

January 2025

DURGA DARES

DURGA INDIA'S OFFICIAL MONTHLY
NEWSLETTER



GET THE INSIDE SCOOP

From the Editor's
Desk

2025 New Year's
Resolutions

Through Her Eyes

Being Free is
Beautiful

Crossword

Echoes of Existence

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Through MY Eyes

Want to Know More?



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

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'Her World: Through Her Eyes!'

For our 16 days of activism campaign, we had asked women from the team and the communities to capture their worlds through their eyes to which we heard many respond, "Nobody's every asked us how we view the world." This month's newsletter is an ode to these women. The women captured darkness, laughter, friendship, isolation, work, frustration, calm and so much more. So here's a little snippet of some women's world through her eyes.

Vibushita

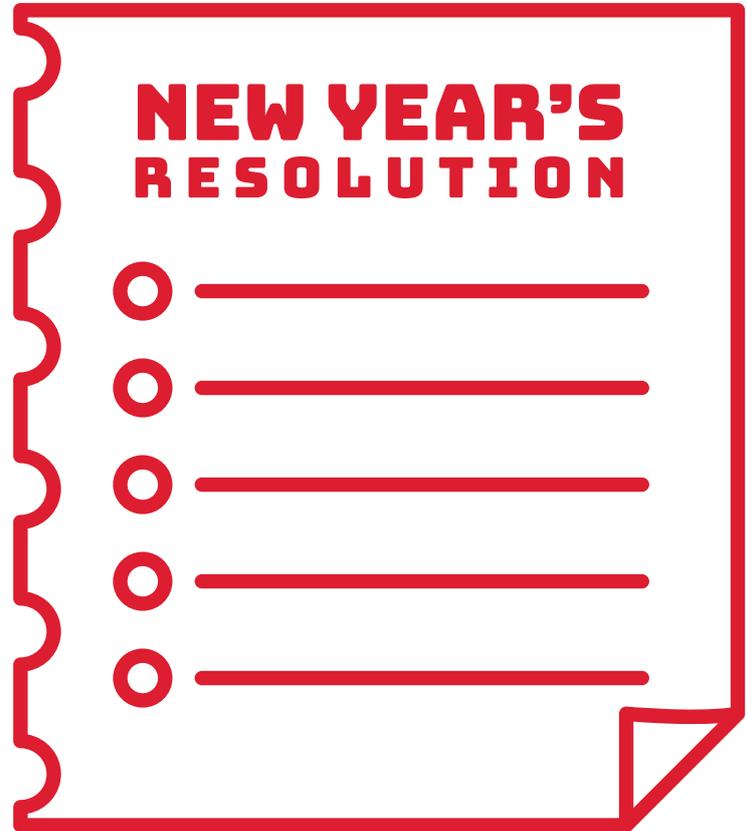
**Communications and Narrative
Buildiong**



2025 RESOLUTIONS

Written by Vibu and Alicia

I've always been apprehensive about new year's resolutions. They're vague, overwhelming and most of the time, I don't even know if I want to really do those things. This year, my resolutions capture what I want, what makes sense for my world. Here's my list:



- To not doubt myself and assume I'm overthinking if I'm scared when I'm walking down the street to get my groceries
- Be kinder to myself
- Explore new pubs and cafes
- Stop excusing misogynistic behaviour
- Build solidarity
- Take up space.



THROUGH HER EYES





THROUGH HER EYES



BEING FREE IS BEAUTIFUL



Anonymous

I was married once.
we had a simple kind of love,
one that felt like
we didn't need to try.
it was just...there.
easy to assemble,
no directions needed.

