrating this milestone with you!

Jun 05, 2026: Launchpad 2026

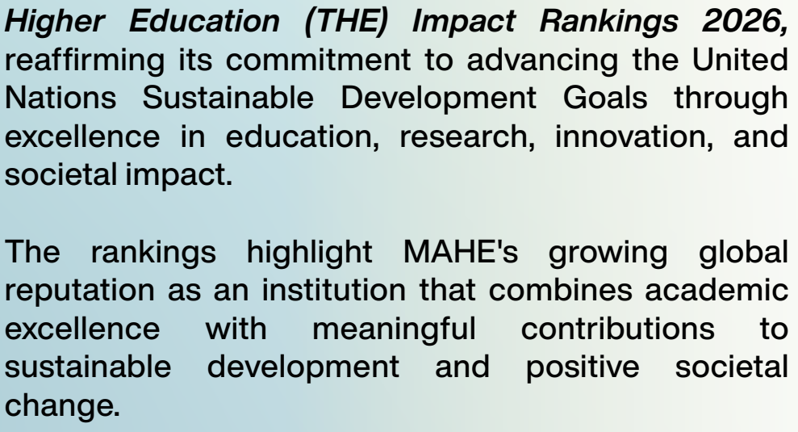
Launchpad 2026 brought together learners, recruiters, and industry leaders for Online Manipal's flagship hybrid career fair. With 80+ recruiters, 100+ job roles, and 4,000+ career opportunities, learners connected with leading employers across diverse industries.

The event went beyond hiring by enabling networking, career guidance, and meaningful industry interactions, reinforcing Online Manipal's commitment to making learners career-ready and connecting them with the right opportunities.

Jun 18, 2026: IRM Integration with Online MBA

MAHE's online MBA programs are now integrated with the Institute of Risk Management (IRM), UK, enabling learners across all MBA specializations to pursue the IRM Global Level 1 Enterprise Risk Management (FoRM) Certification as part of their academic journey.

The integration equips learners with globally recognized risk management knowledge, enhances industry readiness, and provides access to IRM's international professional network and learning resources.



Jun 25, 2026: MAHE Excels in THE Impact Rankings 2026

MAHE achieved outstanding recognition in the *Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings 2026*, reaffirming its commitment to advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals through excellence in education, research, innovation, and societal impact.

The rankings highlight MAHE's growing global reputation as an institution that combines academic excellence with meaningful contributions to sustainable development and positive societal change.

Aug 11, 2026: Expanding the Academic Horizon

MAHE Online has expanded its academic portfolio with the introduction of three new programmes designed around emerging fields and evolving learner aspirations:

- BSc in Information Systems & Management
- MSc in Biostatistics
- MSc in Financial Economics

The new offerings bring together contemporary knowledge, interdisciplinary perspectives, and future-focused learning, further broadening the pathways available to learners through MAHE Online.

Aug 15, 2026: Celebrating the Spirit of Independence

This Independence Day, the MAHE Online community celebrated the spirit of freedom by reflecting on the power of education to transform lives. Just as India's independence marked the beginning of a new chapter, every learner's educational journey represents the freedom to challenge limitations, embrace new opportunities, and shape a brighter future.

As we honoured the nation's progress, we also celebrated the aspirations of thousands of learners who continue to redefine themselves through lifelong learning. Here's wishing our entire MAHE Online community a Happy 80th Independence Day.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Sameer Puri, Online MBA, B5

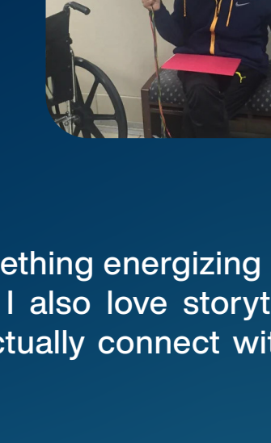
From leading in UX to finding strength on a badminton court, Sameer Puri's story is about building things that matter. Read on for his story.

1. **You've spoken about living with a serious health condition that led to a life-changing surgery. Can you tell us more about your journey?**

   I live with ulcerative colitis, a form of Inflammatory Bowel Disease. There was a period where managing it became extremely difficult. My health declined to the point where even basic daily activities felt like a challenge, and I was dealing with constant fatigue and significant weight loss. Eventually, I had to undergo a life-altering surgery to remove my colon. It tested me physically and mentally in ways I hadn't experienced before.

2. **What carried you through that period?**

   The people around me made all the difference. My organization stood by me without hesitation when I needed time off for surgery and recovery. I was supported financially, given the flexibility to heal at my own pace, and treated with genuine empathy, even in the smallest gestures. It showed me what a truly human-centred workplace looks like, and it's a lesson I carry into how I think about designing for people who don't fit the ideal, easy scenario. Living with an invisible illness has made me far more attentive to human variability in my work, not just the best-case user.



