



International Day of Acceptance

challenging part of living in a world, where people are different, is learning to live with acceptance. Instead of comparing or competing, the best way to show love is to accept differences in abilities, embrace special qualities that each human has to offer, and make the world a better place because of it! Through strength, resilience and determination, almost anyone can overcome challenges, demonstrating that abilities transcend limitations, and inspire others to embrace their own unique strengths and possibilities. Have tons of fun and show how much love there is in the world by celebrating the International Day of Acceptance!

#PRESERVATION

Penguin Awareness Day

Learn about these birds through documentaries, get up close and personal at your local zoo, or donate to conservation charities working to protect them.



Penguins are fun and interesting animals that are unique in many different ways. Penguins are the adorable flightless birds, known for their calm nature, their adorable waddling and their beautiful appearances. Their habitat is far from where humans live, and hence, we know very little about them. Penguins waddling with their group in icy lands is one of the most popular images that we come across. Many animated movies and cartoons have been made on these creatures and each of them teaches us a lot about penguins. Penguins mainly live in the Southern Hemisphere. About 20 species of penguins are known to humans, of which Emperor Penguins are the largest, and the smallest are the ones who live in the coastal areas of New Zealand



History

Even though the real reason for the shrinking population of penguins is yet to be known, the way that the number of penguins is disappearing from the earth, is alarming. Climate change, global warming and changing environments for their habitat are some of the reasons. In 1972, Gerry Wallace of Alamogordo, California wrote the event of Penguin Awareness Day on his wife Aleta's calendar. Since then, this day has been observed. Penguins are a barometer of the effects of human activities on the poles, according to scientists from institutions around the world. Raising awareness about them, therefore, is seen by many as a way to communicate with people about the impending dangers of climate change. If people can see how these birds are being affected, perhaps, they will make changes to their lives. Laboratories and scientific institutions worldwide became increasingly interested in Penguin Awareness Day after 2010. Their main aim is to highlight their penguin-related research and get the public interested in conservation. Penguins spend majority of their lives either on the ice or in the water. Their colonies vary in size considerably, from just a few dozen to millions. Their diet is mainly krill and fish, and they create so-called 'penguin highways' through the ice, to make it easier to collect food. Penguin Awareness Day is an opportunity for everyone involved in the life of penguins to chip in and talk about this vital creature. Remember that penguin is the largest animal to venture into the heart of Antarctica, to breed. It is a tough little cookie and worth celebrating.



Companies know that an average consumer is likely to notice a price hike. What shoppers are less likely to notice is a change in a product's net weight, or a tiny cost-saving alteration to its contents. "If the orange juice container goes from 800 ml to 750 ml, they're probably not going to notice," said Dworsky. This is very true if the container retains its original size.



Shrinkflation Pay More Get Less



Dr. Goutam Sen
CTVS Surgeon
Traveller
Storyteller

Wandering down the aisles of the Supermarkets or Departmental stores was one of the ways to spend time when I first visited the United Kingdom, way back in 1981. The fellowship had a small allowance with little to spare. So, walking along the open shelves (in distinction to across the counter shopping in India at that time) and looking at as well as handling the wide array of items was a novel experience. Always on the lookout for bargain, I would often be tempted to buy bakery items, sweets and chocolates, which were near the expiry date. The offer was the classic 'buy one get another free.'

There were many other appealing offers. There was always a wide array of breakfast cereals, beginning with the Kellogg's classic Corn Flakes to many different flavoured varieties, which could be had with warm or cold milk. (At that time, no one spoke about the nutritional value of the stuff.) I was always on the lookout for Weetabix, which was not available in India. Apart from getting the best out of the purchase, I had incalculable

