



## A SNEAK PEEK INTO THE FIRST QUARTER...

- **Vaibhav Bora**, *Chief Technical Officer*

The first quarter of 2018 is done and we have amped ourselves to a great start. With our quarter 1 release in January and successful M1M, we are on track to leverage the benefits of our process-oriented approach. We are running strong at 230 school partners. In the last 2 months we have added 40 new schools in comparison to 80 in the entire last year!

To deliver quality and stable products, last year we adopted Agile(Scrum) for all our product development teams. We all witnessed the benefits of having developers, testers and product owners sitting together and working effectively to deliver more items. To back each team, we have automated deployments to reduce the dependencies. Scrum adoption has given us a framework how to think proactively and deliver faster. We continue to evolve and master the adoption of scrum sprint by sprint; as they say Scrum is a very easy framework to understand but difficult to master. As we grow our product footprint and add new domains, these initiatives will set ourselves on a path to continue to maintain our USP - we make systems that work!

Exxat being a product company we continue to innovate. Satya Nadella rightly said, "Our industry doesn't respect tradition, it only respects innovation". A great example of this was successful M1M. This year we as a team have really put serious effort to really take M1M to a completely different level. We all witness how small innovations can be life changing. It felt more of a celebratory event rather than a tense one. More than 80 school partners participated in M1M and we ended up sending close to 25,000 emails. I want to congratulate each and every team member for their contribution. Hat's off!

Going forward as we reflect on QUARTER 1 achievements, we have a full packed QUARTER 2. Stay tuned for some interesting news. 😊



## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK...

- Sanit Lune, Editor

Dear Exxatians,



*Sanit Lune*

After successfully launching the first edition of Horizon, we are back with the next version of our Employee Newsletter and this time with the theme of Holi. Welcome to the second edition of Horizon!

In March, we Indians celebrated Holi – the festival of colours. A festival that signifies the victory of good over evil and the arrival of spring and the end of winter. On those lines, in this special edition of Horizon, we bring to you a colourful bash of updates in and around Exxat.

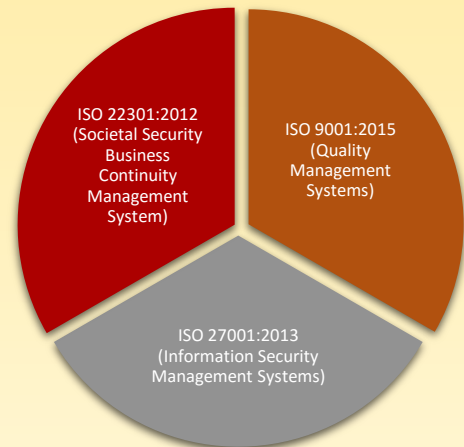
The Newsletter team is thankful to those of you who contributed in this version. I hope you all will continue to provide us with your share of contribution in the upcoming editions as well because that is what gives us the encouragement to bring forth the best talent within Exxat!  
*Happy reading!*

## HUMAN RESOURCE UPDATES

- Mayuri Gohil, Human Resource Manager

### International Organization for Standardization (ISO):

- Pune office is currently preparing for the external ISO Audit.
- The three ISO standards we are in the process of being certified for are shown in the pie chart.
- ISO will shortly be implemented in our Baroda office.

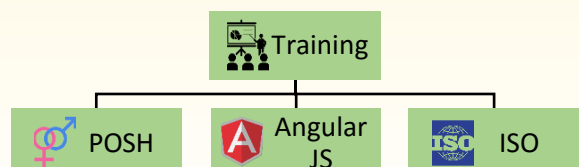


### Fresh Updates:

- Inauguration of Vadodara, Gujarat office on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2018.
- 30 new employees joined the Exxat Family.
- Formation of POSH Committee for prevention of Sexual Harassment at work place.
- Formation of Employee Pulse Team for Employee Engagement.

### Exxat Training Sessions:

- Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH).
- Angular JS - Technical Training to enhance and upgrade to latest technology.
- ISO Awareness Training.