3. **You're active in the design community through Friends of Figma. What draws you to that kind of work?**

   I host workshops and bring designers together to learn from each other, and there's something energizing about watching a room full of strangers turn into a community over a single conversation. I also love storytelling, especially turning complicated, enterprise-level problems into narratives people can actually connect with. It's creative and structured at the same time, and I never get tired of it.

4. **What's a part of your life that most people wouldn't guess from your LinkedIn profile?**

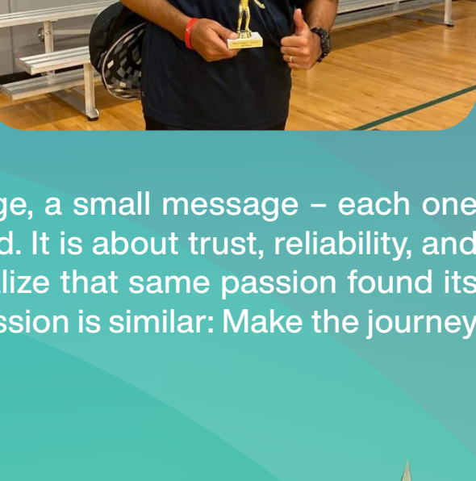
   I love organizing social experiences. Small get-togethers through *Friends of Figma*, group activities, evenings for couples or friends to just be together. It gives me a completely different window into how people communicate and interact, and honestly, it feeds back into how I think about designing experiences for people too.

5. **Where does badminton fit into that story?**

   It's essential to have a hobby you truly love, and for me, that's badminton. I still play, and I always tell people it's one of the things that's kept me going. My doctor once told me to stop playing. I told him I'd take any medication he prescribed, but there were two things he couldn't take away from me: my cup of chai and my badminton. When I'm on the court, I get so absorbed in the game that everything else fades into the background. I've gone on to win local tournaments here in Jacksonville in 2017, 2018, and 2022, and honestly, that streak means as much to me as any milestone in my career.

6. **If you had to sum up what this whole journey taught you, what would it be?**

   Badminton built my body. Ulcerative colitis built my character.



7. **What's your badminton pre-match ritual, if you have one?**

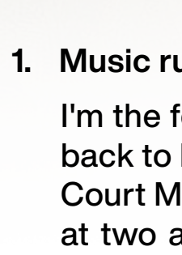
   I tell myself one simple thing: "Play the next point." Not the match. Not the trophy. Just the next point. Because I've learned, in badminton and in life, that you can't control the outcome. You can only control your focus, your attitude, and your effort.

8. **If you weren't in UX, what's the one career you'd have tried instead?**

   I would have been in postal delivery. It may sound unusual, but a letter, a package, a small message – each one carries a story, a purpose, or a moment that matters to someone on the other end. It is about trust, reliability, and creating a connection between people who may never meet. Looking back, I realize that same passion found its way into UX. Whether it's delivering a package or designing an experience, the mission is similar: Make the journey simpler.

ECHOES FROM THE BAY

Telling the stories of learners from diverse walks of life who bring passion and personality beyond their profession.



Aarohi Budhkar, Online BBA (Honors), **B8**

At 19, Aarohi Budhkar has already published a book, written research papers, and carried forward a six-generation musical legacy. Here's her story, in her own words.

1. **Music runs deep in your family. Tell us about that legacy.**

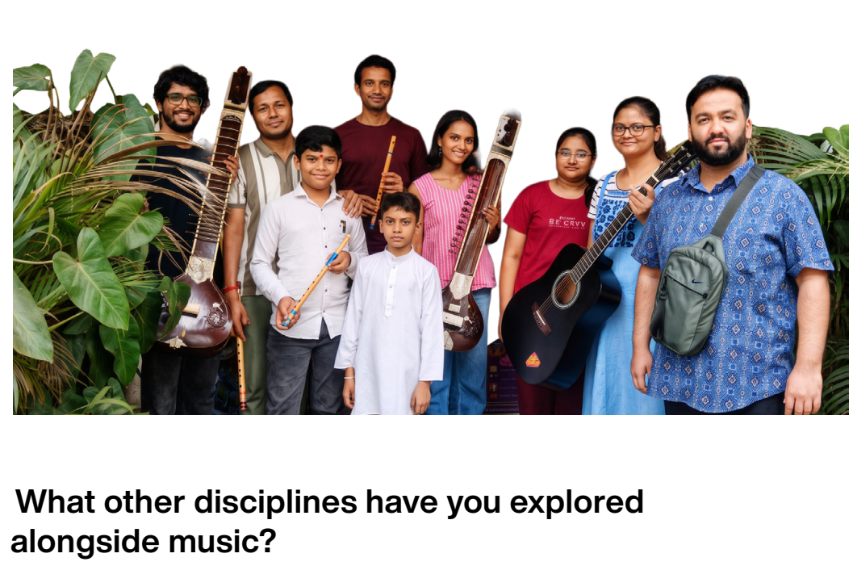
   I'm the fourth generation of a musical lineage that traces back to Pandit Balabhau Umdekar Kundalguru, the Royal Court Musician of the Scindia Kingdom. I started training at two and a half under my mother and Guru, following the traditional Guru-Shishya Parampara. Music was never a hobby for me. It became a discipline, a mission, and eventually a responsibility to carry forward.

3. **Your work goes well beyond performance. What roles do you hold today?**

   I currently serve as Deputy Director at Veena Venu Art Foundation and at Lokgatha Prakashan, alongside roles at VichitraVeenaCineRadio and as co-founder of Radha Aarohii Films. I'm also the Youth Representative for the International Vichitra Veena Council. One achievement I'm especially proud of is Veena Yug Anant, that was brought to life alongside my mother Dr. Radhika Umdekar, who initiated it. Together, we have helped create awareness about the Veena tradition among over two crore people.

4. **You've also built a body of published research and writing. What does that side of your work look like?**

   I published my debut book, "Samay Yatra ka Vichitra Yantra," at eighteen, and later co-authored "Vichitra Veena – Sur, Saaz aur Sadhak." I also co-created "Musical Batatas," a workbook dedicated to Indian classical music. My research spans music, consciousness, and cultural heritage, and I've written more than twenty articles across different platforms.



5. **What other disciplines have you explored alongside music?**

   I'm a certified music therapist, which lets me explore how music connects to emotion and well-being. I'm also a certified gemmologist, something that grew out of my broader interest in traditional knowledge systems. I also serve as Compiler and Coordinator of ShreeVeene magazine and work as a writer and editor with Lokgatha Prakashan. And as a documentary filmmaker, I've directed and researched projects on Indian music and women artists, work that's also given me an IMDB profile. I've had the privilege of interviewing legends like Pandit Vishwa Mohan Bhatt and Pandit Sajan Mishra along the way.

2. **You started teaching at age seven. What has that journey looked like since?**

   I've now mentored over 710 students across vocal music, Vichitra Veena, and related disciplines. I made my television debut at ten on Music Mojo Season 6, and along the way I trained in instruments beyond the Veena too, including Indian Slide Guitar, Mohan Veena, Saraswati Veena, Sitar, Flute, Harmonium, Guitar, Keyboard, Piano, Violin, how I think about melody and resonance as a researcher and educator, not just a performer.

6. **With such a full plate, what led you to pursue a degree through Online Manipal?**

   I believe meaningful leadership is impossible without continuous education. Online Manipal gave me the flexibility to keep learning without stepping back from my work as a musician, educator, and researcher. It's let me bring classroom knowledge directly into real-world leadership, and reinforced something I already believed: learning shouldn't stop, no matter how full life gets.

7. **What is your long-term vision?**

   My long-term vision is to ensure that rare traditions like the Vichitra Veena are not remembered as forgotten instruments of history, but continue to thrive as living traditions through education, research, innovation and meaningful public engagement.

THE MENTOR'S NOOK

Meghashree Umesh

Steering you past challenges, celebrating every milestone along the way.

As a mentor, I've always believed that every learner's journey is unique, and sometimes it's the simplest conversations that leave the biggest impact. One that I'll never forget was with a learner in his 60s who had enrolled not to advance his career, but simply to keep learning and make the most of his time. Guiding him through the student portal reminded me that education truly has no age limit, and that learning can bring purpose and companionship at every stage of life. Moments like these inspire me to be patient, empathetic, and present for every learner who reaches out. Some of the most rewarding moments have come from the relationships I've built along the way. I still smile when I think of a learner, Meghana, who invited me to her sister's wedding because she wanted to introduce me to her family. It was a heartfelt reminder that mentoring goes far beyond academics. Outside work, I enjoy creating handmade jewelry, stitching, applying mehndi, and getting lost in a good book. These little creative pursuits help me unwind and bring balance to my life.

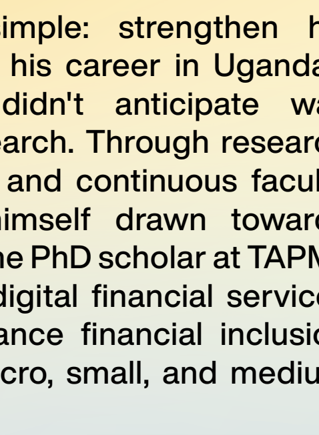
Being recognized as a Star Achiever, including for three consecutive months, has been incredibly special, but the recognition I value most is a learner's trust. If there's one thing I hope every learner remembers about me, it's that they are never alone in their online learning journey. Whenever they need guidance, support, or simply someone to listen to, I hope they know they can always count on me.