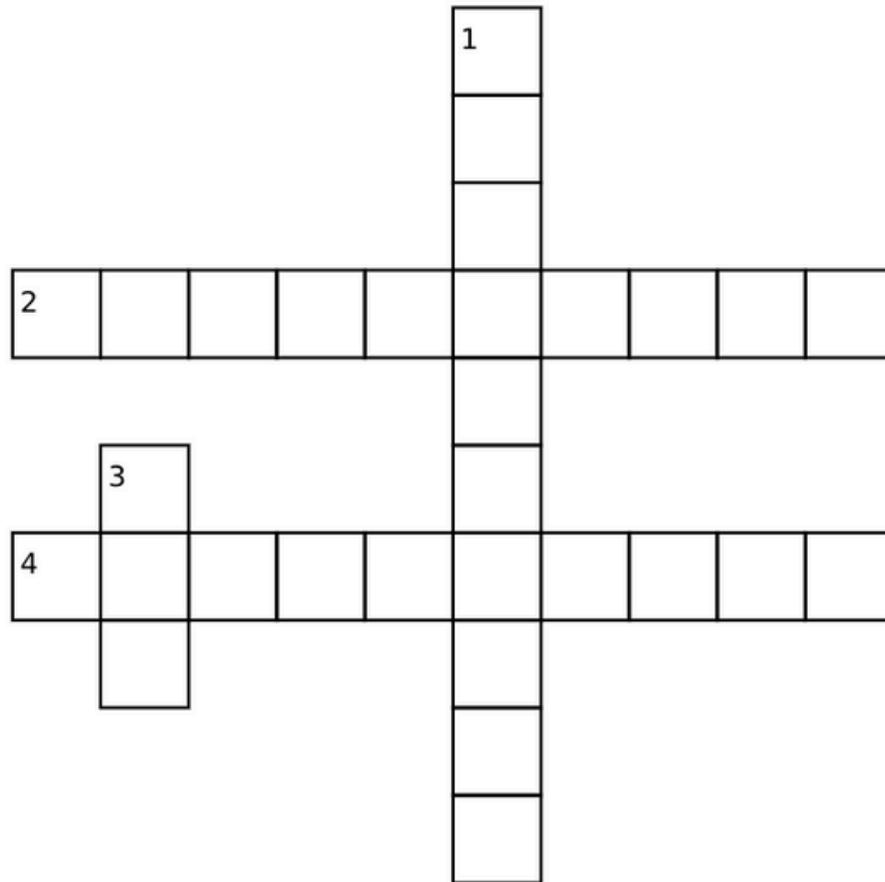


I should have listened
when they told me that
hearts built like this
are the ones that break
the fastest. a little too much
use and the screws come
undone and the pieces
become too hard to find.

It didn't end well.
I still believe more
of my parts went missing than his,
but what heart isn't lost
when it is waiting for the
end of loving someone?

I still have scarred knees
from crawling through my devastation,
but somewhere along the way
I found myself; you don't need a man to complete you.
You need to believe and trust yourself more and more
And never give up on yourself
For anything

CROSSWORD



Down:

1. defiance especially in a socio-political context
3. Great happiness or delight

Across:

2. What one gains through living or doing
4. Unity or a coming together in feeling or action



Scan for answer key



இருத்தலின் எதிரொலிகள்

Written by Merlin Jeeno



என் கண்கள்,
என் முதுல் சுவாசத்தை எடுக்க
தருணத்திலிருந்து
என் ஆன்மாவின் கண்ணாடியாக
திருக்கிறது.

விடியலின் பொன் சூளிக்காக
ரங்கிலேனன்,
மற்றும் சூரிய அஸ்தமனங்கள்
வானத்தை மகிழ்ச்சியுடன்
வரைந்தன.

அதற்கு பதிவாக, நான் உலகின்
முறுக்கப்பட்ட சட்டத்தைப்
பார்த்தேன்,
என் கண்களின் பெயருடன்
எங்கு ஒற்றுமையும் தில்லாத
புரு எதார்த்தம்.
நான் அச்சு பொருத்த
பொராடினேன்.

நான் முழுவதும் தூணாக,
பாறையாக, விழிகாட்டும்
புனியாக மாறினேன்.

அந்நாள் அமைதியில் என்
இதயக்கல் கிசுகிசுக்கினேன் ...

"சந்தோஷம் இப்படிக்கானோ
என்ற உணர்கிறது?
தொலைதூர், மங்கிப்போகும்
கலையா?"

- மெர்லின்



ECHOES OF EXISTENCE (translation of the poem above)

Written by Merlin Jeeno

**My eyes,
Has been a mirror to my soul from the
moment I took my first breath.
I yearned for dawn's golden light,
And sunsets that painted the sky with
delight.**

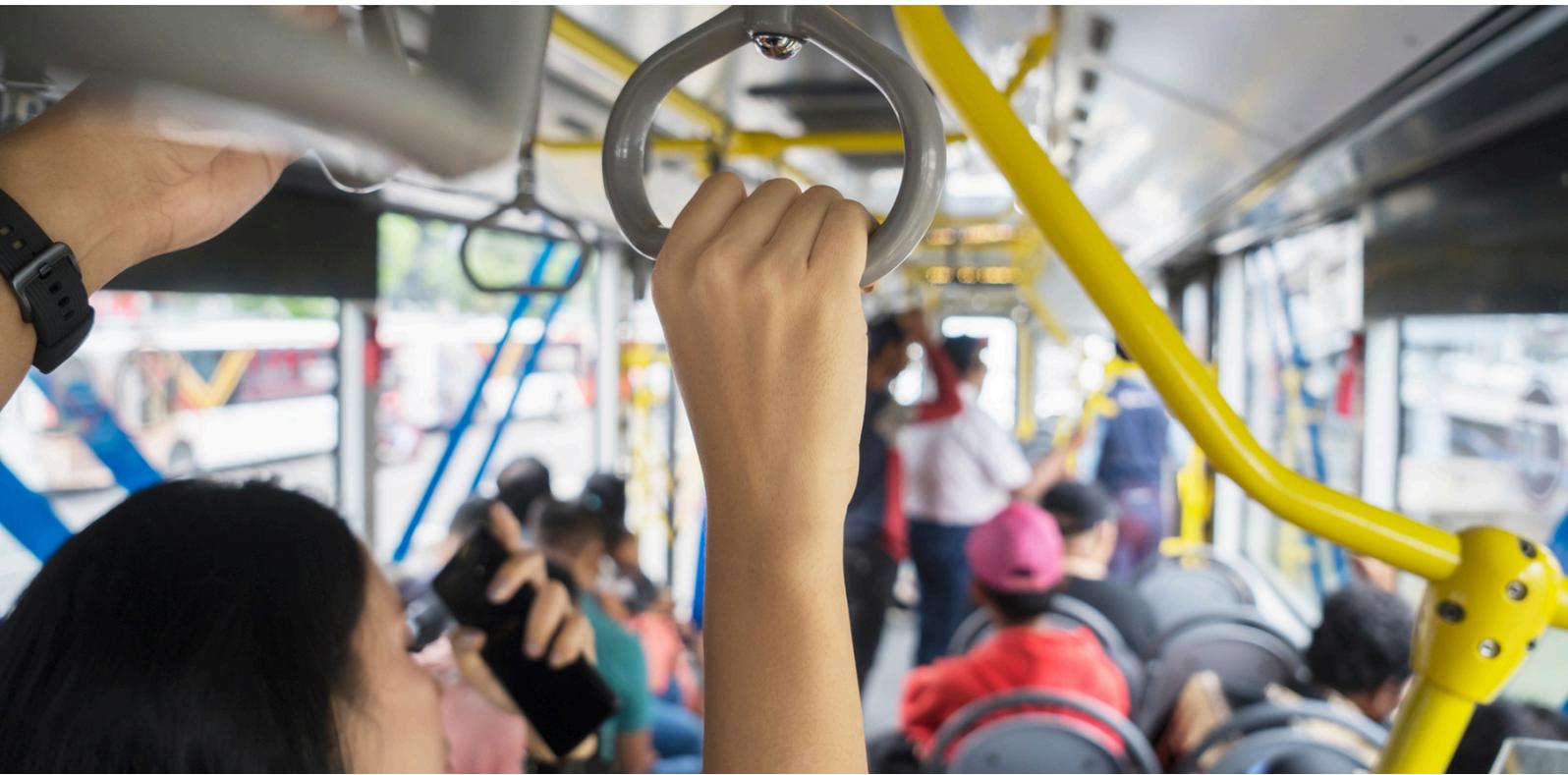
**Instead, I saw the world's twisted frame,
A reality that bore no resemblance to my
dreams' name.
I struggled to to fit the mold,**

**I became the pillar, the rock, the guiding
light, all day long.
But in the silence, I whisper to my heart,
"Is this what happiness feels like? A
distant, fading art?"**



MY PROTECTOR...

