

Herald Cafe

Keeping up with back-to-school trends

As the new academic year begins, parents across Goa are engaging in a familiar but ever-evolving ritual: school shopping. Online shopping and quick delivery apps are also shaping how families prepare, offering convenience and wider choices

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Whether it's chasing down a specific colour of water bottle or tracking the latest trends in stationery, families are blending practical needs with a touch of personality and joy when it comes to shopping for the new academic year. The latest back-to-school trends include customised stationery and accessories, with children opting for personalised items and aesthetic themes.

A SPLASH OF COLOUR AND CHOICE

Mother of five-year-old Zac from Porvorim, Nancy D'Cruz, takes him to the market to select what he loves. "It is the one time of the year when his choice gets a preference. He loves looking at the colours and characters and choosing what he loves. I make him understand that he has to take it to school every day. This year it was the colour purple that he wanted everything in. It was difficult to find everything in that colour for boys but he is happy with his choice. However, for his school bag, he chose a blue astronaut-themed bag. This is also the time where we can explain the importance of money to him," says Nancy.

ATHLETIC INSPIRATION AND INTERNATIONAL FINDS

St Cruz-based Loureta Coutinho is the mother of two daughters, Ericka and Giovanna. A Class 10 student, Ericka is a professional martial arts athlete while Giovanna, a Class 5 student, is also earnestly following the same sport. When it comes to shopping for school essentials, Ericka is always picking up what she likes from her international trips

ONLINE CONVENIENCE MEETS ARTISTIC FLAIR

For Cheryl Fernandes, it is very important to have something that is unique in her class. She was once interested in Disney-themed school items but has now shifted to plain colours for Class 5. Her mother, Diana, has the advantage of online shopping and the ease of stationery shops in Mapusa. "Cheryl has her own preference when it comes to colours

and stationery. She loves all types of colour sets and canvases and the shopping is not limited to just the beginning of the year. She loves drawing and colouring. One huge advantage of online delivery services is they not only supply school items but also deliver printouts within 15 minutes late in the night. This Gen-Z has a lot of options that we missed in our childhood," says Diana.

TEACHING RESPONSIBILITY THROUGH CHOICES

Candolim-based Satchel is the mother of ten-year-old Jake Mascarenhas and she feels that it is important that he understands how to take responsibility. "I prefer taking him to the market so that he can choose and buy what he wants. He has to be involved in the decision-making process and should be really interested in what he wants so that he can be responsible for it and take care of his water bottle, tiffin or school bag. Nowadays, you get school bags that are very sturdy and last over a year but his tiffin and water bottle is replaced regularly. Last year, he was interested in the Avengers theme but this year his choices were more feature-oriented like pop-up campus boxes," informs Satchel.

CUSTOMISED AND COMFORTABLE

In the era of customisation, even school items get a new layer of names and colours. Jill Rodrigues from Calangute finds great joy in sitting with her daughter and choosing school items online. Together, they keep up with the latest trends and find various options besides the usual shopping sites. "Eliana and I source different items online and this year we ordered a customised tiffin box with her name on it. You get really good stuff online through Instagram. And it's all from the comfort of our home. Online shopping, especially quick delivery apps, have been a real lifesaver. When my elder son was in school, it was Chhota Bheem-themed school items and then for four years, it was Frozen-themed stationery and items for my



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JD DESIGN AWARDS 2025 HIGHLIGHTS INDIA'S NEXT-GEN DESIGNERS

SWIPE RIGHT

Marvel's 'Avengers: Doomsday' to be the most expensive film

Marvel Studios is set to break records with 'Avengers: Doomsday', the most expensive film in cinema history. Estimated to cost \$1 billion, the MCU's



upcoming crossover event will feature a star-studded cast, ground-breaking visual effects, and an ambitious storyline. The cast salaries alone are expected to exceed \$250 million, with Robert Downey Jr reportedly earning more than \$80 million for his return as Doctor Doom. This would surpass the previous record-holder, 'Star Wars: The Force Awakens', which had a budget of \$447 million. Directed by the Russo Brothers, 'Avengers: Doomsday' aims to revitalise the MCU after recent box office slumps by uniting heroes across the multiverse. With enormous financial stakes, the film must deliver unprecedented box office results to avoid being labelled a flop.