CHARTING NEW COURSES

Every academic journey begins with a single decision to learn. For two MAHE Online graduates, that decision became the foundation for something even bigger, earning admission into MAHE's on-campus PhD program.

Mmiiro Francis, Online MBA (Marketing) alumnus

When Mmiiro Francis enrolled in MAHE's Online MBA in Marketing, his goal was simple: strengthen his leadership skills and advance his career in Uganda's banking sector. What he didn't anticipate was discovering a passion for research. Through research assignments, his dissertation, and continuous faculty mentorship, Francis found himself drawn towards academia. Today, he is a full-time PhD scholar at TAPMI, where his research explores digital financial services and entrepreneurship to advance financial inclusion and support the growth of micro, small, and medium enterprises.

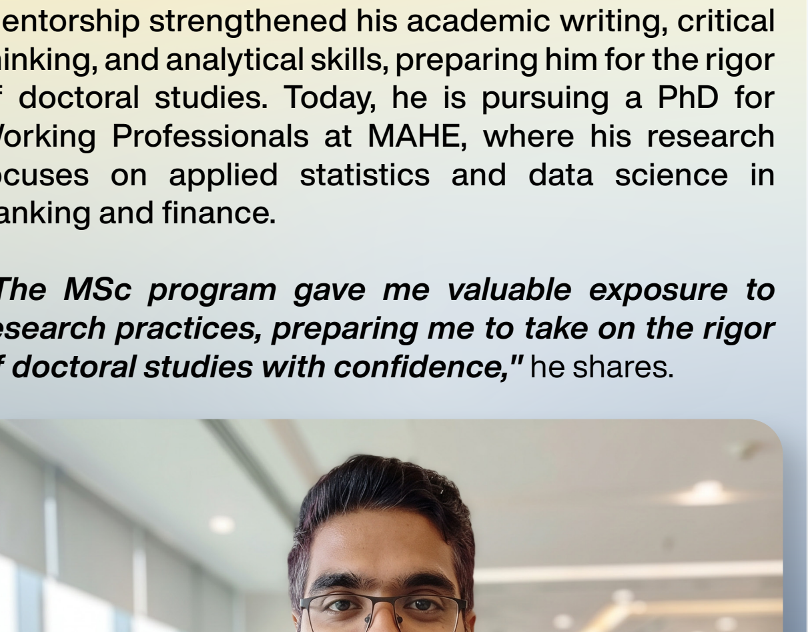


Reflecting on his journey, Francis says, ***"My online MBA became far more than a degree. It gave me the confidence to dream bigger and transformed my ambition into purpose."***

Akrajyoti Panja, Online MSc in Data Science alumnus

For Akrajyoti Panja, pursuing a PhD was always part of the plan. As a Manager at Ernst & Young LLP, he enrolled in MAHE's Online MSc in Data Science to build a stronger theoretical foundation in probability, statistics, and research, complementing the practical experience he had gained in the industry. The program's research projects, dissertation, and faculty mentorship strengthened his academic writing, critical thinking, and analytical skills, preparing him for the rigor of doctoral studies. Today, he is pursuing a PhD for Working Professionals at MAHE, where his research focuses on applied statistics and data science in banking and finance.

"The MSc program gave me valuable exposure to research practices, preparing me to take on the rigor of doctoral studies with confidence," he shares.



GUIDING LIGHTS

From classrooms to quirks – get to know your faculty.

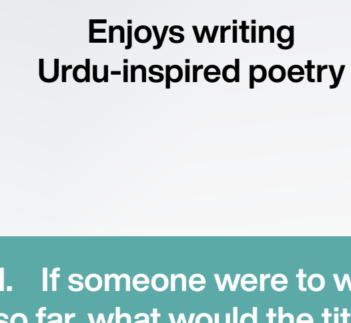
Mr. Gaurav Chandrashekhar Hajare
Assistant Professor

Former state-level volleyball player

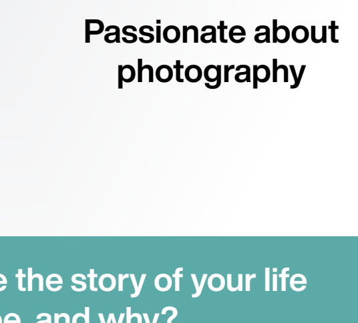
Completed a 10K marathon

Represented MAHE in javelin throw

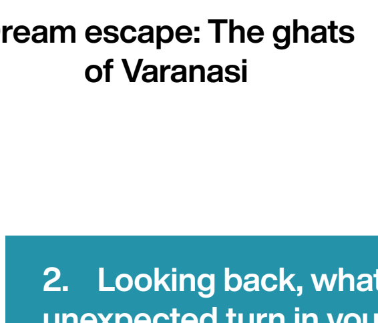
Unwinds with chess and solo travel



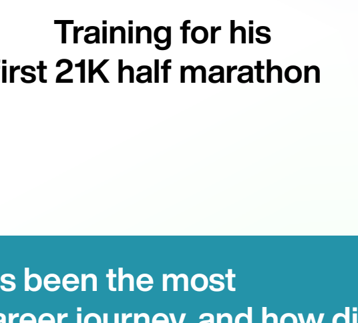
Enjoys writing Urdu-inspired poetry



Passionate about photography



Dream escape: The ghats of Varanasi



Training for his first 21K half marathon

1. If someone were to write the story of your life so far, what would the title be, and why?

"Untangledly Tangled." I've always wanted to live life on my own terms, but responsibilities often led me down expected paths. While life became tangled with obligations, I stayed untangled within, protecting my individuality and choosing whose opinions truly shape me.

2. Looking back, what has been the most unexpected turn in your career journey, and how did it shape the person you are today?

Moving from entrepreneurship to academia was the most unexpected turn in my journey. While running my own pharmaceutical business was rewarding, I felt capable of something more. Teaching has always been part of my family's legacy, and joining MAHE allowed me to transform industry experience into meaningful lessons for learners. It also opened doors to research, travel, and personal growth, proving that stepping away from the boss's chair can sometimes lead to a greater purpose.

3. What's the latest challenge you've taken on, and what motivated you to pursue it?

Running has become my latest challenge. After completing a 10K, I'm now training for my first half marathon, with the dream of becoming an ultramarathoner. Running has taught me endurance, discipline, and the ability to keep moving despite discomfort. Interestingly, those are the same qualities helping me stay focused on completing my PhD.

4. What's one memory from your days as a MAHE student that still makes you smile whenever you're on campus?

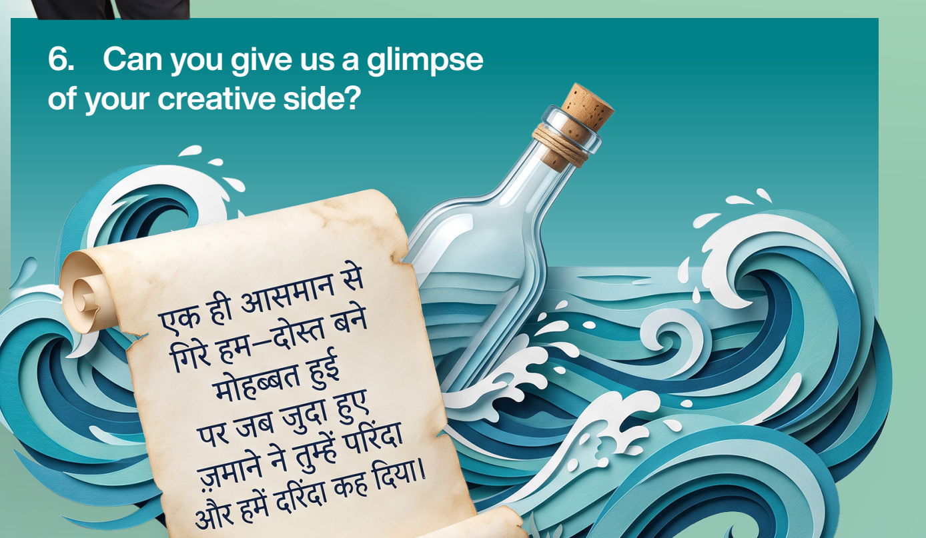
Coming to Manipal from a small town opened my eyes to a completely new world of cultures, friendships, and experiences. While the campus parties were memorable, it's the spontaneous bike rides, trekking trips, and fishing adventures with friends that I cherish the most. Walking around campus today instantly takes me back to those unforgettable years.

5. Beyond teaching and research, what keeps your creative side alive?

Writing and photography keep my creative side alive. I'm inspired by poets like Jaun Elia, Faiz Ahmed Faiz, and Parveen Shakir, whose work has deepened my appreciation for Urdu. While writing helps me express thoughts that are difficult to put into words, photography allows me to capture moments that words sometimes cannot.

"What fascinates me most about poetry is its ability to express the heaviest thoughts through just a few carefully chosen words."

