

# A phoenix from the ashes

Not a victim or survivor, **Sneha Jawale** would rather be known by the things she does. Here's her story

"You were pretty and that's why we could love you. Now we can't. I could not believe that my own mother would disown me because of the way I looked," Sneha Jawale said. "I could either wallow in self pity or rise from the ashes," she added.

Sneha smiles because her metaphorical rise from "the ashes" was quite literally so. On a December day in 2000, her husband threw acid on her, leaving her with burns on her face, upper body and hands. "This was a step further from the mental and physical abuse that she had already gone through," Sneha recalls with an easy smile that disappears when she talks about her parents.

"I kept telling my parents this was happening. Since the third day of marriage, my husband used to hit me. But they kept asking me to stay. According to them, every relationship has these "ups and downs." I blame them more than my in-laws," she adds.

Jawale decided to stay with her husband for the sake of her son. "There was nothing more to fear, I had gone to hell and come back. For my boy to have his parents under a roof, I had forgiven him."

Three years and 20 surgeries later, her husband took her son and left while her parents wanted nothing to do with her. In 2010, her divorce was finalised. The verdict stated that she was mentally unfit, she had burnt herself and was not to be given any rights to meet her son.

That was the nadir of her life after which the only way Sneha thought was positive. Slowly picking up the pieces of her broken present, she taught herself tarot card read-



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convinced me and I started writing episodes of *Runu Zunu*. I wrote for a few more serials," narrates Sneha.

While Sneha went about building her career, she was invited as a speaker by many NGOs. She still speaks and interacts with people across sectors, professions and disabilities, motivating them and inspiring them. To those who want to pay for her surgeries, she instead asks to sponsor others who have suffered burns.

She says, "I am happy with the way I look. I am the Ms Universe between you and your destiny." Along with tarot card reading, Sneha is a propagator of skin banking as well. Just as people donate eyes after they die, people can donate skin too. Skin can survive 7-12 hours after death.

Her list of achievements and awards is a testament to her courage and positive attitude. She is not a burn victim or survivor. She is a fighter, a tarot card reader, a TV writer and a philanthropist in no mood of stopping.

James Roy

*The THIS-ABILITY article series is an attempt to create a positive, humane and empowered discourse around the lives of people living with disabilities. An initiative of the NGO, TRINAYANI, founded by Ritika Sahni, the aim is to alter perspectives and change attitudes of the masses with our premise being that we are all different, yet similar.*  
[www.trinayani.org](http://www.trinayani.org)

What's your message for Sneha Jawale  
Tell [youngmetro@abpmail.com](mailto:youngmetro@abpmail.com)



ing, graphology and tea-coffee reading. She started by offering a free session in the society she lived.

She focused on three aspects of her customers' life — life till now, changes in character and the next 15 days. "I was also learning colour therapy, Vaastu, Feng Shui and I am also a Reiki double grandmaster. So people enjoyed the values I gave them," she says. Soon, office-goers, teachers and salaried employees became her clients. In an attempt to challenge herself, she approached actor Sameer Dharmadhikari, an individual in an "unsettled" profession. "He had given me an hour's time. I reached his house at 11 am. At 4pm, I had to say, sir I need to leave for a meeting. We must have drunk at least three cups of tea," remi-

nised Sneha.

"Through him, Milind Gunaji contacted me and I met him on the sets of the show *Kulvadh*. He loved my work and announced my credentials on the set. One after the other, most of the actors on the set came and sat with me. My clientele in the TV industry grew only through word of mouth," she said.

"In 2010, I found myself on a set for a Saam TV show. I asked director Jitu Arora if I could read the script while I was on the set waiting for my clients. He said okay. I read it and blurted out that I could write better. He heard and asked me to write an episode. Within two days I made him hear what I had written. He said, "Snehaji, well done! You have to write for both my serials." I was taken aback. I hesitated and said I don't want to write. However, I'm glad he

## A SCHOOL TRIP AND A CRICKET MATCH — HAPPY TIMES ON SCHOOL CAMPUS



### WHAT A MATCH!

The highlight of the Children's Day programme at Mount Litera Zee School, Howrah, was the nail-biting cricket match between the teachers and the students. The teachers won the match by seven runs.



They won the toss and chose to bat first. Our principal sir and Krishna sir opened their innings. Principal sir gave the team a brisk start. But they lost wickets at regular intervals. At the end of six overs, they put on a fighting score of 64. There was a promising partnership between our Abbas sir and Amit sir.

From the students' team, Sk. Zubayer of Class IX and Sankalp

Saraf of Class VIII opened the innings. Zubayer entertained the crowd with his massive sixes, while Sankalp played the supporting role. They both had a partnership of 32 runs. After Zubayer got out, Sankalp changed gear and started hitting the ball to all parts of the ground. But somehow, the middle order batsmen failed to keep up with the momentum. It was an exciting match. We all enjoyed it to the fullest.

Text by **Sankhya Sen** and **Atmadeep Dutta**  
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### TRIP TO MET OFFICE

One's destination is never a place but always a new way of seeing things. March 23 is World Meteorology Day and this year our school organised an excursion to the meteorology department.

I went to the primary section at 2pm where my friends were waiting for me. We boarded the car and reached our destination within 30 minutes. Together with our geography teachers, who had been waiting for us, we entered the grounds and asked a policeman where the exhibition was being held. He guided us towards the exhibition and I discovered that students from at least 30 more schools were present.

Our first stop was the conference room and we were explained the need to be responsible future citizens. We were also told about preventive measures to reduce natural disasters. Being very interested in the core elements of nature, I paid special attention to these lectures.

I even clarified a few of my queries regarding the topic. We entered the following room and I was intrigued to learn about the upper sky and the various conditions needed for the proper flight of an aeroplane but little did I know that more interesting things awaited us.

Next in the list was the barometer room Till date I had only read about the

mercury barometer but I finally got an opportunity to see it in reality. We returned to the ground floor and were escorted towards various incredible objects such as the wind vane, celimeter, hygrometer, disdrometer and others.

I was fascinated to learn more about the working of a rocket-sonde. It was a perfect day for me. And what better way to complete the experience than a photo session. We raced each other to the gate followed by a friendly splash of water on each other. It was a day of knowledge, fun and friendship.

Report by **Dyutiprovo Sarkar**,  
Class X, Loyola High School

## SCHOOL NOTES