Dakota Johnson and Chris Martin call it quits after 8 yrs

Hollywood star Dakota Johnson, 35, and Coldplay frontman Chris Martin, 48, have ended their relationship after nearly eight years together and a quiet engagement. The couple, who began dating in 2017, have now officially gone their separate ways,



according to sources close to the pair. An insider revealed, "Their relationship has been over for a long time—they just hadn't figured out how to make it official." While there's still a possibility of reconciliation, the source suggested that some time apart might be necessary. Johnson is said to be heartbroken, particularly about not being around Martin's children as much. "She's devastated," the source added. "But she wants them to know she'll always be there for them." Neither Johnson nor Martin has commented publicly on the split.



Hollywood actress Sydney Sweeney turned heads in a scarlet gown, at the AMC Lincoln Square premiere of her new film 'Echo Valley', shortly after breaking her silence on her split from Jonathan Davino.

WHY EVERY TEENAGER WANTS TO BE A CONTENT CREATOR

From viral reels to Insta fame, content creation is the dream career for India's youth

Prakash Devasi



In today's digital world, social media influencers are the new stars youngsters look up to for information and inspiration. Among them is 18-year-old Meethika Dwivedi, known as The Sound Blaze, from Lucknow. She gained popularity on Instagram for her humorous, relatable videos in her UP accent, growing her following to 3.7 million in just a few years. Meethika's rise reflects a growing trend: many teenagers now dream of becoming content creators, inspired by influencers like CarryMinati and Prajakta Koli. They see it as a fun, independent career setting their own schedules and gaining instant validation through likes and views.

CHASING VIEWS, SEEKING VALIDATION

Rudra Ghotge, a content creator from Goa was named one of Bharat's Top 10 Micro Creators and winner of a National Creator Award in 2024. Rudra's content, based on everyday scenarios, resonates widely with the youth. Rudra notes that social media is redefining success for young people, "Validation matters to a lot of people. Being recognised by your local community or even people abroad has become a new definition of success. Social media, after all, is a numbers game." His viral moment came with a skit titled Modko, which led to widespread recognition, even his mother, who features in his videos, became known.



IS IT A SUSTAINABLE CAREER?

"It is sustainable if you have the right number of followers," Rudra says. "But I think people should have a backup plan. You can always be replaced. Even I don't know if I'll be relevant tomorrow." He encourages aspiring creators to gain practical skills alongside content creation.

CONTENT WITH PURPOSE

Some young creators are motivated by more than just fame. Tulsi Sharma, a media student from Mapusa, aims to

inspire social change. She hopes to collaborate with global organisations and believes storytelling can support NGOs and underrepresented communities.

Aryan Singh, a BCom student from Siolim, focuses on sharing real-life stories and emotional growth. For him, content creation is a way to connect with people and spread motivation—though he admits finding new, engaging topics is a challenge.

From Porvorim, Vishakha Jha sees content as a blend of self-expression and career. She aims to promote fitness, philanthropy and challenge stereotypes. Inspired by Prajakta Koli, she values the freedom and financial opportunity content creation offers, but notes many young creators lack consistency and confidence.

A GROWING INDUSTRY

A 2024 YouTube India report showed 83 percent of Gen Z (ages 14–24) in India consider themselves content creators. A CyberMedia Research study found one in four Indians aged 20–24 is interested in this career. While content creation appears glamorous, it brings pressure. Income is unstable and the need to stay relevant can take a mental toll.

For India's youth, content creation is no longer just a hobby, it's a potential career. But success comes with preparation and willingness to keep learning. That's the key in this fast-changing world of social media.