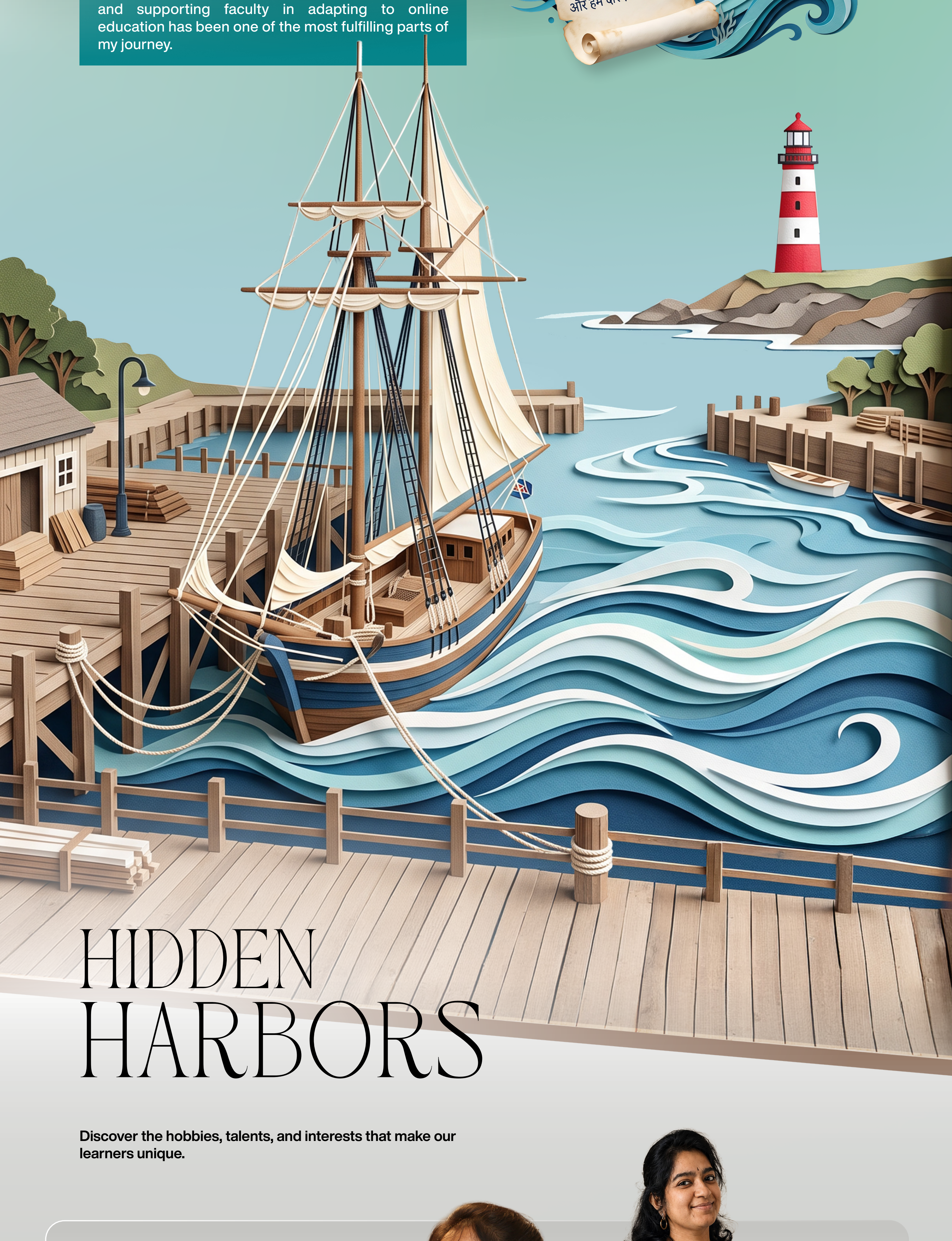
6. Can you give us a glimpse of your creative side?



एक ही आसमान से
गिरे हम–दोस्त बने
मोहब्बत हुई
पर जब जुदा हुए
ज़माने ने तुम्हें परिंदा
और हमें दरिंदा कह दिया।