Alicia Edwards-Farrer



I'm on the bus. The bus I take everyday to work. There's a man a few rows ahead of me who watched me intensely when I got on. His eyes haven't left me since. I know it can't be comfortable for him, with his head turned 180 degrees, but still he persists. I ignore it, this happens all the time and its easier this way. Though, when he starts talking to me, asking me questions, then demanding a friendly response, I become more and more uncomfortable. He starts shouting and I wish the bus would just hurry up and get to my stop. There's other men on the bus too. Finally, one man gets up. He waited until the first man approached me aggressively before he intervined, the verbal harassment wasn't enough.

MY PROTECTOR...

Alicia Edwards-Farrer



He's confrontational towards the man, shouting and instructing him to leave me alone. It's all very awkward. The first man backs down.

I should be grateful. Yet, I can't help thinking, as he now slinks down next to me on the bus, who was he doing that for... I smile hesitantly back.

Does he think I owe him now?

He asks if I am okay, his hand now touching my thigh. I know now that he did not do that for me, he did it for himself, to boost his ego, to feel powerful, to feel in control. I can't help thinking, if I was less attractive, would he have stepped in?

My protector, my saviour.

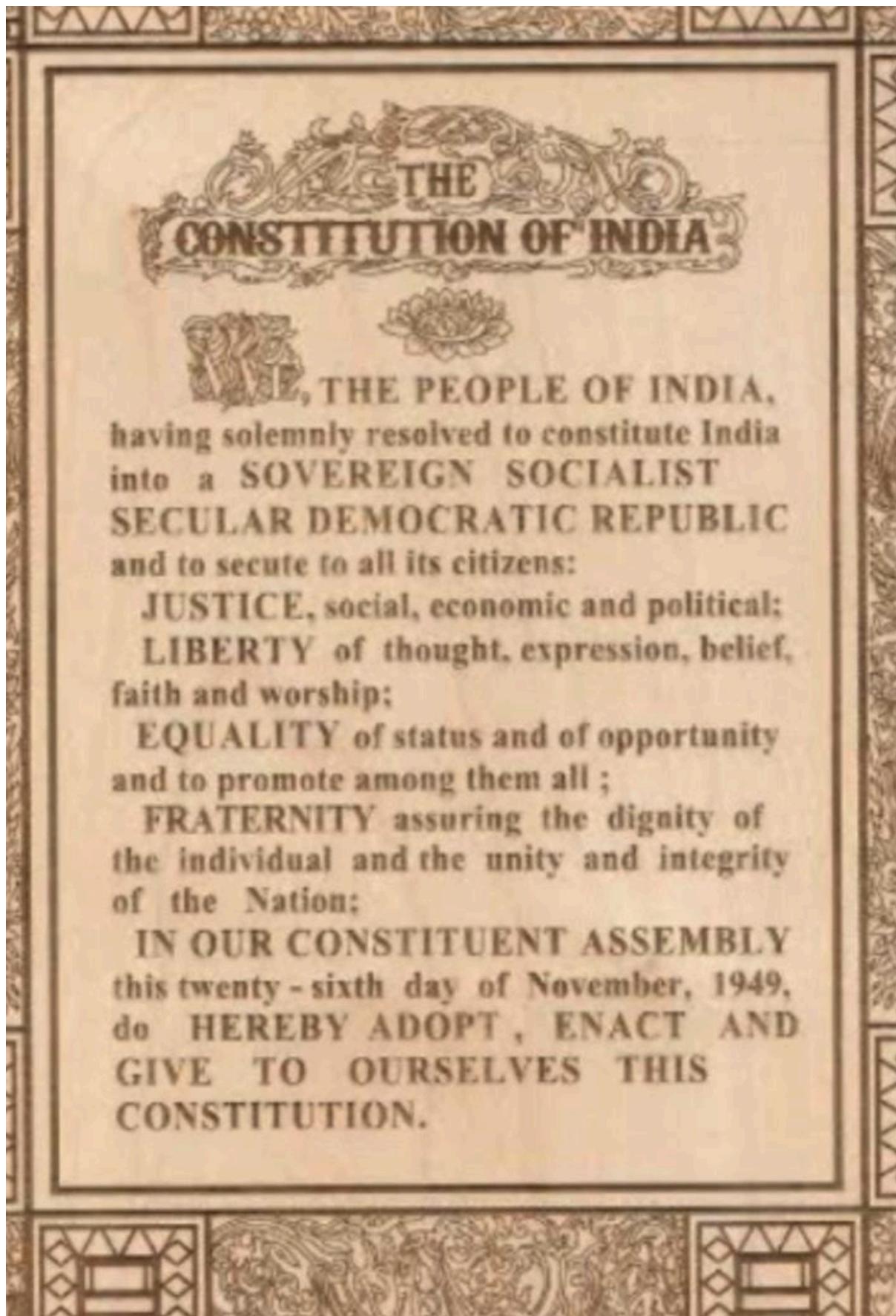
Once again, a man holds the power over me in this situation. He gets to choose whether he intervenes. He gets to decide if it's worth it. My reaction and response to him is another commodity that he is trying to earn. A macho show for me to watch, how lucky I should be.