## COLOURS OF INDIA

- Newsletter Team

Holi is celebrated across India with great energy and enthusiasm. It marks the arrival of spring and is also known as the festival of colours. On the eve of Holi, Holika pyre or a bonfire is lit after sunset. People gather around the bonfire to sing, dance and pray for prosperity and growth. The frolic begins the morning after the bonfire. Normally, people form groups and arm themselves with dry powdered colours, coloured water, water guns and water balloons and target other groups/people. Anyone on the streets is game to play. However, much like the diversity in culture, traditions and languages throughout the subcontinent, this day is also celebrated in varied ways across different parts of India. Let's go through a few of them -

**Highlight:** Warrior Dance

**Also known as:** Hola Mohalla

**Area:** Punjab

**Source:** *Kirti Chadha, Team Manager- Release*

Hola Mohalla, known as the warrior Holi, is celebrated in Punjab. This festival is observed by Nihang Sikhs. They exhibit martial arts, and sing their hearts out on this day, that is usually celebrated a day before Holi.



Figure 1: Source- huffingtonpost



Figure 2: Source- samacharnama

**Highlight:** Musical Holi

**Also known as:** Khadi Holi

**Area:** Uttarakhand

**Source:** *Saurabh Lal, Team Manager- Fusion*

Khadi Holi is played in the Kumaon region that mainly includes towns in Uttarakhand. Locals wear traditional clothes, sing songs based on classical ragas and dance in groups. These groups traverse through the towns and greet people they pass by. In this region, Holi is a musical event.

**Highlight:** Sticks and Shields

**Also known as:** Lathmar Holi

**Area:** Uttar Pradesh

**Source:** *Jyotiraditya Baghel, Business Analyst*

Interestingly, the festival here is celebrated with not just colours, but with lathis or sticks. As per tradition, women chase away the men with lathis while men sing songs to invite the attention of women. But it's not a beating session. The men come prepared to protect themselves with shields.



Figure 3: Source- krishnablogspot





Figure 4: Source- freepressjournal

**Highlight:** Cannabis Smoothie

**Also known as:** Phaguwa

**Area:** Bihar

**Source:** *Abhinav Kumar, Business Analyst*

Holi is a big celebration in Bihar, where a special drink made from bhang (cannabis) is consumed and forms an important part of Holi celebrations. In Bihar, it is vital to light the bonfire before playing Holi. After that, Holi is played with water and powdered colors with folk songs in the background.

**Highlight:** 5 Day Festival

**Also known as:** Yaosang

**Area:** Manipur

**Source:** *Verified from Google*

Yaosang is a festival celebrated in Manipur for five days and is considered the most important festival in Manipur. The highlight of the festival is the Thabal chongba, a Manipuri folk dance that is performed during Yaosang. It begins just after sunset in every village with Yaosang Mei thaba or burning of the straw hut after which monetary donations are given to children. This tradition is called nakatheng. On the second and third days, girls go to their relatives for their nakatheng and block roads with ropes for collecting money. On fourth and fifth days, people pour or splash water on one another.



Figure 5: Source- kumhei



Figure 6: Source- mediaindia

**Highlight:** Royal Holi

**Area:** City of Udaipur in the State of Rajasthan

**Source:** *Subhash Gehlot, Software Engineer*

The Holi celebrations in Udaipur by the Royal Mewar family is famous all over India. The entire royal family participates in the celebrations. Holi starts with the lighting of the bonfire known as the Mewar Holika Dahan. This takes place on the grounds of the city palace. The ruling king lights the holi pyre and the locals perform 'Gair' - a folk dance around the bonfire. The king personally meets all the royal guests, VIPs and dignitaries who have been invited for the celebrations by the royal Mewar family. Mewar Holika Dahan is followed by a grand procession accompanied by the royal family members sitting on decorated camels, elephants and horses. Cocktails and dinner are then served at the royal palace. The royal celebrations conclude with magnificent fireworks. Every hotel and resort in Udaipur arranges for Holi celebrations with live DJ, colours and refreshments.

## YOU ARE A CHAMPION

- **Trupti Naik**, Product Support Analyst

A struggler told me one day, "To find a job or place in this world is not an easy task, you have to struggle...struggle and struggle..."

Struggle is to sacrifice your one-time meal. It is travelling in a hot and overcrowded bus instead of an air-conditioned taxi."

It stuck with me, but I tried hard to set myself free.