habit of checking the package for weight and price. Often, the larger packs gave a fairly voluminous portion at a nominal discount. The packages were in pounds and ounces. (UK did not like the Metric system!) A bit confusing in the beginning, but I got the hang of it soon. I was and am, inordinately fond of cheese and had a hankering of the processed Kraft Cheese that, at that time, was the only cheese to come to India from Australia. I recognised it as Cheddar, but had no knowledge of the huge variety that was available in the west. This was the first time I saw good strong Cheddar. Besides that, all varieties of cheese, from the strong blue-veined mouldy ones to the mild Edam, was on offer. After returning to India, we did wish to have similar stores in our town too, but it was a long time in coming. Now, there are such stores run by Indian corporations as well as private concerns. They do remind me of my earlier days. I enjoy the offers and still look for bargains. The habit of looking at the packaging for weight, price and date of expiry is still a part of my shopping practice. We have all got accustomed to buying the stuff, which would normally come in one kilogram or five hundred gram packages. The price fluctuated a bit, depending on the availability and date of expiry.

Recently, however, my wife commented that our consumption of cheese and Bikaneri Bhujia, besides many other commodities, had suddenly gone up. We would vehemently deny the overeating. I decided to explore the veracity of

#KALYUG



the statement. There has been an insidious change, which most casual shoppers may not have been aware of. The packages remained the same size and price, but the weight of the content has come down. This is mentioned in an inconspicuous corner of the package. It remained unnoticed. In well-known brands of cheese and butter, the 500 gms cartons were now 450 grams or even lower! It meant a ten per cent increase in price without showing any change in actual money paid out. Once we became aware of this change, we became cautious about what we purchased. We realised that this was not just for edibles. It was also seen in packages of condiments and spices and grocery items. Basic items like pepper, red chilly powder, masalas and even pulses were available at nearly the same price, but in significantly lesser quantity. The packages of all deodorants, toothpaste, beauty products and shampoos have undergone the same change. My son pointed out to me that a major toothbrush brand had even reduced the length of the bristle heads by a few millimetres. It would make a considerable difference when a million were sold! Now, there is nothing wrong done by the manufacturer from the legal point of view but it is a

psychological game, which has been played to delude the buyer. If the price and the package remain the same, the weight of the content is often missed. There are newer ways in which this subterfuge is continued. Take for example, edible oils. For long, they were sold by weight. When bought by price, the quantity would be more in litres depending on the specific gravity. All oils are lighter than water! That is why oil floats on water! So, now in the last few years, all oils are sold by the litre only! It makes a considerable difference in the total volume finally purchased. This practice of enhancing the

price by reducing the content now has an official name. It is called 'Shrinkflation.' While not a scam in the classical sense, shrinkflation can be misleading and unfair to consumers. It's often used by companies to cope with inflation, maintain profit margins or avoid overt price hikes. Two classic examples are Candy bars in multipacks becoming smaller than individually sold bars. Toilet paper rolls having a shorter length. Potato chips packets look the same because the nitrogen gas in them keeps the shape deceptively the same! As for legal measures, U.S. Senator Bob Casey has introduced the Shrinkflation Prevention Act of 2024, which aims to prohibit companies from reducing product sizes without corresponding price decreases. But it has to go a long way before it becomes a law. The business lobby is putting up a strong fight. To protect themselves, consumers have to be aware of packaging and product sizes. It is essential to compare prices per unit to ensure that you're not being overcharged. Opt for products from companies that maintain transparent pricing and packaging. There are rare examples where the company will indirectly reflect the change by showing the content size in bold letters. In India, while there isn't spe-

cific legislation targeting shrink-inflation, the Consumer Protection Act of 2019 aims to protect consumers from unfair trade practices, including deceptive packaging and pricing. The Government has not found measures to take action at the manufacturers' level and expects the consumer to fight his own battles. The Week Magazine in the USA came out with an explanatory article. It said that when the cost of doing business goes up, one way companies 'compensate' is by shrinking package and product sizes without actually lowering prices, meaning consumers are paying the same or more, but getting less. "While the practice is usually common in times of rising prices, we happen to be in a tidal wave at the moment," said expert Edgar Dworsky. Manufacturers work to 'balance' the increased costs of gas, labor, supplies against sales and profit. Companies know that an average consumer is likely to notice a price hike. What shoppers are less likely to notice is a change in a product's net weight, or a tiny cost-saving alteration to its contents. "If the orange juice container goes from 800 ml to 750 ml, they're probably not going to notice," said Dworsky. This is very true if the container retains its original size. Some of the common shrinkflation calling cards are the phrases 'new and improved' and 'family size.' These can signal deceptive packaging techniques and this has been identified as 'skimpflation,' when companies pass on a price increase by reformulating a prod-