Now, I am forced into entertaining a conversation with him - his reward.

Today, he goes home the hero. He dreams of saving the girl. The fairytale knight in shining armour.

I go home still tense. Dreaming that, for one day, I could have peace on the bus.

WE THE PEOPLE?



WE THE PEOPLE?



Dalit women who must deal with the horror and trauma of rape are also often imprisoned on false charges for trying to get justice. It's a catch-22 situation for the woman — no matter how she reacts to her rape, she is to blame.

"Someone asked, are you pro-Pakistani just because you are Muslim? They accused me of being anti-national," she said.

Hatred And Violence Against Muslims Have Spread Like an Epidemic in India

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57,582 cases reported of Dalit violence in 2022

A report prepared by the Amravati divisional commissionerate said 557 farmers ended their lives in the division from January to June this year. The highest number of 170 suicides were recorded in Amravati district, followed by 150 in Yavatmal, 111 in Buldhana, 92 in Akola and 34 in Washim.

Impunity is more severe in cases where perpetrators are in positions of disproportionate power

Impunity is more severe in cases where perpetrators are in positions of disproportionate power

India records 51 cases of crime against women every hour; over 4.4 lakh cases in 2022: NCRB report

And this violence has led to more civilian deaths than police or Maoist deaths. Over 2,000 civilians have died in Chhattisgarh in 20 years to 2022, 35% more than the number of security forces and 40% more than the number of Maoists, found an analysis by Article 14.

THROUGH MY EYES

Thejaswini Suresh



Since 2010, December has been a favorite and happy month to me personally, as my two angels were born in December.

As years have passed and now 2024 ends and 2025 began, I would want to recall few of my important learnings from past 2 years. 2023 and 2024 had been the most unforgettable times of difficulties and challenges. In 2023, I lost my dearest soul partner father. He is not only my real hero, He showcased me the inspirations to face, fight with oneself. He showed me the path of my goals and reasons for my living. He was a King in his own way.

In 2024, I lost the nearest person mother-in-law too. She was the actual feminist with innocence I have been with. As I had a journey of 15 years with her, all her ideologies, spirit of being winner, dialogues of questions, tasks and lifestyle, she ruled the entire family like a lioness throughout all the struggles. Her stories also inspire me to move forward. Her teachings in 15 years have showed me great way of handling personal lives.

These two were main people in my life. After losing each of them I could really see the trends of the world out there with more promptly in a gender lens. Its 2025, yet while a woman loses her partner our society's approach, views and perceptions are inclined towards moralistic and draws 'N' number of limitations and beliefs to suppress her based on each of their flexibility and convivences. It starts with the basic dressing to way she talks and places she needs to visit and her immediate behaviors. She cannot show her frustrations.

THROUGH MY EYES

Thejaswini Suresh



On the other side, while a man loses his partner, he too suffers loneliness. Whereas our communities look at it is not the same as woman. Burden lies with him that he cannot vent out his emotions in front of anyone because he is particular gender and head of the family.

Women are restricted from attending the events, losing authority. Often my mother was pointed and reminded of superstitious beliefs. While Men are not considered for the same restrictions that our society believes in. It's the privilege that society provides unconsciously. It has been a continuum and I keep the effort of moving ahead to break the pattern.

For me it comes out to be a learning, coping-up and responding mechanism to deviate and start from the point of thinking of action to deter and solution orientation.

Through my eyes I manifest to have equitable spaces and platforms to share experiences and break patterns of judgements.





WANT TO KNOW MORE?



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