AND then,  
It all started that day,  
That long and lengthy day  
I thought I had given it all,  
I had given everything I had  
Alas! It wasn't true  
I couldn't see the light, I had no clue  
And inside my head the devil lit  
He said it's time to quit.  
But the heart said and kept saying it again  
This is all part of a big damn game  
Depression is like a big dark well,  
But believe me or not it is only temporary hell!  
So listen to me and shut the other voices,  
Go fight back and climb the well, get out of that hell!  
Because remember who you are?  
You Are A Champion!  
Today is the day, not tomorrow, not next week  
Start wherever you are and reach the highest peak.  
Because remember who you are?  
You Are A Champion!  
Everyone will remember the person you will be  
You will definitely win and amazing your world will be!  
Because remember who you are?  
You Are A Champion!  
Finally, the struggle story took a turn and I got a place in this world!  
Eventually, all went right, and happiness came by my side.  
After all, it has been rightly said that  
"Believe in yourself, as it takes only a minute to change your life".

## LET ME TELL YOU A STORY!

- **Shripad Angre**, Product Support Analyst

Flashback to May 2016, we were about to graduate from Padmabhushan Vasantdada Patil Institute of Technology (PVPIT) with a Bachelor of Engineering with a major in Electronics and Telecommunications and were hoping for an opportunity for campus placements till the final hour.

As a ray of hope came Exxat at the campus drive, which then precisely consisted of 27 employees as mentioned during the company presentation by Exxat's very own Wikipedia, Ankit Kabra.

I was pretty confident about clearing the first aptitude test, but I might have missed by a whisker.

Four months later, Akash who appeared for the campus drive with me and made it to Exxat, referred me. I made *an even bigger blunder this time*. I got a call from the then HR and by the time I realised it was a formal telephonic interview, it was too late. The HR was asking the usual 'typical HR questions' and I said, "I think these talks should be done in person rather than on a telephone!".

Alas! It was done, the HR said, "I am speechless" and disconnected the call. Within minutes, I received the rejection email. I flunked again!

Exactly a year later, Akash trusted me again and my interview was scheduled on the same date as the campus drive in 2016! It was the 4<sup>th</sup> of May 2017, but this time the odds were with me and as well know the rest is history!



## SELF DEFENCE: NEED OF THE HOUR

- **Abhay Thakur**, *Programmer Analyst*

In today's world, staying alert, safe and fit are necessary skills, but incorporating this in our busy lives is a challenge. When we look for the best of both worlds, that's when Krav Maga comes to our help. It is an Israeli self-defence technique which consists of various forms of martial arts. It was specially designed for Israeli defence forces to keep them fit and combat ready.



Now, you'd be thinking: what's in this for me? Fitness, combat skills and most importantly the confidence that you can protect yourselves and your close ones from any threat. When you are on the streets, Krav Maga is a discipline that helps you the most to deal with situations involving multiple attackers or even attackers armed with sticks, knives and even guns. It also gives you the ability and skill to take on anyone regardless of their size because Krav Maga is based on very sophisticated techniques, principles and concepts.

I have been a Krav Maga Practitioner for a year and a half and have completed Practitioner Level 2 (grading). I can see the difference in my physique and my capability to defend myself and others in adverse situations.

Anyone can encounter an unsafe situation in today's world and that is when I thought of introducing Krav Maga to Exxatians. Co-incidentally a free demo of Krav Maga was organized on February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018 and we got permission from Vivek to take five people for the demo. Neelam, Mohini, Shweta Parekh, Shridhar and Krishnamohan came along. They learnt about the reality of streets and were also amazed at how easy it was to avert intense situations. The feedback from them was positive and hopefully we will be able to get everyone trained, so that they are empowered to safe guard themselves and others around them.

## EASTER

- **Preetha Mathew**, *Medical Data Analyst*

### ***Easter or Resurrection Sunday***

Easter is another festival that falls between March and April. Easter is celebrated by Christians all over the world.

It is believed that Jesus, the son of God, was born on Earth, died for everyone's sins, and then rose from the dead. Easter celebrates his resurrection on the third day of his burial after his crucifixion.

Easter customs vary across the Christian world. Churches hold special services such as sunrise services and clipping the church. In some cultures, people greet each other with 'Christ is risen' or 'The Lord is risen' (Paschal greeting). Easter egg hunts are held for Christians and non-Christians during Easter. Decorated hard-boiled eggs or chocolates in the shape of an egg are hidden. Children and sometime adults participate in finding these. It can be played both indoors and outdoors.

### **Easter symbols:**

In addition to the Easter egg, other symbols of Easter include

**The Easter Lamb:** a symbol of the sacrifice by Jesus Christ

**The Easter Lily:** a symbol of the resurrection

**The Easter Bunny:** a symbol of new life

## CONNECTING CONTINENTS

- **Rashmi Modak**, *Learning Facilitator*

My father is an avid reader and stories from and about Africa always fascinated him. In May 1994, he was offered an expat position as a financial controller in Ghana, West Africa and he obviously accepted. Knowledge about Africa was limited in 1994 and we were teased about the possibility of living in tree houses in dense jungles amongst wild animals and going to school swinging from branch to branch like chimpanzees. Mowgli was my childhood hero and this imagery excited me. At nine, I believed I could indeed befriend wild wolves and bears. In August 1994, my mother, my sister and I joined my father in Accra, the coastal capital city. There were no signs of a jungle and I soon found out that Ghana, like any West African country, is devoid of any wildlife, much to my disappointment! Ghana is a beautiful, tropical country situated at the Equator and the temperature is at a cosy 30 throughout the year. Accra is speckled with white sand beaches lined with palm and coconut trees and has a significant European population and great infrastructure.

My sister and I started school right away. Our school was called Ghana International School and there were over 50 nationalities. We took a lot of pride in calling it our 'Mini United Nations' and we lived by our school's motto - 'Understanding of each other'.

Our values and ethics teacher, Miss Bartels, a fervent traveller, always told us that the only way to appreciate and truly learn about new cultures and adapt new ideas is when you understand your own heritage and completely embrace your own roots- a full acceptance of self. I have always been inspired by her advice and followed it.

Our parents are bitten by the travel bug and we explored a new country every summer holiday. We visited New Zealand in July 2002 and instantly fell in love with the 'land of the long white cloud'! We decided to move! I finished school in New Zealand and went on to pursue my bachelors at the University of Auckland.

New Zealand is made of the North and South Island. It is a land blessed with diverse natural beauty. Every road is lined with silhouettes of serrated mountains and rolling pasture land dotted with snow white lambs. With 14,000 km of coast line, New Zealand's exquisite beaches are never too far. The most fascinating feature is its active volcanic and geothermal zones. Towering fiords, pristine trout-filled lakes and wild turquoise rivers are characteristic of New Zealand's South Island. New Zealand is stunning to say the least!

I was born in Mumbai, India, raised in Accra, Ghana and Auckland, New Zealand. All three countries hold a very special place in my heart. Luckily, I live in India, my sister still lives at our home in Auckland. My parents have moved back to West Africa and live in Togo- neighbouring Ghana and all of us continue to travel between the three continents.

## OUT OF THE BOX



Bullock Cart - A mode of transport in rural India, captured by **Sameer Bhaise**, *Product Analyst*



Artistic Creation by **Siddhi Oak**, *Business Analyst*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS!

- KUDOS to the entire Operations team for a highly successful March 1st Mailing.
- We are excited about adopting a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool - **Salesforce**. Salesforce is a leading platform to manage operations from lead generations right through to support. It will also allow us to have a 'live chat' feature in our product.
- Congratulations **Madhura Prabhu**, for getting her research paper on "**Assessment of SERVQUAL model in hospitals located in Tier II cities of India**" published and recognized by SAGE publications in February 2018.

### Exxat babies on board:

- Samata Bora (*Program Manager, India Lead*) - **Baby Girl**
- Rupali Khalse (*Quality Analyst*) - **Baby Boy**
- Seirra Lawton (*Customer Success Representative*) - **Baby Girl**

### Exxatians who found their Soulmate:

- Tabish Khan, *Quality Analyst*
- Madhura Parlikar, *Quality Analyst*
- Swapnil Khalekar, *Business Analyst*
- Neelam Tak, *Product Support Analyst*
- Nayan Chaudhari, *Quality Analyst*