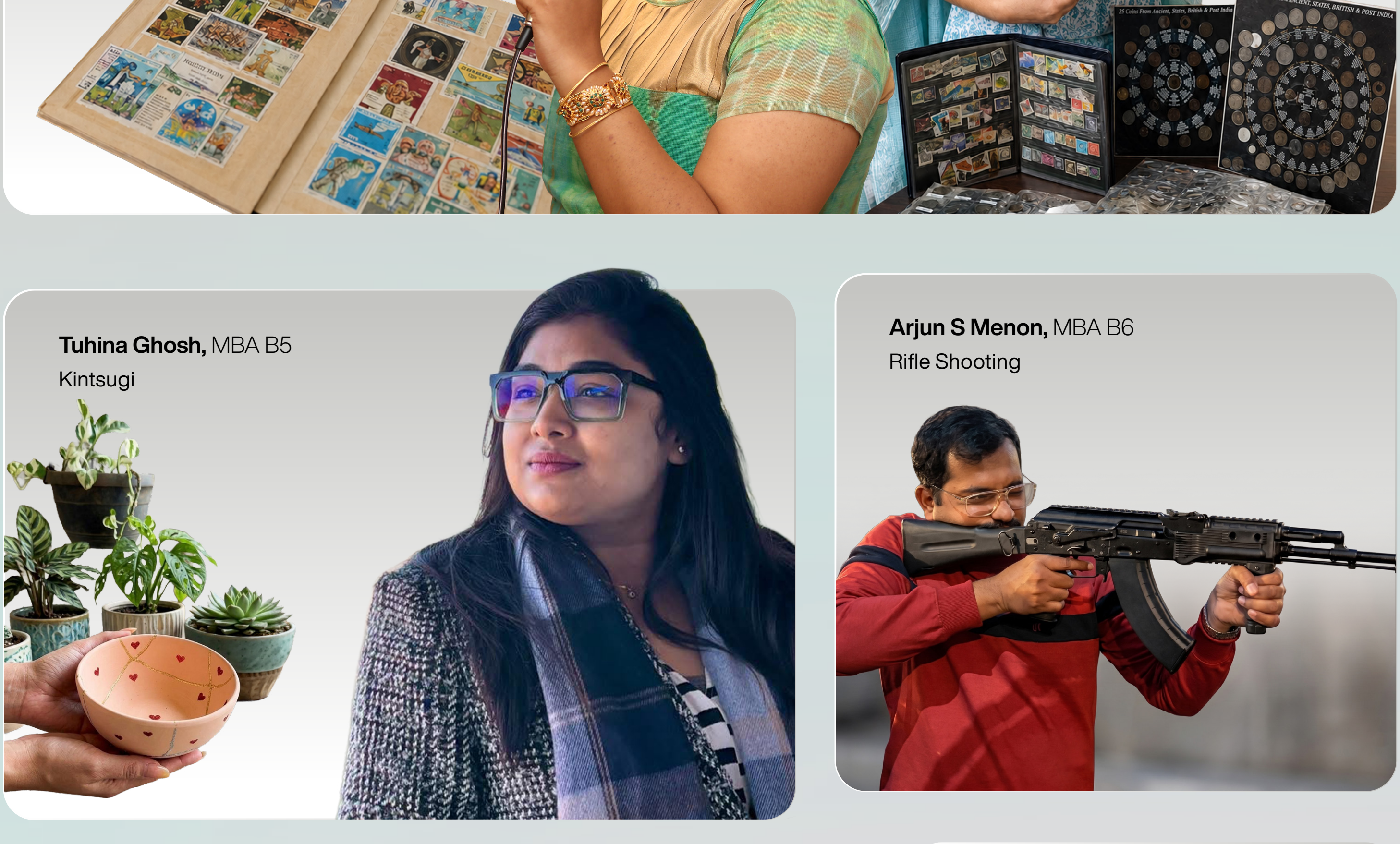
7. Was there a moment when you realised that contributing beyond the classroom was important to you?

Joining the Directorate of Online Education and working on the Healthcare and Pharmaceutical Management specialisations made me realise that my role extended beyond teaching. Helping build these programs, refining them with learner feedback, and supporting faculty in adapting to online education has been one of the most fulfilling parts of my journey.

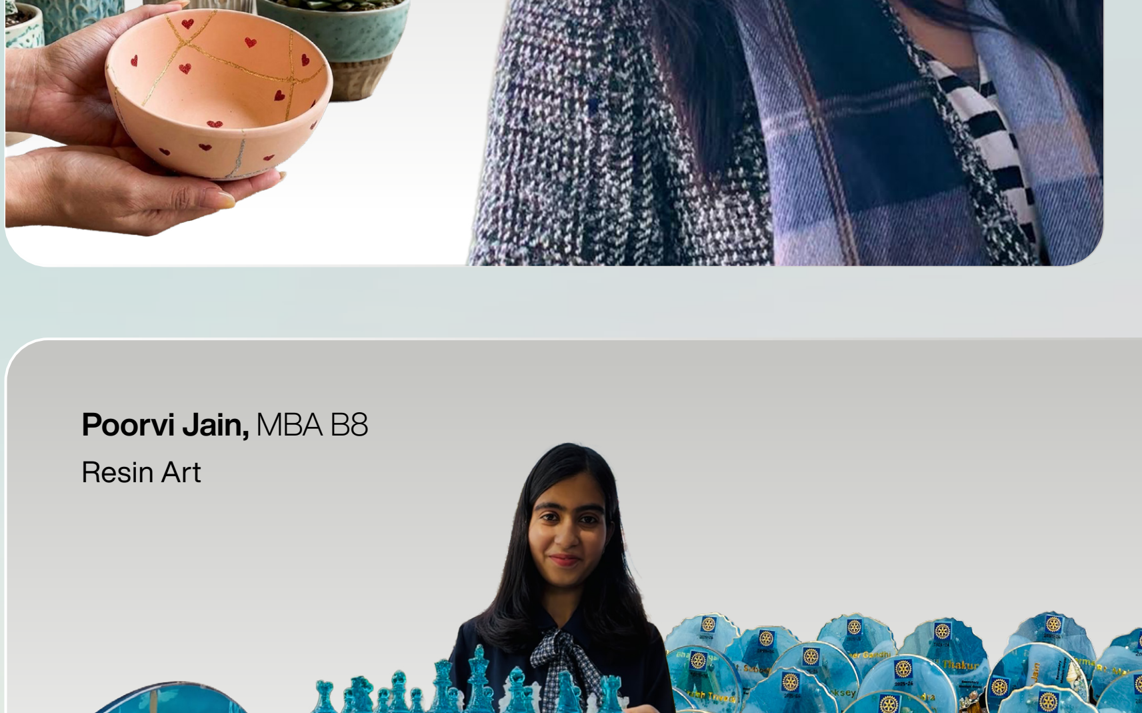


HIDDEN HARBORS

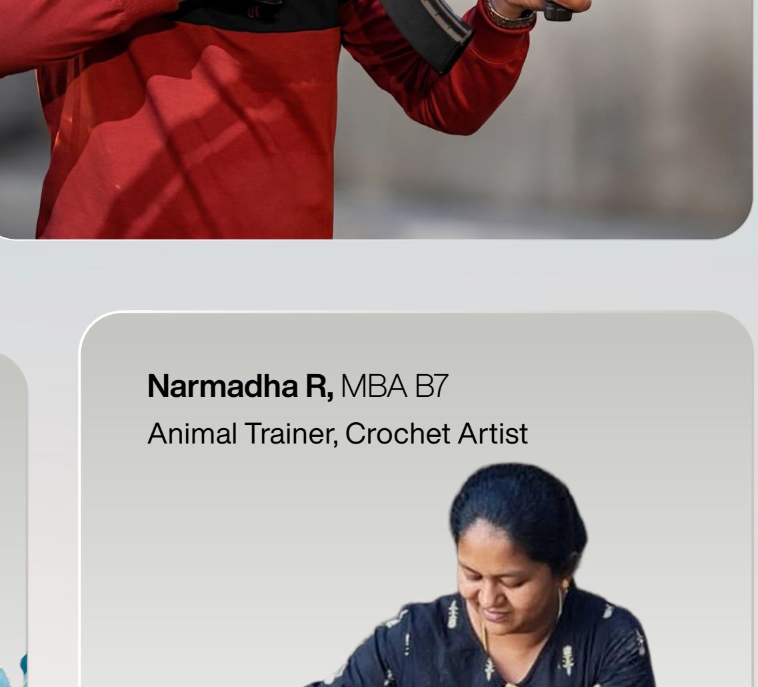
Discover the hobbies, talents, and interests that make our learners unique.



Sruti Murali, MBA B7
Carnatic Singer, Philatelist

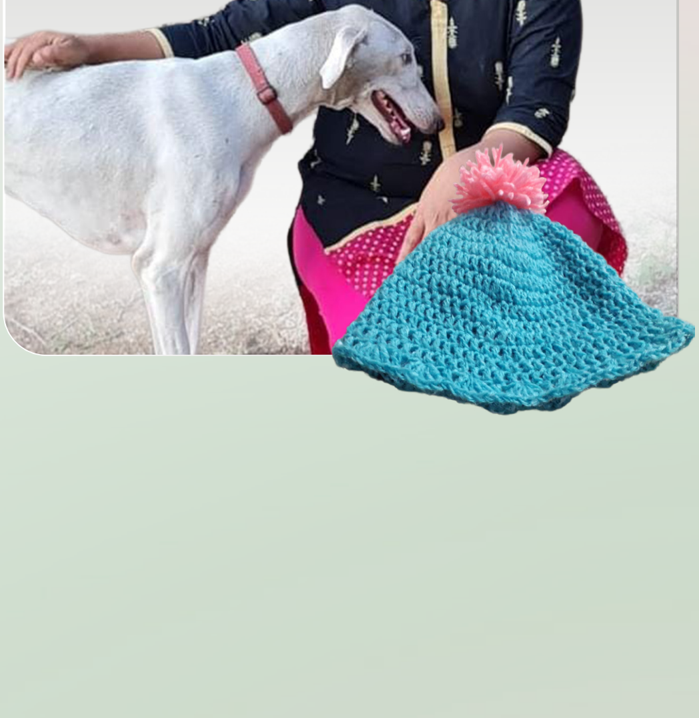


Tuhina Ghosh, MBA B5
Kintsugi



Arjun S Menon, MBA B6
Rifle Shooting

Poorvi Jain, MBA B8
Resin Art



Narmadha R, MBA B7
Animal Trainer, Crochet Artist

ILLUMINATE THE COMMUNITY

We encourage learners to submit blogs, success stories, and personal anecdotes and get featured!

SUBMIT HERE

Enjoyed reading The Lighthouse?

Let us know! Drop us a message

DIRECTORATE OF
ONLINE EDUCATION
(A unit of Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal)

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