uct with cheaper ingredients. Most important, though, is to keep an eye on the product's weight. All the methods to avoid shrinkflation and skimpflation require careful reading of all labels and comparing the cost of the same product in different brands. When a protest is made by individual consumers, manufacturers soften the blow by offering some coupons. Financial advisors recommend planning your meals, avoiding impulse purchases, shopping the sale items and using credit card rewards to save money while shrinkflation is rampant. Shoppers should also do some research before heading to the store. That way, you avoid getting taken for a ride and can identify a good deal when you see one. When we're talking about fashion, the closest thing to an ingredient in food is fabric. If your favorite sweater used to be 100 per cent cashmere, you should look closely at the label before you buy it again. Now, it may be 90 per cent cashmere and 10 per cent polyester. But in some ways, for some people, shrinkflation could also represent an opportunity. Think of it as a chance to wear yourself off packaged foods. The retailers might be able to make cereal boxes and granola bars smaller, but they can't shrink a kilo of apples or items bought from an open bag. There will always be newfangled ways to bamboozle the customer. The only way to win in this game is to wisen up fast!



Traditional Overcoat
If you have a traditional overcoat in your closet, then you can also wear it over your saree. To add that wow factor to the look, you can put on a statement belt. The same look can also be created with any trench coat or a long sweater.

Velvet Shawl
Now, if you feel that your saree is too pretty to be worn in any other way, then you can simply team it up with a velvet shawl. A velvet shawl can make any look elegant.

Boho Jacket
You can also add a boho twist to your look by wearing a traditional jacket with thread work over it. A white cotton saree with a boho jacket and oxidised silver jewellery can make you a star at any event.

Sweater
Ditching the usual blouse, you can also team up your saree with your favourite sweater. Now, you can either pick a sweater in the same hue or can also opt for contrasting colour. A black saree with gold work works well with a white sweater.

#J'ADORE

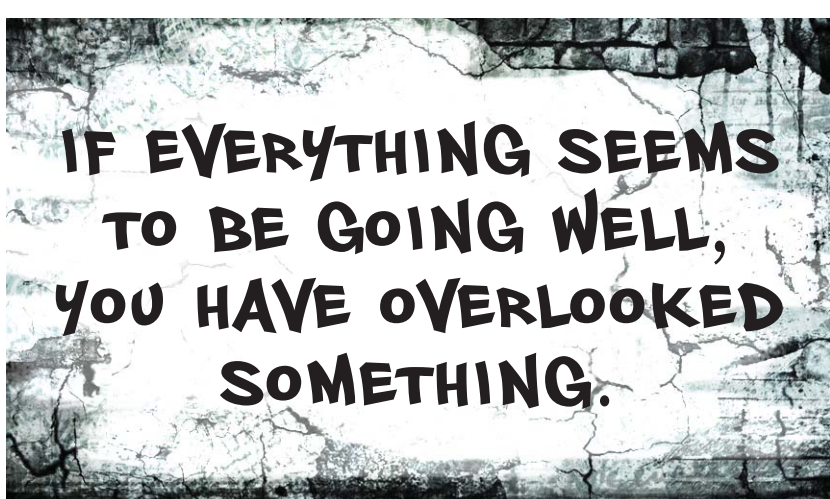
Styling Summer Sarees In Winter

When we update our winter wardrobe, we pack our summer sarees and put them in the trunk for months. Not anymore! Here, we share with you how you can style your summer sarees in winter.



Formal Blazer
To create the perfect formal look this season, team up your favourite cotton saree with a formal blazer. To amp up the look, you can match your accessories with your blazer. While picking the coat for the outfit, make sure that you pick contrasting colours.

THE WALL



BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman