

APRIL 2010 Rs 30

harmony

celebrate age

Costume designer
Bhanu Athaiya's
latest creation

PHOTOFEATURE

Five silvers
dance to the
song of life

HEALTH

Beat obesity
with bariatric surgery

Shaukat Azmi
on love, life and poetry

The magazine for silver citizens Subscriber Copy Not For Resale



Timeri Murari discovers new highs • Harvest recipes

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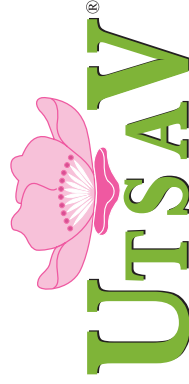


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Security BLANKET

Here's a simple equation that even the mathematically challenged can compute: financial security = empowerment. It's something we all understand. However, what we tend to forget is that for our silvers, financial security should not be a privilege but a right. As an evolved society, that's the least we can do for Generation A.

That's why it comes as such a disappointment when Budgets roll in and out paying mere lip service to silvers. They speak of 'inclusion', yet result in neglect; promise a transformation but retain the status quo. This year is no exception. There has been some cheer with the revision of tax slabs; for instance, silvers with an income of Rs 160,000 to Rs 500,000 save Rs 20,600 a year compared to the same slab last year; those earning Rs 500,000 to Rs 800,000 stand to save around Rs 41,000; and those earning above Rs 800,000 save Rs 51,500. Unfortunately, the steady increase in the price of fuel and other essential commodities are sure to offset any gains that will accrue.

Indeed, the Budget is far more remarkable for what it hasn't accomplished. Health insurance premiums continue to mount with the years. Yet, the ceiling for tax deduction for medical insurance remains Rs 20,000 per annum for silvers with no sign of upward revision. Other long-standing demands like freeing older silvers from taxes and uniform social pensions continue to be ignored. And we are yet to define the age of a 'senior citizen'—while millions 'retire' at 60, the Income Tax Department recognises them as senior citizens only when they turn 65.

Clearly, the need of the hour is a security blanket that provides real cover and enduring shelter from the vagaries of the economy through viable financial avenues. One such avenue is Reverse Mortgage, a loan that can be



Donald Woodrow

availed by mortgaging one's property while continuing to occupy it. It is Harmony's mission to raise awareness on this scheme. In January 2008 and September 2008, we organised seminars in Mumbai and Delhi with National Housing Bank (NHB) to address issues and concerns. And in January 2009, we launched a helpline (1800-100-1111) with NHB to answer queries on the subject.

On 9 April, we will further our engagement with *Reverse Mortgage – A Step Ahead*, a seminar in partnership with Central Bank of India and Star Union Dai-ichi (SUD) Life Insurance. Central Bank is promoting Cent Swabhiman Plus, a new Reverse Mortgage scheme for anyone over the age of 60 (individually or with a spouse of 55 years and above). When coupled with SUD, it assures lifetime annuity along with revision after every three years based on revaluation of property, and options with or without lump-sum loan. What's more, Harmony's helpline will continue under the aegis of Central Bank. We need many more such initiatives from civil society to weave that blanket of security—and draw it in close and warm over India's silvers.

Tina Ambani

A Harmony for Silvers Foundation Initiative

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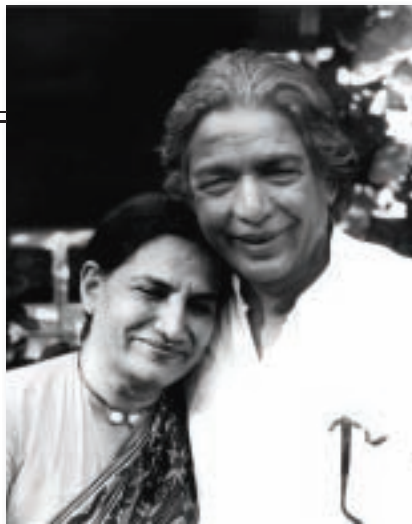
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A rare glimpse into the life of veteran actor and writer Shaukat Azmi

Cover photograph:
Jit Ray



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PLAYING LIFE'S GAME: Ashok Kumar on his father, hockey legend Major Dhyan Chand



CANDID CAMERA:
Cinematographer V K Murthy shares snapshots from his life

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column one

No one knows how to sacrifice the comforts of life for love better than the silver generation. The only credible measure of strong beliefs and emotions, sacrifice was once a way of life—like yoga, the more one practised it, the more it became part of the self. No wonder Shaukat Azmi, wife of legendary poet Kaifi Azmi and mother of actor Shabana Azmi, thinks little of having led a life conceding to circumstances of dejection and sometimes penury. For, by her side was Kaifi Azmi to reinforce their hope in love. His belief in the *raison d'être* of the Communist Party was enough to get Shaukat Azmi equally involved in the party's workings; his love for poetry provided the impetus for her love for theatre; and his resilience became her strength. On the cover this month, Shaukat Azmi ("The Colours in Her Life") would surely arouse a similar sentiment in *Harmony* readers.

Sometimes surrendering to a passion can be sweet indeed. More and more silvers are finding a rhythm that best suits them and tapping their feet to it. In "Two Right Feet", we feature silvers from across the country who enrolled in dance classes. Years ago, the time might not have been right for them to pursue their passion, but age didn't deter them from taking to it yet again.

Elsewhere in the magazine, there's colour from costume queen Bhanu Athaiya's life ("Star and Style"). An Oscar winner for Richard Attenborough's *Gandhi*, Athaiya dressed yesteryear actors Nadira, Mumtaz and Zeenat Aman, to name just a few. Every costume told a story, each one miles ahead of the time's trends. Choose your own craze and fashion a life of meaning. Happy reading, until next month!

—Meeta Bhatti



I am 72 years old; I retired a decade ago as head of administration of a corporate group of companies. I am also a registered advocate though I never practised in any court. After retirement, I decided to do something novel and beneficial for citizens of all ages, particularly widows. I set out to spread awareness on the need to write and register one's will. I did this through lectures to senior citizens' organisations at various forums in and around Delhi. I also started distributing write-ups via photocopies and emails. In 2003, while giving a lecture to senior citizens in the suburb of Vasant Kunj, Delhi, an 82 year-old pointed out to me that the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) does not accept a registered will and insists on a no-objection certificate (NOC) from all legal heirs.

I decided to meet the vice-chairman of the DDA, not an easy task for a common man. I approached the late H D Shourie, who was then the director of the public interest organisation, Common Cause. He got me an appointment with Anil Bajjal, IAS, who was then the vice-chairman. He was kind enough to understand my logic that such a NOC was tantamount to a veto of the demised person's last wish and the fact that it would be impossible to get an NOC from those who have been denied a share in property. In April 2004, the DDA issued necessary instructions to this effect. Buoyed with this success, I approached the commissioner of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi. After three years of correspondence, a similar order was issued on 8 December 2009. As the RTO, Delhi, still insists on the NOC, I have taken up the matter with the Transport Commissioner and expect the Transport Department to follow suit.

Even though our laws are made by the legislature, the rules are made by bureaucrats. It is our responsibility as citizens to compel these officials to amend the rules to make them consumer-friendly. In development authorities and municipal corporations all over India, if someone goes for mutation of property with a registered will, he is asked to return with the NOC from other legal heirs or a probate of the will from a competent court. Getting the probate of a registered will is a lengthy process that costs more than about 3 per cent of the cost of the property (with stamp duty, lawyers' fees, and umpteen rounds of the courts). I believe that if such rules can be amended in Delhi by the initiative of a single senior citizen, it can be done anywhere. I urge all readers to get such rules in their own cities amended. I am ready to provide the relevant help, support and information to anyone willing to take the initiative—you can contact me at (0) 9312234825.

N Ahuja, New Delhi

With reference to "The Sex Files" ('Orbit', March 2010), it's true that sex is no longer considered a dirty word for both young and older people. An active sex life can contribute to the good health of elders as long as we maintain our dignity keeping our Indian culture in mind. It's interesting that even the younger generation is realising that their elders need

companionship. For instance, recently in Kanpur, two sons reunited their widower father with his childhood love in a bid to assuage his loneliness. There have also been a few Bollywood films of late that have focused on this subject. This is a heartening sign.

Mahesh Kumar, New Delhi

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Kudos for your cover feature on composer and producer Biddu ("The Triple X Factor", March 2010), a pioneer of pop music in India. Biddu's



music has made him a household name in India and elsewhere. The remarkable thing is that even if he is composing for western audiences, he injects an Indian touch in his songs. In India, he has galvanised the music scene with memorable hits like *Aap jaisa koi* for the Hindi film *Qurbani*, and *Made in India* with Alisha Chinoy. Here's a man who has used his talent to cut across borders and make his own dreams come true.

Vinod C Dixit, Ahmedabad

I am 69 years old and a regular reader of *Harmony* magazine. I believe the contents of the magazine are beneficial to all elders. To widen your reach, I request you to consider publishing the magazine in Hindi too.

J S Periwal, Vadodra

I have read a few issues of *Harmony* given to me by a friend. I believe a magazine like yours should be made accessible to all the residents of old

age homes in India who can read English. This will bring them happiness and renewed energy.

C S Devarajan, Chennai

I am 75 years old and an active member of Anil Parikh's Ghatkopar Senior Citizens' Mandal. I'm writing to thank Harmony for Silvers Foundation for the wonderful visit we enjoyed to Lavasa with the Harmony team on 14 February 2010. I laud the untiring efforts of Harmony to provide the best to silver citizens through a variety of activities and initiatives, including the Senior Citizens' Run at the Mumbai Marathon. Indeed, our Mandal's bond with Harmony is growing stronger by the day and we look forward to many such enjoyable experiences in future.

Chandrakant Shah, Mumbai

When the police sent a squad to Carmel Convent on 19 February to find out what the ruckus was about, they realised that 320 senior citizens were having a ball at the Valentine's Day function organised by the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women (DCCW)! For those brief hours, grief, pain and medical prescriptions seemed far away, drowned by the 'here and now' of joy and contentment. Highlights of the show included the grand march; the Bharatanatyam prayer dance by Rayna Braganza; the Portuguese dance by grandchildren for their grandparents; and the Israeli dance by Pam and the Golden Girls! As if all this and the games, snacks and prizes galore were not enough, the evening ended with a performance by Dr Victor Rodrigues's body-and-soul stirring band. I'd like to inform you that the DCCW was established during the Eucharistic Congress in Mumbai in 1964. Affiliated to the Council of Catholic Women of India and the World Union of Catholic Women, its aim is to promote the participation

and cooperation of Catholic women in society and the Church. Every year, it organises and celebrates Mother's Day, Valentine's Day and Elders' Day on a grand scale. The DCCW is also planning to build a home for middle-class elders in Mumbai. If anyone can donate land, property or is willing to build an extension to an existing home, please contact Father John Mascarenhas at St Theresa's Church, Bandra; Tel: 022-26407891.

George Menezes, Mumbai

It's high time that we stop calling our seniors or elder citizens 'old'. Old is a derogatory word that signifies something that is rusted and without use. If we agree that 'old is gold', shouldn't we be calling our seniors gold instead of old? Even more important, at what age do we start calling people silvers or elders? Does it not make an active, productive and physically fit person feel inferior if he is called 'senior' at the young age of 50? Today, real life only begins at the age of 60 when one can enjoy life after fulfilling all responsibilities towards children and family and without the pressures of work or deadlines. Now, even the government has started rethinking the retirement age. In earlier days, one nationalised bank used to have 55 as its retirement age; it went on to raise it to 58, then 60 and finally 62. In my opinion, the age at which we call someone 'senior', 'elder' or 'silver' should be 65. Once people reach their 70s, they can be called septuagenarians or 'golden'; in their 80s, octogenarians or 'platinum'; 90s, nonagenarians or 'diamond'; and once they become centenarians, they can be called centurions. Benefits and concessions can be offered on the basis of these categories instead of a blanket approach to all elders. This will ensure inclusive and need-based distribution to enable all seniors to maintain their quality of life.

Mohan Siroya, Mumbai

OPEN YOUR EYES TO EVERYTHING
THAT'S NEW IN THE SILVER WORLD



O»INNOVATION

HOVERCRAFT

A wheelchair without wheels? That's exactly what researchers at Japan's Kobe Gakuin University have conjured up. As technology website *news.cnet.com* reports, the prototype features an air compressor that spouts jets of air out of several openings on the bottom of the device, thereby creating a cushion of air that actually makes the chair hover over the ground. Without any friction, the user who sits comfortably with a backrest and footrest can easily navigate the device, which rotates smoothly even through sharp turns. At present, it only works on flat and smooth surfaces and is limited to horizontal movement but over time, researchers expect it to negotiate all surfaces and even move vertically, which would enable silvers to 'climb' stairs while seated. Wow.



Rahul

O»NEWSWORTHY

Park 'N' play

Hyde Park has long been a favourite of children in London—they can swim, boat and fish there as well as romp across its 350 acres. This spring, their grandparents are likely to join them for their own little adventure. The park will soon be home to **London's first 'playground' for silvers**, which will feature low-impact exercise equipment to improve balance and flexibility and tone muscles. This is the third silver playground in Europe; the first opened in Nuremberg, Germany, in 2007 and the second in Manchester in the UK a year later. All these projects have been inspired by a study conducted at the Finnish University of Lapland in 2007, which showed that silvers experienced improvements in balance, coordination and speed after only three months of 'playing'. "Many older people aren't exercising enough," Michelle Mitchell, charity director of British NGO Age Concern, tells *The Associated Press*. "Further, working out with others their age can help older people alleviate feelings of loneliness and depression."

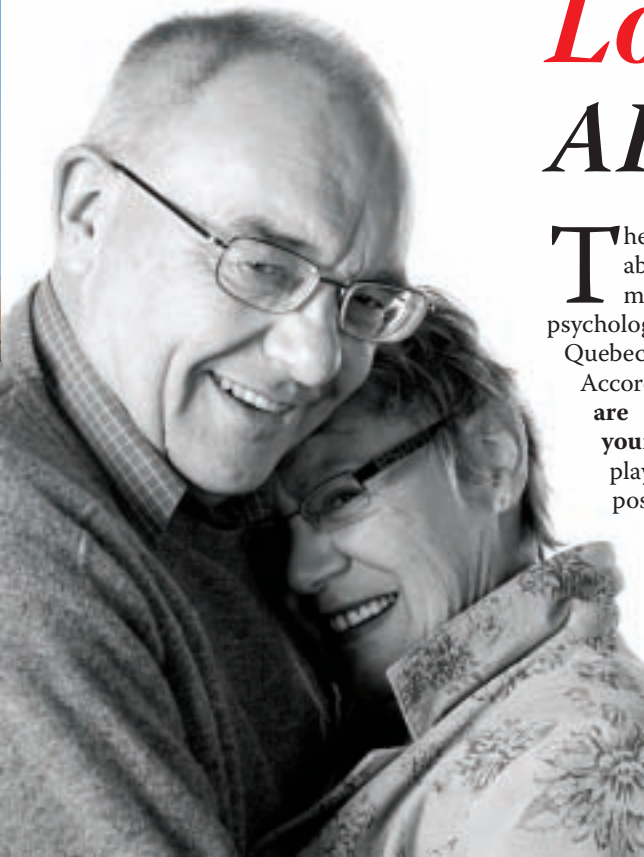


Less is MORE

Silvers in Mumbai have a **host of discounts** coming their way. In late February, the **Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC)** announced a 5 per cent rebate in property taxes if the property is in the name of a senior citizen. In addition, those over the age of 65 will not be charged for admission in BMC-run hospitals and will get 25 per cent off on diagnostic tests like blood tests, cardiograms, MRIs and echo-cardiology tests. That's not all. Other benefits for silvers include no entry fee at civic zoos; 75 per cent concession at BMC swimming pools; reservation of 10 front-row seats in BMC theatres across the city; 50 per cent discount on ticket costs; and the establishment of separate counters at all bill paying centres. "Nobody cares about elderly people these days," Ravindra Waikar, chairman of the BMC's standing committee tells media. "We hope these measures help them live their lives better."

BACK TO THE BOOKS: BRITISH UNIVERSITIES MUST OFFER COURSES FOR SILVERS IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN LATER YEARS, SAYS A REPORT BY UNIVERSITIES UK, A HIGHER EDUCATION ACTION GROUP. IT RECOMMENDS THAT UNIVERSITIES SET UP CENTRES IN AREAS WITH A HIGH PROPORTION OF SILVERS AND DEVELOP COURSES LIKE ENVIRONMENTAL CITIZENSHIP AND HUMAN RIGHTS LAW.

O»TRENDS



Love in the AFTERNOON

There's something to be said about a love that grows richer, more intense with time. And psychologists at the University of Quebec in Montreal are saying it. According to them, **silver couples are more in sync than their younger counterparts**, displaying higher satisfaction and positivity with their partners.

The team studied 508 Canadian couples and found that those over the age of 65 obtained the highest scores of 119 and 120 points on the international Spanier Dyadic Adjustment Scale, which measures levels of sexual satisfaction, connectivity and

consistency in a relationship—the Canadian average is 114.

"The difference of five or six points might not sound like much of a difference but it is statistically very significant," Gilles Trudel, lead author of the study, tells news agency Agence France-Presse. "One factor that contributes to higher levels of happiness may be the lower rate of separation among elder couples. Also, they have passed the midlife stage linked to child-raising, when there is much to disagree about. The retirement phase is stress-free with less troubles at home and absence of work-related conflict, giving them additional opportunities of travel and pursuing shared interests."

O»EVENT

Reviving the NPOP

When the government recently established a four-member committee to review the National Policy for Older Persons (NPOP), there were murmurs of both approval and dissent. On 3 March, Harmony for Silvers Foundation and Heritage Foundation jointly hosted a seminar, **NPOP: Retrospect and Prospect**, at Harmony Interactive Centre in Girgaum, Mumbai. The seminar, chaired by K R Gangadharan, chairman of Heritage Foundation, and co-chaired by Professor S Siva Raju of Tata Institute of Social Sciences, was held to discuss whether there was a need to review the NPOP; provisions to be added to enhance the existing policy; reasons behind the inertia surrounding it; and ways to counter roadblocks in future. Around 25 key officials from various senior citizens' organisations attended the event. While there was an inconclusive debate on the need for a review, some meaningful recommendations were offered. These include special pension for widows without any means of



livelihood; precise data on the elderly in the forthcoming census; a separate ministry for silvers; a well-planned list of priorities with deadlines; investing concerned officials with relevant authority; attending inter-ministerial meetings to facilitate a productive outcome; and raising awareness about the NPOP among silvers. Gangadharan, member of the review committee, assured that the recommendations would receive a fair evaluation and emphasised the need for collaboration between stakeholders.

O»ANALYSE THIS

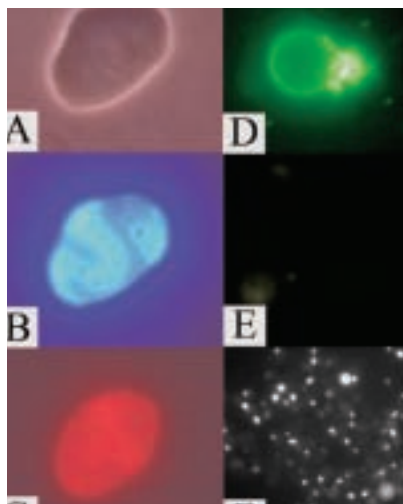
ZAP the blues

If you decide to splurge on a Nintendo Wii for a grandchild, buy yourself one too. According to scientists at the Sam and Rose Stein Institute for Research on Ageing at the University of California - San Diego School of Medicine, such ‘**exergames**’ that combine play with exercise can improve the symptoms of subsyndromal depression (SSD) in silvers. SSD is much more common than major depression in seniors, and is associated with substantial suffering and functional disability. In the study, 19 participants with SSD ranging from 63 to 94 years of age played an exergame on the Nintendo Wii video game system during 35-minute sessions, three times a week. After a quick tutorial, they zeroed in on one of five games: tennis, bowling, baseball, golf or boxing. Holding the Wii remote—a wireless device that senses motion—they used their arm and body to simulate actions akin to actually playing the sport. The researchers found that over



one-third of the participants had a 50 per cent or greater reduction of depressive symptoms. Many displayed a significant improvement in mood and mental health as well as increased cognitive stimulation.

“Depression predicts non-adherence to physical activity and that is a key barrier to most exercise programmes,” writes study leader Dilip V Jeste in the March issue of the *American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*. “Older adults with depression may be at particular risk for diminished enjoyment of physical activity and, therefore, more likely to stop exercise programmes prematurely. Such games offer a fun yet gentle way for them to get their bodies and minds moving in a positive direction.”



Secret of SENESCENCE

It's possibly the biggest biological mystery of all time: **how do living cells age?** A team comprising researchers from Newcastle University in the UK and University of Ulm in southern Germany may have just found the answer. With the help of computer modelling and experiments with cell cultures and genetically modified mice, they discovered that an ageing cell sends out specific internal signals when it detects serious damage to its DNA caused by the wear and tear of life. These distress signals trigger the cell's mitochondria, which produce its energy, to make oxidising ‘free radical’ molecules. These tell the cell either to self-destruct or stop dividing with the aim to avoid damaged DNA that could cause chronic diseases like cancer. Thus, the tissues that make up these cells begin to show physical signs of deterioration. The team expects that this discovery will lead to the development of appropriate drugs for age-related illnesses, such as diabetes and heart disease. Their study is published in the March issue of journal *Molecular Systems Biology*.

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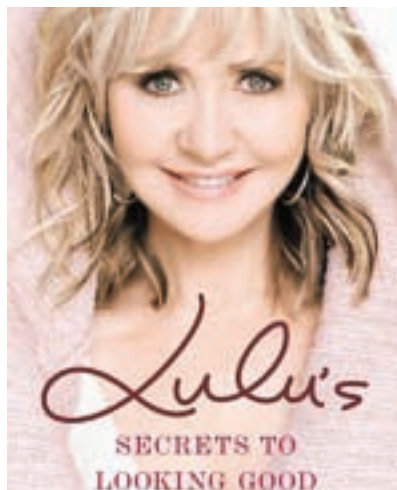
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O» MEDIA WATCH



Sizzling SILVER

Lulu Kennedy-Cairns is a model, actor, chart-topping recording artist—and grandmother. A poster girl for reinvention (“I like to shake things up”), she studied social science at university level last year and is taking a creative writing course this year. And now the 61 year-old, beloved in her native England, is sharing the secrets of her fabulousness in *Lulu's Secrets to Looking Good* (HarperCollins) where she dishes on skincare, wardrobe, exercise, diet and inner well-being. “What is so wonderful is that we are living in an era when women can look and feel good for a

lifetime,” she writes. “We are living longer, we are living more healthily, science is more advanced; and as a result my generation has the chance to be ageless. It would never have occurred to my mother that she could write a book or start a business at 60; now women can do whatever they like, be whoever they want. Above all, if you are open to new things, life is a wonderful adventure.” Here are just some of her tips:

Pamper your skin: “Splash water on your face through the day. Massage your skin whenever you can to improve blood flow. And start and end the day with a glass of hot water and lemon for a glow that lasts.”

Don't limit your wardrobe: “You can't tell anything until you try it on. Don't just look at clothes on the rack, try them on, be brave! Look around and keep an open mind. Listen to others. Find a good tailor. And always go shopping with a friend.”

Stand up straight: “Good posture makes you look younger, fitter. Try the Alexander Technique, where you imagine being gently pulled up by a string attached to the top of the head. You feel your neck lengthening. The arms should be relaxed and heavy, but not so heavy that they drag down your shoulders. Keep your back straight and your buttocks relaxed. In a relaxed way, put your shoulders back and open that chest.”

Only for 'grownups'

World over, ageism is nowhere as acute as in the entertainment industry. Magazines like *AARP* in the US—and *Harmony* in India—that focus on the silver demographic, know far too well the reluctance of many stars to appear on their cover, worried that they will be labelled ‘over the hill’. Thus, an event like ‘**AARP the Magazine's Movies for Grownups Gala**’ assumes a deeper significance beyond being just another awards show. The ninth edition of the Gala, which was held in February in Los Angeles, was attended by A-listers including 66 year-old Robert De Niro, 60 year-old Jeff Bridges, 49 year-old Sean Penn and 72 year-old Morgan Freeman. Winners included Bridges (Best Actor for *Crazy Heart*—a feat he repeated at the Oscars); 64 year-old Helen Mirren (Best Actor for *The Last Station*); 51 year-old Alec Baldwin (Best Supporting Actor for *It's Complicated*); 56 year-old Kim Basinger (Best Supporting Actor for *The Burning Plain*); and 58 year-old Oscar winner Kathryn Bigelow (Best Director for *The Hurt Locker*). The best film went to 79 year-old Clint Eastwood's *Invictus* based on the life of Nelson Mandela. “What's amazing is that this award comes from America's fastest growing demographic even though many of us don't pay full price and talk loudly during the quiet parts,” quipped De Niro as he received a Lifetime Achievement Award. “Age is still a big stigma for many in the business,” Meg Grant, *AARP's* entertainment editor at large, tells *The Los Angeles Times*. “With events like these, we are trying to build a better image of ageing one brick at a time.”

73

NOT OUT

IN THE FACE OF A SILVERING POPULATION, BIG BUSINESS HOUSES IN AUSTRALIA HAVE COME TOGETHER TO PROPOSE TO THE GOVERNMENT THAT THE RETIREMENT AGE BE LIFTED TO 73—FROM THE CURRENT 65—BY 2049. BY THEN, THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE OVER THE AGE OF 65 WILL INCREASE FROM 2.9 MILLION TO ABOUT 7.4 MILLION.



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O»LOVE THAT



Yo deejay!

The coolest nightclubs in Paris are rocking to a granny beat. Clad in a leopard-skin shrug, funky earrings and dark sunglasses, **69 year-old Ruth Flowers is the hottest deejay on town**, spinning a mix of techno with The Rolling Stones, Queen and Abba, as London newspaper *The Times* reports. Flowers happened upon her new calling just by chance—the Briton, a trained singer, went to a disco four years ago to celebrate her grandson's 13th birthday party. "I went in and it was very noisy and the lights were flashing, but there was an awful lot of energy and joy," she tells the newspaper. She decided instantly that this is what she wanted to do. So she contacted a friend in the music business who put her in touch with French producer and deejay Aurelien Simon, who taught her how to spin and use the machines. Impressed by her progress, Simon invited her to perform at the Cannes film festival. It was the beginning of a new life in Paris, with the hottest clubs in town lining up to have Flowers deejay for them. "Young people come up to me all the time and say they want to be like me," she says. "I always say, 'You don't want to be like me. You want to be you.'"

MEETING OF MINDS: MAHATMA GANDHI CHITRAKOOT GRAMODYA UNIVERSITY IN CHITRAKOOT, MADHYA PRADESH, PLAYED HOST TO A MEETING OF SILVER MINDS FROM 8 TO 10 FEBRUARY. OVER 50 DELEGATES FROM SINGAPORE, THE UK, US, FRANCE, ICELAND, NEW ZEALAND, SOUTH AFRICA, KOREA, NEPAL AND AUSTRALIA JOINED 300 REPRESENTATIVES OF SENIOR CITIZENS' ASSOCIATIONS ACROSS INDIA—INCLUDING 90 FROM DELHI ALONE—FOR A CONFERENCE ON LIFELONG LEARNING AND AGEING WITH DIGNITY.

THE MASTER

If the equivalent of a black belt in judo is a '1st Dan', imagine how exalted the status of '10th Dan' would be. It's not just **judo's highest accolade**, granted by the International Judo Federation, it's also incredibly hard to attain—only seven living judokas have got there. The latest entrant to this hall of fame is **72 year-old George Kerr**. The Scot first started boxing when he was eight years old and went on to train in Japan when he was 18 on a four-year scholarship. Winner of the European judo cham-



pion in 1957 and a two-time winner of the British Open championship, Kerr has also refereed the sport at the Olympics and is president of the British Judo Association. "Judo has been my life," he tells London newspaper *The Guardian*. "It's more than just a sport; there's a whole moral code you need to live by: honour, integrity, discipline, politeness, not picking on people who are weaker than you. It's the way of the samurai, really." Kerr now shows this way to the next generation at the judo club he has established for children in Edinburgh.

O»IN FOCUS

Match point

A unique initiative by Mumbai-based businessman Kumar Deshpande enables silvers to find a soul mate

It is a sultry Saturday morning in early March. Damodar Hall in Mumbai's Lower Parel looks like any other club where a mass speed date session is on full swing with its attendant buzz. A closer look reveals over 800 silvers—men and women—gathered together in hushed anticipation and a frisson of nervousness. They are all part of the Companion Club established by Mumbai-based businessman Kumar Deshpande, 31, (*see pic, right*). While some silvers are from Maharashtra, others have come from Delhi, and some even from far-off Dubai.

Deshpande came up with the idea when he saw his father-in-law's misery after his mother-in-law's death. "My mother-in-law passed away two years ago and since then my father-in-law, Balkrishna Joshi, has never been the same," says Deshpande. Family members wondered if a companion would help drive away Joshi's loneliness. "Everyone needs a companion, and as you grow older this need only grows stronger," says Deshpande. "I could see the acute loneliness in his eyes. He was living alone in Dhule as both his daughters were living in other cities."

Deshpande decided to take a step that would not only change 62 year-old Joshi's life but that of many other silvers like him. Initially, his idea met with stiff opposition. "When I proposed the idea of getting my father-in-law remarried, my wife and her sister were totally against the idea," says Deshpande. "They said they did not want a 'stepmother' at their age." He convinced them to look at the larger

picture—providing their father with a friend who could share his sunset years. But even after his wife and sister-in-law agreed, Deshpande was still far from getting his father-in-law's approval. It took him a year of cajoling to get Joshi to agree to take a second chance at togetherness. In December 2010, Joshi finally married again after finding a suitable match, helped by his daughter and son-in-law.



On 6 March, Deshpande launched the Companion Club in Mumbai, aided by lawyers and marriage counsellors. "Many lawyers and counsellors approached me after they heard about me through newspapers and word-of-mouth publicity," says Deshpande. "These experts help senior citizens with matters of social acceptance, legal opinion and even changes to be made in their family will." But he insists he is not running a professional marriage bureau. "I just don't want senior citizens to lead lonely, unhappy lives." Following the Mumbai club, he set up a Companion Club in Nasik. "We received maximum requests from Nasik, hence we decided to set up shop there," he says. "We are also setting up a club in Pune. If the response is good, we will launch more such clubs in other cities."

The Club is not restricted to any community or caste. Registration is free. You just fill a form with your personal details and a description of the kind of companion you are seeking. Deshpande and his team then arrange a meeting for you with suitable candidates during Companion Club gatherings. A similar event will be held in Mumbai in May; registrations are open till end April. To register online, go to www.deshpandefoundation.com/enquiry.html or call 022-67527998/7999.

—Dhanya Nair Sankar



O»H PEOPLE

Valley of hope

Union Sports Minister **Manohar Singh Gill**'s fascination for the Lahaul and Spiti Valley began in the summer of 1962 when he journeyed through the northern Indian plains to the Himalaya and spent a year living and working with the locals. He formed the Himalayan Club and



contributed to the development of the region as the president of the Indian Mountaineering Foundation for six years. All through that time, he jotted down notes on the places that he visited and the life and pace of the people there. His writings were published in 1971 as a book with a foreword by then prime minister Indira Gandhi. Now, the book has been reprinted by Penguin with a foreword by Congress President Sonia Gandhi. *Himalayan Wonderland – Travels in Lahaul and Spiti* is part-memoir, part-travelogue and part-anthropology and includes pictures taken by Gill and the maps he used during his travels. Though he moved on to new designations, the Himalayan valley remained close to his heart. Last month, he sanctioned a grant of Rs 500,000 to encourage mountaineering in the region.

—Anjali Rego

ACTION PLAN FOR APRIL

Write on the Web. If you love to write and want to share it with others, the Internet is the place for you.

A survey by British charity Booktrust found that about 31 per cent silvers are keen to go online to publish short stories and join book clubs and websites like *Bookbite.org.uk*, a reading and creative writing project for silvers. "Our website is attracting high numbers of people over the age of 50," says Mark Johnson, digital producer for *Authonomy.com*, a talent-spotting website launched by publisher HarperCollins. "Perhaps this is because age and experience can offer a clear advantage to anyone hoping to write engagingly or perhaps older people now have more time, and are more confident, to share their passions online. But our experience suggests that older generations aren't just learning how to use the Web—they're taking advantage of it like never before."



IN PASSING

Industrialist **G P Birla**, founder of the Birla Institute of Technology, passed away after a brief illness on 5 March in Kolkata. He was 87.

Eustace Fernandes, creator of Amul's popular 'utterly butterly' moppet, passed away on 11 March in Mumbai. He was 75.

Marathi litterateur and winner of the Jnanpith Award **Govind Vinayak Karandikar**, fondly known as Vinda Karandikar, passed away on 14 March after a prolonged illness in Mumbai. He was 92.

Former prime minister of Nepal **Girija Prasad Koirala** died of multiple organ failure in Kathmandu on 20 March. He was 85.

BIRTHDAYS

- Actor **Anupam Kher** turned 55 on 7 March
- Actor **Shashi Kapoor** turned 72 on 18 March
- Former attorney general **Soli Sorabjee** turned 80 on 9 March
- American actor **Bruce Willis** turned 55 on 19 March
- American action hero **Sylvester Stallone** turned 66 on 15 March
- American feminist **Gloria Steinem** turned 76 on 25 March

VISITOR

Who: **Stephen Smith**, Australia's foreign minister

When: 2-4 March

What: To rebuild the strained relations between India and Australia following the growing incidences of assault on Indian students in Australia. Smith, who was a spectator at the hockey match between India and Australia during the Hockey World Cup held in Delhi, was also here to assess the security arrangements for the forthcoming Commonwealth Games in the capital. He received a security briefing from Indian Foreign Minister S M Krishna.

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THE BEST IS YET TO BE

I was born in 1921 and grew up in Varanasi with teachings from the Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, *Bhagavad-Gita* and English literature, with a liberal sprinkling of history, geography and modern science. I believe that Man is a 'multifaceted animal'; he can do several things simultaneously. After reading about Shatawadhani pundits who are capable of attending 100 literary activities at a time, I asked myself why I couldn't as well.

In the turbulent 1940s, I graduated in science from Lucknow University and joined King George's Medical College, graduating in medicine and surgery in 1947. Though I chose pathology and modern medicine, my inclination to literature, dramatics and music was at an equal footing. To quench my thirst for new learning, I did Hindi Visharad to explore the literary nuances of the language. I also started a health magazine *Apka Swasthya* under the aegis of the Indian Medical Association on health education. Through this periodical, I made a conscious attempt to root out misconceptions and myths plaguing our society and abolish quackery.



Wordsmith and healer: Mehta

George Santayana, the philosopher, has said: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." A question kept throbbing in my mind since youth as to how, why, when and where the cure of various ailments developed. In the 1950s and 1960s, I scoured libraries and struggled to search for books on this uncommon subject. This journey culminated in my book on history of medicine published in the 1990s.

Medicine was my profession, while theatre was my passion. I find myself to be a student of theatre in all its existing forms till date. In 1951, I wrote

my first play *Bhartendu*, which received rave reviews. I explored different genres of dramatics on stage with my plays and adaptations like *Ulka*, *Akalmandi*, *Chadia Nu Sapnu*, *Sheni Vijanand*, *Tapti Dhoop Sheetal Chhaya*, *Witness for the Prosecution*, and *Mousetrap*. I was also lucky to work with the wizard of theatre lighting, Tapas Sen. I carry on my associations with the Uttar Pradesh Sangeet Natak Akademi to give theatre and music a new lease on life. Though my physical activity has somewhat diminished now, my passion for writing and dramatics is far from over. I am an undefeated enthusiast who is discovering the orb of knowledge and imparting his wealth to the younger generation. By contributing essays to health journals, I keep age-induced boredom at bay. Though I do not practice medicine anymore, I share my experiences with students and in exchange update my scientific awareness.

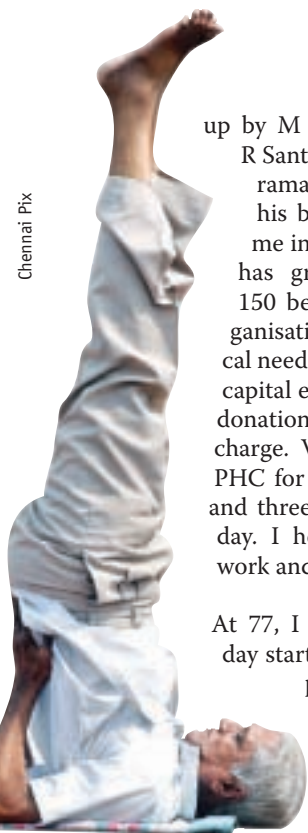
I owe my growth to my enigmatic city of Varanasi and its ancient civilisation. To commemorate its eternal glory, I compiled a guidebook, *So Kasi Sei Kas Na*. After all, inheritance is multi-factorial, which pushes me to get involved in every effort that is being made to preserve our heritage, environment and historical lineage.

—Dr B Mehta, Varanasi

SERVICE SPEAKS

I still remember the speech that the Paramachariar of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham gave when he visited the Public Health Centre (PHC) in Chennai in the 1980s. "People work for themselves and for their families. Everyone should work for others for at least an hour everyday," he said. Those words are the guiding principle of my life.

I joined ITC Ltd in 1957. After working there for 27 years I opted for voluntary retirement in 1983. Besides working with ITC, I was also making detergents for industrial use. After retirement, I exported leather garments for five years. In 2003, I wound down my business and decided to do something more meaningful with my life. My association with the PHC dates back to the early 1950s when the charitable healthcare institution was set



up by M C Subramaniam. My father R Santhanam, a close friend of Subramaniam, not only contributed his bit to PHC but also initiated me into social service. Today PHC has grown into a hospital with 150 beds. It is a not-for-profit organisation that attends to the medical needs of lower income groups. All capital expenditures are met through donations and patients pay a nominal charge. Volunteers and doctors visit PHC for three hours in the morning and three hours in the evening every day. I help out with administrative work and teach yoga to patients.

At 77, I lead a fairly active life. My day starts at 3 am when I wake up to practice yoga for two hours, following which I do *puja*.

I go to the PHC after that and return to spend time with my grandchildren. After an afternoon nap I go to the PHC again in the evening. Everyone in my family encourages

Man with a cause: Sampat

me to serve at the PHC and many of them also volunteer time there. My wife and I will celebrate our 50th anniversary this year. Both my children are settled in the US. For me, whether I go to a temple or not, visiting the PHC is a must. All of us should take up a meaningful cause in our silver years. There is no better way to erase age-related anxiety in our minds and replace it with contentment.

—C S Sampat, Chennai

ANDAMAN ADVENTURE

For a very long time, I had the Andaman Islands on my mind. Two months ago, my friend Susan told me about a group of silver women who were planning a trip to the Andamans. When I contacted them, I was told there was no space for another person. Later, one of them had to drop out because her husband was not keeping very well. Her loss was my gain and I quickly got down to packing for my trip!

To say that it was an exhilarating experience would be an understatement. The eldest in our group was 75 years old. Two women came on board with their walking sticks, and another two are now getting ready to have their knees replaced. Yet all of us drew strength from each other's indomitable spirit. Grandmothers all, we had made up our minds to have undiluted fun. Meena, who is nudging 70, came to the station from the hospital where she had

been admitted with excruciating pain in her stomach. She had brought along 'the baby of the group', 25 year-old Anusha, who was completely in awe of the remarkable spirit of all the silvers. Sulochana, in her late 60s, joined the group on just 24 hours' notice when another silver opted out because of high fever.

The fun started right after we met at Secunderabad station. The train to Chennai started on time and so did the *antakshari*! From Chennai, we flew to Port Blair where we were booked at the TSG Emerald Hotel. After freshening up we stood by the Rajiv Gandhi Water Sports Complex, savouring our first breathtaking view of the Bay of Bengal. Though everything about the trip was memorable, some aspects stand out brighter in my memory. Like the spirit of the remarkable women who were my travel companions. Our camaraderie and acceptance of each other, were truly heartfelt. Second, the place—Andamans—and all that it has meant and continues to mean. As a soldier's wife, I am always moved by tales of valour and patriotism. The sound-and-light show at the Cellular Jail brought a huge lump to my throat and soon the tears started flowing freely. When I looked around me, I found I was not the only one. Third, Havelock Island—with Radhanagar Beach and Elephant Beach—was straight out of paradise.

Initially I hesitated to try snorkelling but my roommate Sulochana urged me to give it a shot. Those 10 minutes



Khanna's all-women escapade

underwater—filled with stunning colours—will remain vivid in my memory. I tried sketching but I could not match the gorgeous colours of nature. Was it aquamarine, turquoise, green or a pale lemon...? I still wonder. Maybe I will go back some day with just my easel and colours for company.

—Shyamola Khanna, Hyderabad



Dr Jane

Barratt

Community design:

Responding to the needs of all age groups together

My brothers, sisters and I grew up in Carlisle, Western Australia. In the locality, we knew all our neighbours; the Carrolls, the Opies and the Tames, as well as the Busings. It was a community made up of all age groups. These families provided a network of friends and support systems. There was a sense of belonging and an intuitive support mechanism among us all.

Now, about 40 years later, there is a growing body of literature about 'communities for all ages'. Founders of the concept in the US define it as a lifespan approach to community building that can be used by them to:

- address critical issues from a multi-generational, cross-sector perspective
- improve the well-being of people at every life stage
- change community norms to reflect a sense of shared fate and collective responsibility for the well-being of all residents.

A community for all ages confronts the age-specific 'silos' that create artificial generation barriers. It makes sense, given an increasing proportion of older and younger populations in many communities, along with a dramatically increased demand for services and supports. The idea of working together across generations seems to have new resonance.

The potential of both older adults and youth to make significant contribu-

tions to their communities is great. However, these two groups are often seen as problems and not resources. This view is compounded by the age-segregated framework in which most communities operate. Solutions to chronic social problems elude discovery because each problem is addressed by agencies focused on age-specific rather than community solutions.

Existing community building efforts in many countries reinforce the age-segregated approach by focusing on creating either 'elder-friendly' or

We all have the capacity to respond to the needs of those around us. Ironically, we now need to restart knowing our neighbours through government schemes

'youth-friendly' places to live. This encourages competition for scarce resources, diminishes human connectedness, and squanders valuable sources of social capital. Even the most longstanding and widely adopted programmes address discrete problems, not the system that is the root cause.

Most advocates for children, youth, and older adults have not yet recognised the need to come together as allies to develop a comprehensive, shared agenda. Although there are a growing number of programmes that bring

generations together to address specific needs, these cannot be sustained unless they are embedded in communities that embrace policies, practices, and partnerships that are lifespan-focused and promote interdependence.

The whole world is grappling with the prospect of an increasing number of silvers, some who will require great care as they live to older ages and others who are relatively healthy and mobile. At the same time, effective government policy and well-funded programmes are either not available or cannot keep up with the pace of demographic change.

How will this impact people in India? To answer this, let us explore different models of 'communities for all ages' and learn how some of the principles and processes can be used in your community.

Communities for All Ages - The US

The Communities for All Ages (CFAA) concept was developed by Dr Nancy Henkin, executive director of the Temple University Centre for Intergenerational Learning, in 1999. It envisions communities as good places for growing up and growing older.

Ajo in Arizona is part of the national network with a remarkable story to tell. It is a small, rural town with a population of 3,705, located 10 miles west of the Tohono O'odham Nation and 40 miles north of the State of Sonora, Mexico. Its key town assets include being the gateway to the pristine Sonoran Desert; beautiful historic buildings and town centre; and a rich cultural diversity. Once a thriving

copper mining town, Ajo was economically devastated when the mine closed in 1985. Today, the tax base is still only one-fourth of what it was in 1980 and 23 per cent of its residents live in poverty.

Since 2005, though, the CFAA team has successfully leveraged the strengths of residents across the lifespan to make Ajo a great place to grow up and grow old. The broad strategy has been to use the power of the arts to bring people together across cultures and generations. The community hosts festivals and celebrations, sponsors arts and cultural crafts workshops, and brings public art to its citizens. Several large historic buildings in the area have been renovated, restoring vital hubs for intergenerational and multicultural engagement and interaction in the town. These permanent institutional anchors include an award-winning artisan live/work project surrounded by a community, cultural and learning centre created on the vacant 7.5-acre Curley School campus for all ages. Work to restore Ajo's historic town plaza and park as a vibrant multicultural and multigenerational town centre has also commenced.

Imagine a community that has:

- Policies, facilities and public spaces that foster stimulating interaction across generations
- Strong social networks of all ages and cultures
- Opportunities for lifelong civic engagement and learning
- Diverse and affordable housing and transportation options that address changing needs
- A physical environment that promotes healthy living and the wise use of natural resources
- An integrated system of accessible

health and social services that support individuals and families across the life course.

Project 'Surprise'

Interfaith Community Care, the City of Surprise, Rio Salado College and Dysart School District received a planning grant from the Arizona Community Foundation to create a CFAA. Community members (government, police and fire, not-for-profit organi-



sations, businesses, education institutions, and individuals—young and old) have partnered to identify the various ways to build a strong, healthy and vibrant community.

A survey of 100 residents (ages 15 to 78) revealed that the youth were really interested in finding a place where young and old have access to each other and learn from each other. The elders were interested in how to get connected using the Internet. The surveys also indicated that volunteer and job opportunities were vital and transportation to get to these activities was important for young as well as older people.

When asked where they see Surprise in four years, the overwhelming response was to ensure a community for all ages with five main projects:

- To create a city to be proud of
- Intergenerational career, education, and mentorship opportunities
- Physical and digital interconnectivity for all
- Leveraging resources through community partnerships
- Celebrating arts and culture that's relevant for all ages.

For more information, you can check out the 'Community for All Ages – Surprise' on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/pages/Community-for-All-Ages-Surprise/110428002161

The case for change in Britain

In Great Britain, communities have an important role in helping to challenge the stereotypes that surround older people purely as dependents and strengthen the bonds between generations. Many people in later life have rich experiences to share, having been teachers, volunteers, or even serving in the armed forces. Equally, there is a huge diversity in this age group, with people from different ethnic backgrounds, and a variety of aspirations. Breaking down these rigid stereotypes will help us benefit from the array of contributions that older people can make.


From time to time, it seems we are recreating something that existed many decades ago; something that was discarded as old-fashioned, out of date and, perhaps, even a little archaic. We have the capacity as individuals and community to respond to the needs of those around us, and with the development of programmes and services to support the concept of community once again, we need to know our neighbours.

Dr Jane Barratt is Secretary General, International Federation on Ageing



COVER FEATURE

THE COLOURS IN HER LIFE



Actor, activist and a poet's muse, 81 year-old Shaukat Azmi's life has been a vibrant palette of politics, theatre, literature, cinema and popular culture, as Meeta Bhatti discovers

If the colour of her Gadwal sari is described as anything other than *zafrani*, it wouldn't get Shaukat Kaifi noticing the one eulogising her choice of wardrobe. Saffron is too English and that's not how Hyderabad, her city of birth, celebrated colours. Hyderabad, despite the feudal rule of the Nizam, was the city that nurtured her ambitions to be free and fiery. When she did get that opportunity on marrying legendary poet Kaifi Azmi, Shaukat Kaifi gave herself completely, selflessly, to a movement that almost flung her into penury—the only colour that stayed with her then was red. The Communist Party, of which Kaifi Azmi was a member, led her to carve a niche for herself as a radio and theatre artist. Her parallel relationship with Kaifi Azmi's world gave her a world view that only destiny can bestow on the most privileged. The return to a many-hued world was unhurried, shifting moods with Kaifi Azmi's failure and success in Hindi films. In 2004, two years after the poet's demise, Shaukat Azmi published *Yaad ki Rehghuzar*, the story of her life with 'an unusual man'. Today, she is happy that the book has been translated into English (***Kaifi & I*; Zubaan; 165 pages; Rs 295**) as well, after Hindi, Marathi and Japanese. As much her own person as Kaifi Azmi's wife, and mother and creative force behind actor Shabana and cinematographer Baba, she helped blend politics with literature, cinema and popular culture. And she blazed a trail with her work with Prithvi Theatre and acclaimed cinematic performances in *Garam Hawa*, *Umrao Jaan*, *Bazaar* and *Salaam Bombay*. Shaukat Azmi proudly looks back, and ahead....

Urdu scholar late Dr Ralph Russell says in the foreword of *Kaifi and I*, "Not every good person is a communist and not every communist is a good person." But here you were—a good person who was not a member of the Communist Party, and a communist (Kaifi Azmi) who was a fantastic person, worthy of a

book. Where does it leave you today without him?

He had taken up communism to provide people with basic facilities, to have their children educated, to give them roofs over their heads. Today, after over six decades of independence, people still sleep on pavements. I miss him a lot. I spent 55 years with a man who never addressed me with an informal *tu*; he always addressed me with a more respecting *aap*. He was such an extraordinary and remarkable man that, if I even write 10 more books on him, I wouldn't be able to praise him enough. In this book, on every page, there is only his colour. I started the book to write about my native place Hyderabad, a city of fascinating colours. Names of colours here sounded more exotic than anywhere else in India—*pyazi* [pink from onion], *katthae* [brown from *paan* or betel leaf's *kattha*], *turai ke phool ka rang* [yellow from bottle gourd's flowers], *kahi* [bottle green], *sandali* [beige from sandalwood], *morkanthi ka rang* [turquoise from the peacock's crown]. I wanted to write how beautiful Hyderabad was, but my pen leaned on its own towards Kaifi. And I couldn't avoid that—I was so drenched in his colour. He was such a lovable companion...I tend to cry when I think about him. Kaifi never spoke harshly or rudely. In late 1976, he fractured his hipbone while tackling the stairs of a hotel and had to lie flat on his back for four months. To this day, I marvel at his resilience. Every morning he would say, 'Shaukat, thank goodness, another day has passed.'

I helped him stand up again, but instead of taking it easy he decided to go back to his village Mijwan in Uttar Pradesh. His distant relatives had taken over his land so he asked me to get a room built for him. We constructed a room and toilet and later expanded it. There was no gas or electricity there. When I cooked in a pressure cooker, women would come and ask, giggling,

if a train was coming to the village. With help from the government, Kaifi got a road made, and opened a school for kids. His participation in making his village self-sufficient continued for close to three decades and he made a college for girls, establishing a society for vocational training for them. Electricity came and, later, so did television. Now Shabana helms the work in Mijwan. He was indeed an extraordinary man.

Did you ever imagine that a resurrection of your memories of life with Kaifi *sahib* will one day be translated into so many languages—Urdu, Hindi, Marathi, Japanese and now English?

I was born to a well-provided family—we had a car and telephone then. At 19, I married Kaifi with only my father by our side; we married against the wishes of my family. *Kaifi & I* is about the selflessness of our life in the commune with members of the Communist Party. I lived with them and overcame so many of my drawbacks. It's the story of an era and how it's never going to be the same. The speciality of the book is its truthfulness. Shabana and Javed Akhtar, my son-in-law, had first said that it is so interesting that it will undoubtedly be well-accepted. I used to stay in my room, listen to music and read books. But they got me out, especially Shabana, with this book. It was appreciated in Urdu, yet I was so surprised when I was approached for approval to translate it into Marathi and Japanese. Today, eight universities in the US have the book in their libraries.

Would you like to see it adapted into a film?

At the release of the English translation in February, some people asked me who I would like to see as pro-

tagonists if the book were to be made into a film. I said, if that were the case, Sonam Kapoor should play Shaukat and Abhishek Bachchan, Kaifi. Sonam has a certain innocence about her and looks like I did when I was young. And Abhishek has the naughtiness that was on Kaifi's face.

The humour you found in mundane things and conversations...do you think there's scope for that *dillagi* (fun and frolic) in today's life?

Not at all. After Kaifi and I married, one Sunday afternoon, I wanted to see a film. Kaifi agreed, regardless of the fact that he only had Rs 2 and 8 *anna* in his pocket. Chetan Anand's film *Safar* was playing at Roxy Cinema on Charni Road [Mumbai], which was a mile away from where we lived. We walked to the cinema and bought two tickets for Re 1 and 4 *anna* each.

The revival of Indian theatre can't hinge on monetary funds from a select few people. It's the government's responsibility. Or if someone gets as interested as Prithviraj ji's family, a revival may happen

During the intermission, I felt thirsty, but in those days all public taps were turned off in the afternoon. On a footpath, an old woman sat with an earthenware pot, selling water at 2 paisa a glass. Kaifi asked me to go drink water and tell the woman that I was getting money from my husband and run off. For many years, whenever we passed Opera House, he would remind me that the old woman was waiting for my 2 *anna*. Today, women wouldn't consider a man with 2 paisa in his pocket a great companion. Girls in this day and age are so educated and liberal that they ask for their freedom and rights first, but men are not progressive yet. They are backward and want them to stay at home and look after their kids and house.

Shaukat Azmi, the actor, has always believed that her work would speak for itself and has treated the whole world as her stage: (Clockwise from left) As the glamorous Khanam Jaan in *Umrao Jaan* (1982) directed by Muzaffar Ali; a picture of domesticity with Balraj Sahni in M S Sathyu's *Garam Hawa* (1973); as the old fixer Chuhia Begum in Muzaffar Ali's *Anjuman* (1985); as the madam of the brothel with Nana Patekar in Mira Nair's *Salaam Bombay* (1998)

Do you see any reflection of the joy and expectancy of the era gone by; or the same love and commitment?

We have vanquished our own culture. I feel exasperated when kids don't talk in Urdu. 'Hi' and 'bye', and they are off. At the same time I am joyous every day of my life because my children are very honest. Baba is with Tanvi, a gem of a person. Shabana and Javed are remarkable people. I see Javed as the image of Kaifi. He is like my son. His attitude to even his domestic help is amazing. He bought a house for one of them when his daughter was of school-going age. And when the help's rela-

tive came to work for us, he promised to buy one for him as well when his child turned two. This culture is not prevalent in the younger generation. I also find that it's hard for them to be good companions to their spouses—now they get married and divorced in six months. The romance we were so proud of is missing.

Nothing is the same. Not even film songs. Even Javed is sometimes baffled with the demands young directors make of him. And film actresses... if they dressed better they would look more beautiful. I might sound conservative but I am not. In fact, I was always ahead of the times. When we were growing up, we weren't allowed to look out of the window. Though





Shaukat and Kaifi Azmi at their 25th wedding anniversary with son Baba and daughter Shabana

I started the book to write about my native place Hyderabad, a city of fascinating colours. But my pen leaned on its own towards Kaifi. And I could not avoid that—I was so drenched in his colour

my father never asked my mother or any of us sisters to wear a *burqua*, not all men felt like he did. I was 14 and selected and coloured my own *dupatta*. Before wearing one around my neck, I used to crush it so its wrinkles wouldn't open. And when an aunt passed a nasty comment, I wished she were dead. I was against my environment. And so are today's girls. I think times don't remain the same. They are forever changing. You can't stop life from flowing and finding a new path for itself.

Having been part of communist life, how do you see and deal with the philosophy today?

It started with Russia. When Russia

broke, the communist *nizam* broke. I am hopeful the future will be better. But today's environment is such that we seem to be going nowhere.

Do you feel that there are too few theatres like Prithvi considering the growing number of theatre lovers?

Papaji, as Prithvirajji was called, ran Prithvi Theatre on meagre funds. The company made a profit on tour, but in Bombay it ran at a loss because not many people go to the theatre on a Sunday morning. After a three-hour show, he would stand at the door waiting for the audience to make a contribution as they were leaving the theatre. The money collected went to the Theatre Workers' Fund and

was given to needy artists as a loan. Today, cinema has adopted all of us. An interesting medium, theatre could equally reflect today's poverty, travails, hardships and raise its voice against it. However, now it is in need of help. The revival can't hinge on monetary help from a few select people. It's the government's responsibility. Or if someone gets as interested as Prithvirajji's family, a revival may happen.

Do you still believe that Prithviraj Kapoor's beliefs about acting are prevalent—and relevant—in this day and age?

Papaji practiced the Stanislavski method of acting. Time and again, he would tell us, "You should inhabit your character so completely that if your heart is ripped open, it should be found beating like that of the character you are portraying." Recently, I

heard lot of praise for *Paa*. I watched it and have become such a fan of Amitabh Bachchan. I was always a great fan of him and have seen most of his films. But I didn't realise he was an actor of such calibre. I can't see Amitabh in that role in *Paa*.

***Kaifi & I* is distinctly the voice of a woman living amid poetry, letters, spaces and conversations. Do you find scope for these things in modern-day society?**

Legendary poet [Mirza] Ghalib died 150 years ago. His letters gave us the atmosphere of his Delhi. I am glad to have saved all of Kaifi's letters. The art of writing letters died a silent death with technology. I wish I could look into the future and tell of its return some day. Today, there's only the phone. The last time I went to Hyderabad was about five years ago. It's the phone that helps me stay in touch with my family there. Also rare today are books in Urdu. The few that I get to read are the ones that my friends and Javed receive from Pakistan. And so is poetry. I like Javed's poetry the most. When he had left home, he wrote a *nazm* titled *Bhookh*; about how it is when one goes hungry for three days—it moves me to tears. In his *shaiyari* I can see a reflection of poets of my times.

Please share one of your favourites with us.

*Zindagi naam hai kuch lamhon ka
Aur unmein bhi wohi ek lamha
Jisme do bolti aakhein
Chai ki pyali se jab utthein
To dil mein doobein
Doob ke dil mein kahein
Aaj tum kuch na kaho
Aaj main kuch na kahoon
Bas yun hi baithey raho
haath mein haath liye
Gam ki saugaat liye
Garmiye jazbaat liye
Kaun jaane ki isi lamhe mein
Duur parbat pey kahin
barf pighalne hi lage
It's by Kaifi Azmi.*

EXCERPT FROM *KAIFI & I*



Kaifi cared for working people and the destitute, and had a firm belief in communism. He always carried his party membership card in his briefcase and would often take it out, saying with great pride, 'This is my most precious capital.' The objective of his life was to change the world, to banish poverty, hunger and ignorance. But he understood that to change the whole world would take a very long time, so he turned instead to answer the call of his village, where he did indeed achieve a huge transformation....

Kaifi had created the Mijwan Welfare Society and built its offices on his own land. He had ceiling fans installed in every room. That night all four fans were stolen and there was mayhem in the village. I was really angry and raised my voice loud enough for all to hear, 'I don't understand why Kaifi wants to kill himself working for such ungrateful people.' Kaifi remained silent. Shabana, who is more impatient than her father, asked him, 'Abba don't you get frustrated when the change you are struggling for doesn't occur at the pace you'd like it to?' Kaifi answered her with equanimity, 'Betey, when you are working for change, you should build into your expectation the possibility that the change might not occur within your lifetime, but if you carry on regardless, change

will come, even if it does so after you are gone. Then, how can there be room for frustration?'

Kaifi was a grand human being. I have never seen a more gracious man. I do not think there could be a more befitting epitaph for Kaifi than Jadu's poem.

He Was an Unusual Man

He was an unusual man
He was a melody of love; he was
a rebel's song
At times he was fire, at other
times a flower
He was an unusual man
To the poor he would say
Bad time can pass away
To the tyrants he would say
The gold crowns on your heads
Can one day melt away
To rules he would say
I can break you
To comforts he would say
I can forsake you
To the winds he would say
I can turn you
To a dream he would say
I'll make you come true
To hopes he would say
I am your companion
I'll wake with you, however
arduous the journey
I'll never tire
To life he would say
I'll adorn you
Ask me for the moon
I'll bring the moon to you
To people he would say
You must love humanity
You must save the earth
It is wasting away
He was an unusual man
To all obstacles he would say
I'll triumph over you
One day, all trace of you will
be erased
The world will forget you
But my story stands apart
In eyes that have dreams in them
In hearts that have hope in them
In arms with strength in them
On lips with words on them
I'll live after I fade away
He was an unusual man.

Javed Akthar
Mumbai, 20 July 2002

Two right feet!

Rajashree Balaram cheers silvers who dare to dance to the tune in their heart

In December 2009, one of the most watched people on popular video-hosting website *YouTube.com* was 75 year-old Sarah Jones, a petite grandmother from Stourbridge in Britain who had won the TV contest *Tu Si Que Vales* (You're Worth It), the Spanish equivalent of the UK talent show *Britain's Got Talent*. Jones beat hundreds of participants to take home the cash prize of € 10,000 after performing a vigorous salsa number with her partner—40 years her junior—on the show. Later, Jones shared with media that she had moved to Valencia in Spain six years ago to enjoy a quiet retirement with her husband David. When David passed away, she decided to stay in Spain instead of moving back to Britain, and signed up for salsa classes to come to terms with her loss and life.

Jones's story would not have been half as riveting if she had won the competition at 30. What makes her feat so compelling is that she jumped and swivelled and gyrated at an age when most people expected her to

sit back and watch her grandchildren bang their heads to hard rock. Jones is dazzling proof that, when it comes to dance, more than any limitations placed by our bodies, it's the inhibitions in our mind that are more daunting. And lest you think grooving in one's silver years is a Western phenomenon, you would be surprised to know—as were we—that more and more elders in India are swaying to the beat to stay fit.

Diana, 55, has been learning dance at the Lourd Vijay's Dance Studio in Bengaluru for the past year. Separated from her spouse, she lives life on her own terms. "Though my friends and family have only been encouraging, I am someone who never lets the world have much of a say in what I should do with my life," affirms Diana, who teaches mentally challenged children. She first took up dance 10 years ago to understand the fluidity of movement to be able to better communicate it to her wards. However, she attended classes intermittently and often gave up owing to some reason or another. Last year, she signed up all over again

and has been more committed. "To me, dance is both energising and relaxing," says Diana. "And I get to match steps with my son who is also a salsa dancer." *Harmony* spoke to her just a week after she had been discharged from hospital following a virulent bout of fever. Needless to say, she was back on her toes—and twirling—at her twice weekly session of Latin American dance.

Indeed, there is something therapeutic about dance, and maybe a lot of it has to do with the sheer sense of abandon—the opportunity to focus on that place in our heart where we are able to touch base with who we truly are, devoid of social pressures and conditioning. Dance therapy, though it may sound esoteric, is steadily gaining credence all over the world. It is best described as the psychotherapeutic use of movement and dance for emotional, social, behavioural and physical well-being. Delhi-based choreographer and dance therapist Tripura Kashyap strongly recommends dance as a perfect exercise for elders.

Continued on Page 30

Meera Sheth, 53

SURAT

A diehard optimist and spirited silver, Meera Sheth is learning ballroom dancing, jive, salsa and cha-cha-cha. Mother of two sons—aged 23 and 20—Sheth and her architect husband Bharat, 56, signed up for dance classes last year. "It doesn't take much for me to break into a jig," says Sheth, who is a qualified special educator. According to her, "The silver years are the best time to get back to everything we gave up to look after our family." Sheth has always loved dancing and is a keen participant at Navaratri dance festivals. She and Bharat

are avid party-goers and often throw parties, the theme for which are always "dance, music and lots of laughter". "Dance is an enjoyable way to burn calories and having to remember the exact sequence of steps helps me sharpen my memory," says Sheth who often unwinds at home with her husband by grooving to their favourite Western pop and Bollywood numbers—"I love the peppy pub song from *Karthik Calling Karthik*." Her choice of songs mirrors her sunny, hyperactive personality. Does she get upset when she is not able to pick up complicated dance moves as quickly as the younger students in class? "I just have to try harder and it always works out," she responds with nonchalance. Inspiring words for those who think it's too late to shake a leg.

—Rajashree Balaram



Kashyap worked closely with a group of 25 silvers between the ages of 70 and 90 at a seniors' home in Bengaluru for seven months. When she started out, most complained of aching knee joints, a bent back and gnarled stiff fingers. "I simply told them they were participating in a muscle toning programme to dispel any inhibitions that they might have had about dancing," says Kashyap. Painstakingly, she persevered in helping them discover their innate rhythm. She made them sit on a chair and move their arms and necks to a sequence of steps. Slowly, they graduated to holding a ball in their hands and moving it in circles; playing musical chairs; and then gathering in a circle and performing a group dance. At the end of the programme, Kashyap noted significant improvement in the mental and physical wellbeing of the silvers. "The social interaction of matching each other's steps, learning from each other's mistakes and participating in a shared rhythm improved their sense of balance and coordination and changed their outlook towards life, and themselves," she recounts. "Initially they were quite unnerved by the thought of movement, but by the end of it they were looking forward eagerly to the sessions." Kashyap is saddened that there are no dance classes that focus on dance for the elderly. "Most dance classes are all about getting the technique right, but the elderly need dance movements that adapt to their bodies instead of the other way around," she believes. According to her there is no such thing as two left feet. "Each one of us has moved to our own individual rhythm since the time we were in our mother's womb."

So how late is too late when it comes to learning dance? The question seemed more and more redundant as we spoke to our nimble-footed silvers. "I learnt to dance at the age of 42," says Navnita Parmar who was first drawn to dance when she accompanied her prepubescent daughter to her Bharatanatyam dance class 20 years ago. "Instead of waiting for her outside the

class, I decided to join her," she says with a chuckle. Her daughter discontinued dancing after a few years but Parmar pursued it with a passion. She performed her *arangetram* when she was pushing 50. Today at 62, she runs a dance class for young children, many of whom are speech impaired. "I have never had to slow down my movement or pace because of age or fatigue," says Parmar. "Dancing has helped me stay fit and agile." *Harmony* has good reason to believe her—we were stunned by Parmar's dance recital at the Social Impact Awards programme hosted by Mumbai's S P Jain Institute of Management.

The elderly need dance movements that adapt to their bodies instead of the other way around

Though the invigorating aerobic movement is a good reason to take up dance, many silvers are doing it for unalloyed pleasure. "For me, dance is pure fun," says 67 year-old business consultant Sarosh Sanjana, who has been learning cha-cha-cha, salsa and rumba for the past three years at DanceSport India in Chowpatty, Mumbai. "It challenges me to push myself and pick up new moves, and gives me a great adrenalin rush." Sanjana has been organising dance classes at the Bombay Gymkhana since last November. He also plays the harmonica as part of the live band that plays there every week. "Often my daughter and I jive together at the club."

Besides the fun quotient, think about the physical fitness you stand to gain. A study conducted at the University of Minnesota revealed that a regular dance regimen improved systolic blood pressure, balance, kinaesthetic awareness, and decreased arthritic discomfort, neuromuscular hypertension and low back pain. And it can even heal the mind. For 50 year-old

Chandrakant Khapre who lost his wife to cancer, dance offered an outlet to cope with grief and loss.

On the other hand, for architect Umesh Pachigar, 60, dance is a wonderful pursuit to keep the spark alive in his marriage. Pachigar and his wife Shubha, 54, are successful architects who lead hectic lives crammed with blueprints of hotels and apartments. "As we hardly get to spend time with each other we decided to take up a hobby that we both enjoyed; and we both love dancing," says Pachigar. It's been three years since the couple joined a dance class in suburban Mumbai. Pachigar remembers feeling a little shy partnering with young students at the classes as most of them were the age of his children, both of whom are in their 20s and studying abroad. "It took me a while to loosen up but then I realised I had nothing to lose if I let go of my inhibitions," says the busy silver who has now moved to Level 11 in his class. (Level 13-14 is considered to be the top league.) "It feels good when I can match pace with someone 30 years younger." The bonus: he lost 9 kg after taking up dance.

The most common hurdle that silvers face when they consider dancing is their deterrent inner voice that flings out the wrong questions: Is this the right thing to do at my age? Won't I look clumsy? Will I be able to keep pace? Pune-based dance instructor Rocky Poonawala has an encouraging answer: "I find my older students more disciplined than the younger ones. Younger students tend to be impatient but, even if they take longer to get the sequence right, the older ones stick around and manage to perfect it." He recommends ballroom dancing such as cha-cha-cha and meringue as the best choices for silvers who are keen to take up dance, though he insists that there are no hard and fast rules. *Harmony* urges you not to take too long to make up your mind. It's not how you dance that really matters. It's how much you enjoy doing it that will make all the difference.

P K Dutta, 57

CHANDIGARH

On 19 March, the dance academy where P K Dutta learnt the salsa two years ago celebrated its second anniversary—Dutta made sure he was there “to dance with the kids”. A manager with State Bank of India in Panchkula, he was a keen dancer in his college years when he participated in youth dance festivals. Today he enjoys all dance forms: Indian, Western, and fusion. “My wife Uma and I are known as ‘the dancing couple’ in our circle, as we both enjoy dancing at parties and weddings,” says Dutta, who has no qualms about being the first to hit the dance floor during such occasions.

Five years ago, when he was posted in Karnal, he and his wife won the best dancer couple prize at a New Year’s Eve party for two consecutive years. Though his wife also signed up at the same dance class, these days she feels a bit conscious about dancing because of her age. Dutta, however, doesn’t share the sentiment.

“Frankly, I don’t remember or care about my age when I hit the dance floor,” he says. “The older I grow, the more I enjoy dancing.” At his son’s wedding *sangeet* ceremony two years ago, Dutta’s uninhibited moves won him many compliments from the guests. “Music is all I need to get grooving!”

—Vandana Shukla



Sant Advani, 64

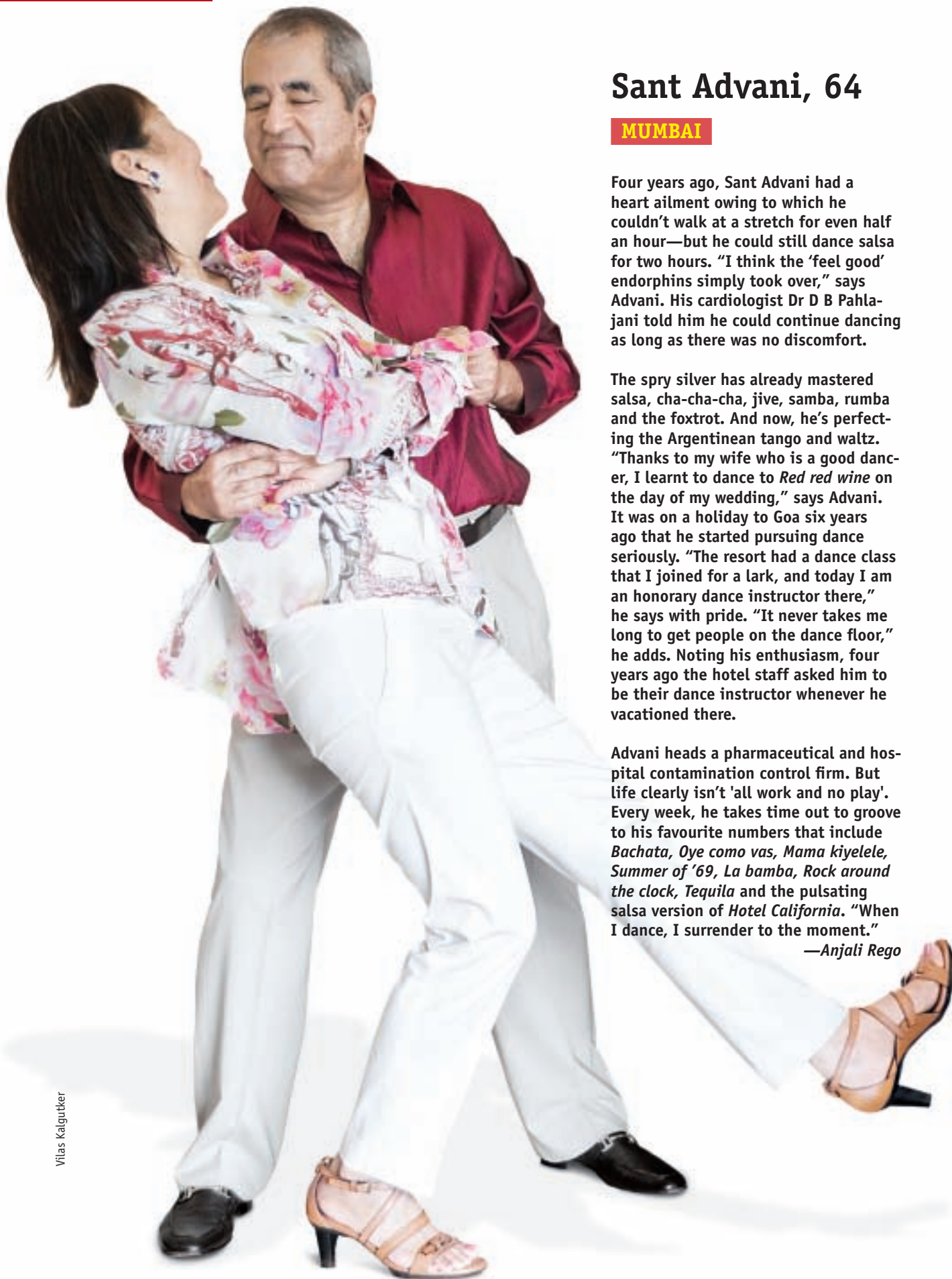
MUMBAI

Four years ago, Sant Advani had a heart ailment owing to which he couldn't walk at a stretch for even half an hour—but he could still dance salsa for two hours. "I think the 'feel good' endorphins simply took over," says Advani. His cardiologist Dr D B Pahlajani told him he could continue dancing as long as there was no discomfort.

The spry silver has already mastered salsa, cha-cha-cha, jive, samba, rumba and the foxtrot. And now, he's perfecting the Argentinean tango and waltz. "Thanks to my wife who is a good dancer, I learnt to dance to *Red red wine* on the day of my wedding," says Advani. It was on a holiday to Goa six years ago that he started pursuing dance seriously. "The resort had a dance class that I joined for a lark, and today I am an honorary dance instructor there," he says with pride. "It never takes me long to get people on the dance floor," he adds. Noting his enthusiasm, four years ago the hotel staff asked him to be their dance instructor whenever he vacationed there.

Advani heads a pharmaceutical and hospital contamination control firm. But life clearly isn't 'all work and no play'. Every week, he takes time out to groove to his favourite numbers that include *Bachata, Oye como vas, Mama kiyelele, Summer of '69, La bamba, Rock around the clock, Tequila* and the pulsating salsa version of *Hotel California*. "When I dance, I surrender to the moment."

—Anjali Rego



A full-length photograph of Dr. Jayashree Rana, a 60-year-old woman, captured in a dynamic dance pose. She is wearing a vibrant orange and green floral kurta paired with a matching orange shawl and large, puffed orange trousers. Her hands are pressed together in a prayer-like gesture, and her legs are spread wide in a powerful stance. She is looking towards the camera with a slight smile.

Dr Jayashree Rana, 60

NEW DELHI

Encouragement and a shared love for rhythm with husband Ajit made it possible for 60 year-old Dr Jayashree Rana to dream about “dancing on stage just once”—a dream that came true when she performed at Ashley Lobo’s dance festival at Delhi’s Siri Fort in December 2000. “I wore a red miniskirt with black tights and top!” says the vivacious sexagenarian. Earlier that year, she joined Lobo’s jazz classes where her younger daughter Sapna was a professional instructor. Learning with students ranging from 15 to 60 years of age made her feel young once again. She also picked up salsa at home. “I love any form of dance,” she says. “The movements give me a sense of freedom and help bring out myself.”

Dancing is not just fun but also a great stress-buster for her. Never losing a chance to party and dance, she particularly enjoys Michael Jackson numbers like *Black or white* and Hindi pop. “It gives me a high that even alcohol doesn’t.” Her body moves automatically to the rhythm of any music playing in the house, any time of the day. “My husband enjoys watching me but the domestic help tend to get shocked at times!” she says with a laugh. Though her daughters Sangeeta and Sapna have been supportive, they also tend to get a bit nervous because of her knee pain—a problem she has successfully worked around by favouring her better leg while dancing. “I have osteoarthritis, so I just need to be careful while making sudden turns while dancing, but I cannot imagine giving up dancing,” says Rana. “I would never want to live a day when I cannot dance.”

—Anjana Jha

A photograph of an older man with grey hair and a mustache, wearing a light blue silk shirt and black trousers, dancing with a woman in a black dress. They are in a dance studio with large mirrors and a wooden floor. The man is smiling and looking towards the camera, while the woman is also smiling. In the background, other people are visible in the studio.

Valentine Ward, 66

BENGALURU

Valentine Ward retired as a physical trainer from the Baldwin Boys School six years ago. Dressed in his silk salsa shirt, he moves with fluid grace on the dance floor. The smoothness, of course, has come with six years of diligent study. At the age of 60, Ward signed up to learn dance at Lourd Vijay's Dance Studio in Bengaluru. Over the years, he has learnt cha-cha-cha, foxtrot, quickstep and waltz. At present, besides salsa, he also learns the samba and rumba. Though not a pub-crawler, Ward likes to drop by at Upbeat, a small pub in suburban Bengaluru that is known to play music from the 1960s and '70s. His wife Grace too enjoys dancing and the two often dance together at parties and weddings. "Every time, we hear *Can I have this last dance?*, Grace and I break into a dance, wherever we are," says Ward unabashedly. "My daughter Miracle, of course, thinks we're funny!" he adds with a laugh. Ward lets nothing inhibit him—not even the bypass surgery he had to undergo 16 years ago. "My heart is working just fine, maybe because I always carry my dancing shoes wherever I go," he signs off, promising to teach us if we are willing to make the time.

—Priya N

Harvest spread

A NEW SEASON AND THE BEGINNING OF A NEW CALENDAR FOR MANY, APRIL IS A MONTH OF CELEBRATION ACROSS THE COUNTRY. JOIN THE FESTIVITIES WITH **DR PUSHPESH PANT'S** PART-HEALTHY, PART-SINFUL RECIPES

Radhaballabhi

Green peas puff

Preparation time: 1 hour

Cooking time: 30 minutes

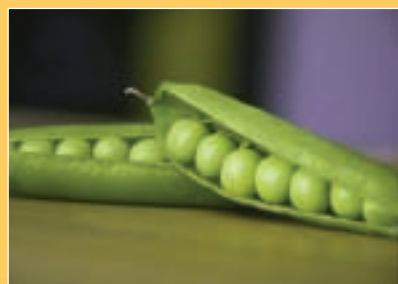
Serves: 6-8

INGREDIENTS

- Flour: 250 gm
- Shelled green peas: 250 gm
- Cumin seeds: 1 tsp
- *Garam masala*: 1 tsp
- *Amchoor*: 1 tsp
- Red chilly powder: ½ tsp
- Oil to shallow fry
- Salt to taste

METHOD

Heat a little oil in a pan and crackle cumin seeds in it. Add peas and cover. Cook till soft; sprinkle very little water if required. Sprinkle powdered spices along with salt. Sift the flour with salt and soda. Add 3 tbsp ghee and some water to knead into dough. Make small balls and flatten these between moist palms. Make a small hollow in the middle and pack these with equal portion of spicy peas. Reshape into tight balls and flatten again by pressing between palms. Heat oil and shallow-fry in convenient batches until golden. Drain excess oil on kitchen napkins.



FRESH FACT

Rich source of vegetable proteins, green pea pods are said to be heavy on the stomach in uncooked form. Its shoots can be added to salad for colour and flavour.





Jal Jeera

Cumin water

Preparation time: 20 minutes + soaking time

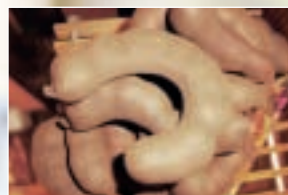
Serves: 6

INGREDIENTS

- Dried tamarind: About 100 gm
- Red chilly powder: ½ tsp
- Black salt: ½ tsp; ground
- Lemon juice: 2 tbsp
- Brown sugar: 1 tbsp; powdered
- Water: 6 glasses
- Cumin seed powder: ½ tsp
- Low sodium salt: just a pinch
- Lemon slices for garnishing: 6
- A few sprigs of fresh mint (ground)

METHOD

Soak tamarind in cold water for about two hours. Strain the liquid through a damp muslin cloth. Add all the ingredients to the liquid and combine in a blender or mix together with a whisk. Chill. Put some more black salt on a plate, wet the rims of six glasses and dip them upside down in the plate of salt, so the rims get coated. Pour in the *jal jeera* and put the lemon wedge on the edge of the glass, sideways. Serve with ice cubes.



FRESH FACT

Tamarind has its origins in Africa, though India made it its own centuries ago. Its unripe green pod can be eaten raw. Once ripe, its pulp can be put to medicinal and culinary use. Popular as a gentle laxative, it is useful in correcting various bilious disorders.



Vilas Kalgutker; FOOD STYLING: Anita Sarin

Anarse

Rice sesame patties

Preparation time: 1 hour

Cooking time: 1 hour

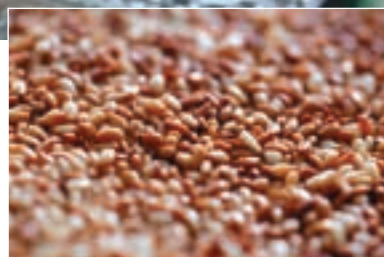
Serves: 6-8

INGREDIENTS

- Rice: 500 gm
- Sugar-free sweetener: 250 gm
- White sesame seeds: 50 gm
- Ghee for shallow frying

METHOD

Soak rice in water for 24 hours. Drain and dry before grounding to powder form. Mix with powdered sugar and keep aside. Heat some ghee in a pan. Shape the mixture into small round thin flat patties. Coat with sesame seeds on both sides to prevent the patties from breaking up while frying. Now, shallow-fry in batches.




FRESH FACT

One of the most well known oil seeds, sesame could be black, red or white. The black ones give out maximum oil, white seeds are rich in calcium and red in iron. All these are said to prevent piles.

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SIZE matters!

OBESITY IS A MAJOR RISK FACTOR FOR MANY LIFE-THREATENING CONDITIONS. DR PRADEEP CHOWBEY DISCUSSES THE LATEST TREATMENT OPTIONS

Defined as the accumulation of excess body fat, obesity is associated with the 3Ds: disease, disability and death. After smoking, it is the second leading cause of preventable death. Nearly 30 diseases have been linked to obesity, including T2DM (Type 2 diabetes mellitus), CAD (heart disease), stroke, COPD (lung disease), hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, osteoarthritis, deep venous thrombosis, sleep apnoea, and increased risk of cancer of the breast, colon, prostate, uterus and ovary. An obese person is also likely to suffer psychological, social, physical and economic co-morbidities. Prejudice and public ridicule often result in psychological illnesses like depression, which leads to escalating cost of treatment. These factors are multiplied manifold with advancing age.

COLLECTIVE CRISIS

Home to 20 per cent of the world's poor, India is, ironically, facing an obesity crisis. Labelled as the worst pandemic of the 21st century, it's likely to emerge as the single most public health problem in India. Studies to document the incidence of obesity in India reveal that 35 per cent or approximately 120 million people are seriously obese, with one in 10 urban children being obese. In Delhi, 45 per cent of men and 55 per cent of women suffer from obesity. Changing lifestyle is one of the most important causative factors. Increasingly, a sedentary lifestyle and practices like a high-fat diet with near total immobility post partum (following childbirth) result in rapid weight gain. The rising occurrence of obesity in children also increases the likelihood of a larger number of obese adults. Obesity is known to run in families, which implies a genetic predisposition. These genes cause greater fat storage with increased food intake and reduced energy expenditure. Hormonal disorders like hypogonadism, hyperthyroidism and Cushing's syndrome are also associated with obesity.

An alarming picture has emerged from these studies. The onset of obesity-related medical diseases like hypertension, T2DM and CAD in the Asian population occurs at much lower BMI values in comparison to the West.

QUANTIFYING OBESITY

Being overweight does not indicate that a person is suffering from obesity. It is necessary to determine the level at which excess weight becomes harmful by calculating the total body mass known as Body Mass Index (BMI). This is calculated by dividing the person's weight in kilograms with the square of height in metres. For example, if one's weight is 125 kg and height is 1.6 m, BMI will be calculated as $125 / (1.6 \times 1.6) = 48.8$

The obtained value analysed against standard Asian BMI guidelines will define excess weight:

BMI (kg/m ²)	Obesity
Less than 18.5	Underweight
18.5 – 22.9	Normal
23.0 – 27.4	Overweight
27.5 – 32.4	Pre-obese
32.5 – 37.5	Obese
More than 37.5	Morbidly obese

Another method to determine the degree of obesity is to calculate waist to hip ratio. The ideal ratio is 0.88 for Indian men and 0.8 for Indian women. Deleterious effects of obesity come into force when values exceed these limits.

TREATMENT OPTIONS

Like any disease, obesity has medical, physical, social and psychological ramifications. The implied medical costs for treating obesity and related co-morbidities add significant burden on the country's health budget. Early treatment and preventive measures to check escalating numbers is vital. Treatment for morbid obesity is to reduce excess weight with maximum safety and minimum side-effects; control co-morbidity; and long-term weight control.

It's a multi-factorial disease resulting from energy imbalance when energy intake is higher than energy output.

Hence treatment is directed at decreasing energy intake and increasing energy output. The treatment protocol is:

LIFESTYLE MODIFICATION

Diet & Exercise	when BMI < 23
Drugs	when BMI > 23, when lifestyle changes fail
Surgery	when BMI > 32.5 with co-morbidity/ BMI > 37.5

DIET

Lowering carbohydrate and/or fat content along with reduced size of each meal restricts caloric intake and decreases energy intake resulting in weight loss. A majority of patients regain weight (some even more than their previous weight) on stopping their new dietary regime.

EXERCISE

Though exercise works by increasing energy output, it cannot induce weight loss by itself. It tones the body and augments the weight loss effects of dietary restriction.

DRUGS

Certain drugs cause loss of appetite and decrease energy intake. Some commonly used drugs include Sibutramine, Orlistat, Phentermine, Bupropion and Metformin, with only the first three approved for long-term use. All drugs are associated with side-effects like nausea, bloating, oily stools, and flatulence. Drugs induce loss of only about 10 per cent of excess weight and may not be the answer for patients requiring greater weight loss.

BARIATRIC SURGERY

Technically known as bariatric surgery, obesity surgery is a new branch of surgical sciences to be introduced in India, though it has existed in the West for over half a century. Bariatric surgery has evolved and been refined over the past five decades. Today, it offers the most effective means of prophylaxis against life-threatening complications and severe degenerative problems of obesity.

Bariatric surgery provides the framework wherein the patient is able to follow dietary restrictions required for inducing and maintaining weight loss. Obesity surgery has two broad categories: surgery of restriction (gastric banding) and surgery of malabsorption (intestinal bypass).

GASTRIC BANDING

The procedure involves placing a band in the upper part of the stomach and dividing it into two sections, with a small opening to allow food to pass. The section above the band acts like the stomach. As it fills with food it stretches, sending out signals to the satiety centre of the brain. However,

this surgery only restricts quantity of food intake whereas weight loss requires regulation of quality too.

GASTRIC BYPASS

This procedure is both restrictive and malabsorptive. The restrictive element is about creating a small stomach pouch (15-20 ml) with stapling. The outlet from this newly formed pouch empties directly into the lower portion of the small intestine. A certain segment of the intestine being bypassed without any absorption forms the malabsorptive element. Ideal for inducing weight loss, its other advantages include improvement and even cure of diseases like diabetes mellitus, hypertension and metabolic syndrome.

SLEEVE GASTRECTOMY

This complicated procedure forms an extreme in the spectrum of bariatric surgeries and involves severe malabsorption. The original procedure recommended elimination of the gastric pylorus (the region of the stomach that connects to the duodenum) with rapid gastric emptying (dumping syndrome) to facilitate weight loss. However, recent advances enabling pylorus preservation (the BPD/DS procedure reduces the stomach along the greater curvature) have shown equally good results with a fall in the incidence of marginal ulcers and dumping syndrome.

All these procedures are performed by keyhole surgery with advantages like early recovery, less hospitalisation, minimal wound complications and better cosmesis (surgical correction). Bariatric surgery is not cosmetic surgery; it only helps treat co-morbidities consequential to obesity.

DIABETES AND METABOLIC SYNDROME

Obesity is a recognised cause of insulin resistance that leads to impaired glucose tolerance. By 2025 India is predicted to become the global capital for diabetes. This can be related to the rising incidence of obesity. The multiple diseases or co-morbidities associated with central obesity are termed the 'metabolic syndrome'. And despite aggressive management, current therapies fail to achieve satisfactory control in a majority of patients. Operations for morbid obesity have been seen to not only induce significant weight loss but have a significant impact on the course of the metabolic syndrome and T2DM. While resolution of all parameters of metabolic syndrome occurs dramatically in operated patients, resolution of diabetes occurs in more than 90 per cent of patients following gastric bypass surgery even before significant weight loss occurs.

Obesity is a real problem and can no longer be ignored. The first step is to acknowledge the existence of the problem. The second is to be aware that treatment is at hand.

Dr Pradeep Chowbey is joint MD and chief of surgery and allied surgical specialities at Max Healthcare, New Delhi

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Dr Anjali

Mukerjee

Bloating blues: Simple ways to tackle water retention

I suffer from excessive water retention and constantly feel bloated. Would reducing my water intake help or do I need to change my diet?

Medically called oedema, water retention is common among the elderly and can be a major hindrance in daily activities. Excess fluids leak from blood vessels like arteries and accumulate in body tissues. This leads to generalised swelling of the body or more localised swelling in legs, feet, ankles, hands, face, arms or even the lungs. A few causes of oedema are:

- High blood pressure (abnormal pressure in blood capillaries can result in abnormal exchange of fluids to and from body tissues).
- Heart failure (when the heart cannot pump blood fast enough to clear fluids from tissues).
- Kidney problems (it can cause large amounts of protein to be lost in urine and cause fluids to accumulate in tissues).
- Hormonal fluctuations and effect of drugs (it can cause substantial build-up of fluids in the body).
- Excessive intake of foods rich in salt and sugar.
- Nutritional deficiencies of B-complex vitamins and proteins, for example.

NATURAL DIURETICS

Nature has endowed certain foods with diuretic properties. They can be classified into potassium-rich foods and natural diuretic foods and herbs with high water content. Some of these are endowed with vital nutrients that help flush out excess water through the urinary tract.

- **Green tea** works as a natural diuretic.
- A glass of **cranberry juice** aids in the removal of excess fluids.
- **Fennel seeds** or *saunf* are believed to have a cooling and diuretic effect on the body when eaten in combination with sugar and water.
- Water-rich foods like **watermelon** and **cucumber** are naturally rich in sulphur and silicon that stimulate the kidney to function more effectively.
- **Asparagus** contains a chemical, asparagine, that boosts kidney performance and improves waste removal from the body.

- **Lettuce leaves** boost metabolism and flushing out of toxins.
- **Tomato** is rich in Vitamins C and A that boost metabolism and help release water from the kidneys to flush out waste.
- **Raw onion** and **radish** are powerhouses of sulphur compounds that rev up metabolism and flush out toxins.
- **Coconut water**, one of nature's best tonics, naturally cools the body and maintains electrolyte balance.
- **Foods rich in potassium** like tomato, yogurt, coconut water, cucumber juice and banana serve as natural diuretics as they help prevent water retention.

DIURETIC HERBS

Herbs that enhance the diuretic effect of kidneys also boost immune function, acting as antioxidant, antiviral, antibacterial and antiseptic agents.

- **Couch grass** or *durva* is highly recommended for its diuretic properties.



Nature has endowed certain foods with diuretic properties. They can be classified into potassium-rich foods and natural diuretic foods and herbs with high water content. Some of these are endowed with vital nutrients that help flush out excess water through the urinary tract

- **Uva ursi** (bearberry) contains antibiotic properties that fight urinary tract infection.
- **Parsley** is believed to increase the elimination of excessive water along with waste products like urea and other acidic metabolites.
- **Gokshura** is an excellent rejuvenating herb that supports efficient function of the urinary tract.

DIETARY GUIDELINES

The effect of these foods can be further enhanced by a lifestyle that supports efficient kidney function and prevents build-up of fluids in the tissues.

- Salt and sugar present in carbohydrate-rich food bind water and trap fluids within tissues. So, keep away from these two white poisons.
- Restrict salt and preservative-laden processed foods.
- Increase intake of fresh fruits and vegetables to add more potassium in your diet.
- Choose unsalted nuts over the salted version.
- Drink at least eight to 10 glasses of water to prevent fluid retention and make up for water lost through urine.
- Replace red meat and processed meat like sausages, frankfurters and ham with skinned chicken and fish to minimise intake of salt and harmful preservatives.
- Increase intake of fibre through wholegrain, fruits and vegetables to prevent build-up of toxins that promote water retention.
- Avoid cereals like rice and chapatti at night to keep water retention at bay. Eat them for breakfast or lunch.
- A 30-minute exercise or brisk walk thrice a week will prevent fluid accumulation.

A lifestyle that supports well-flushed kidneys works well for people suffering from symptoms of oedema.

Nutritionist Dr Anjali Mukerjee is the founder of Health Total, a nutrition counselling centre
Website: www.health-total.com



WEIGHT WATCH

DR JOE LEWIS ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS ON DIET, WEIGHT AND EXERCISE

Q I am a regular at the gym since 2008. Later this month, I have to undergo cataract surgery. How soon can I resume exercising and what exercises would be suitable? Please advise me.

A After cataract surgery, there is a natural anxiousness to get back to one's familiar routine of reading, watching TV, walking and other activities. Your doctor will advise you regarding the time frame—generally a few days—after which you could return to your normal schedule. Take it easy for a few more days until you have healed completely.

During the first few weeks, avoid jerky movements, aerobics, running, swimming or contact sports to help the healing process. Initially, begin with your walks or the treadmill or the elliptical trainer. Later, you can move on to aerobic exercises or gym workouts, but not swimming to avoid contracting an infection.

Consult your doctor when you decide to start working out. Instead of putting sudden strain or pressure on the eye, resort to resistance training using bands or the gym stick and don't lift weights for some time. Work out for about 20 minutes twice a day. You could do this for a while, as it is good for your abs, legs, and triceps. When you start weight training, make sure your gym instructor knows of your condition. Initially, do not bend past your waist or lift anything heavier than 4-5 kg. Gradually, lift higher weights as you progress.

If you play tennis or golf, ensure you are fit enough and eye coordination with fast-moving objects is well oriented. Increase your workouts to 30-40 minutes for three to five times a week. Resume your sporting activities after four to six weeks, or after a complete recovery. Returning to your pre-operative lifestyle is important to the quality of life you are enjoying.



Dr Joe Lewis is head of research and development at Kaya Life, a chain of professional weight-control centres (SMS Life to 54646)



If you have a question for Dr Mukerjee or Dr Lewis, write to contact.mag@harmonyindia.org



Shameem

Akthar

Brush off bad breath:

Combat halitosis with yoga

Halitosis or bad breath is a common problem that is often brushed under the carpet owing to the social embarrassment it causes. Incredibly enough, there are several yoga practices that can help us deal with the problem.

The source of bad breath is not always the mouth; it could originate from chronic conditions like acid reflux, sluggish digestion, diabetes, metabolic dysfunction, dehydration (a common cause as the bacterial build-up at the back of the tongue does not get washed away), obesity, addiction to certain types of foods (non-vegetarian food, cheese, alcohol), respiratory ailments, sinus infections and kidney problems. As yoga offers relief in such problems, it combats bad breath by rectifying the underlying issues. If a medical cause is established as the reason for halitosis, following a specific programme to deal with the cause can remove the effect.

YOGIC MOVES

Lion-roaring pose (*simhagarjāsana*)

This may be done seated or standing. Sit in any comfortable position, ideally the thunderbolt pose (*vajrasana*) where you kneel with your buttocks resting on the heels. If standing bend forward lightly, bending legs at the knees and placing hands on the thighs, fingers spread out. Inhale and exhale twice deeply. After the third inhalation, exhale forcefully, pushing the tongue out and down, eyes looking upwards, the body as taut as possible, stomach caved in and held firmly. The fingers should also become

taut if you are standing. Hold the pose for five seconds or five counts. Release and repeat a few times. The number of times you do this and the duration you hold the final pose may be increased with practice. Also, you can do it several times during the day.



The water hand gesture (*jal mudra*) and rain hand gesture (*varun mudra*) are said to increase the water element in the body, thus reducing the dehydration that helps bacteria thrive at the back of our tongue. A good way to start every day is the metabolic fire practice (*agnisara kriya*), which stokes metabolism and detoxifies the body. This largely takes care of the digestive and metabolic problems that trigger halitosis. Nasal cleansing (*jal neti*) is another powerful practice that clears the accumulation of debris along the nasal cavity: nasal infections or presence of debris is also said to cause halitosis.

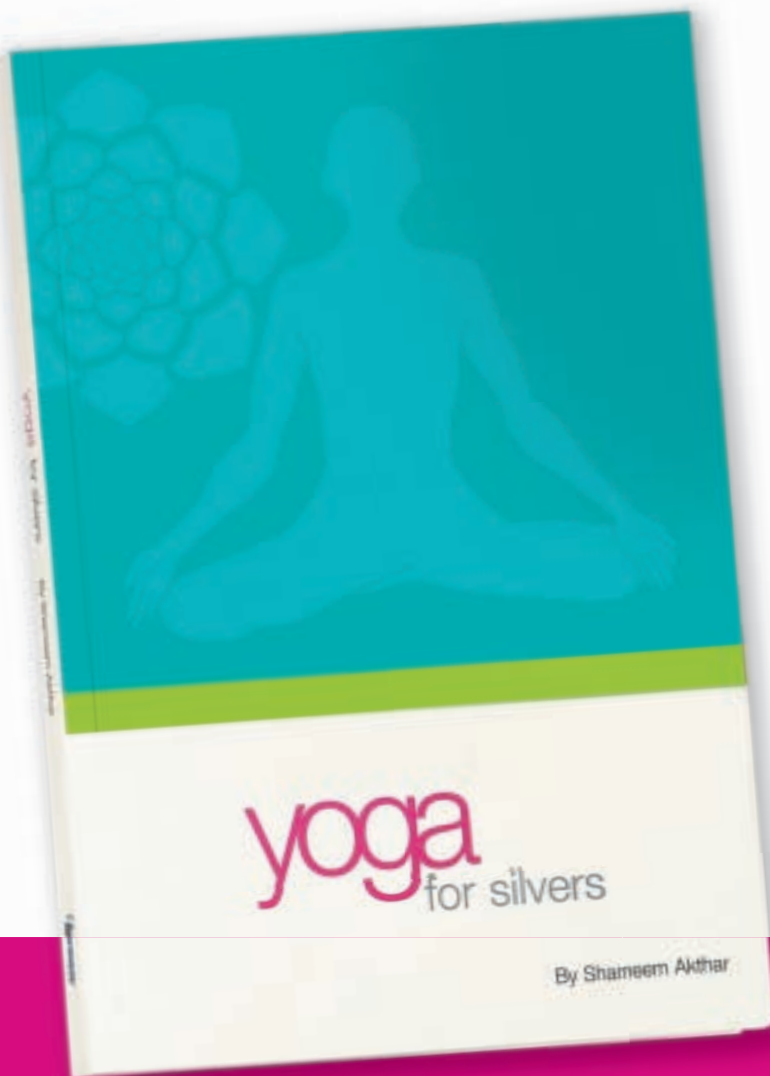
One of the most powerful practices to directly—and immediately—treat halitosis is the lion-roaring pose (*simhagarjāsana*). A similar practice is the goddess face pose (*kaliasana*). Also therapeutic are hydrating breathing practices (*pranayama*)—while cooling breath (*seetali*) and hissing breath (*seetkari*) ‘wash’ the tongue, the humming bee (*bhramari*) acts as a vacuum cleaner of the sinus cavities in the face.

Benefits: Other than offering relief in halitosis, this is one of the most complete, powerful and therapeutic poses that subtly works on the entire body and all organ systems. It is said to have a toggle effect. In inflammatory or feverish conditions, it can reduce the temperature of the body and in disturbingly cold conditions, it can hike body heat. It has a similar effect on blood pressure, upping it if it is low and lowering it if it is high. It has an incredible impact on the ear-nose-throat (ENT) region. It is also said to increase confidence and battle the effects of ageing by removing tension lines and wrinkles from the face.

Shameem Akthar is a Mumbai-based yoga acharya



If you have any queries for her, mail us or email at contact.mag@harmonyindia.org
(Please consult your physician before following advice given here)



yoga for silvers

Yoga shiromani and acharya **Shameem Akthar** urges the elderly to heal body, mind and soul with ancient yogic habits that are easy to learn. From the philosophy behind practices and poses to step-by-step instructions with illustrations, this is a comprehensive guide written especially for Silvers.

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Growing hope

The body of research establishing **stem cell treatment's therapeutic and regenerative properties**—in cancer, Parkinson's, diabetes, heart disease, and kidney and liver failure—continues to grow. After a five-year study, a team of doctors at AIIMS in Delhi have concluded that stem cells have the potential to repair and regenerate kidney tissue. Positive results have also been seen in cases of spina bifida (a neurological deficit). At two Mumbai-based stem cell therapy centres—NeuroGen Brain & Spine Institute and Stem Cell Genetic Research Centre in Sion Hospital—a growing number of people are opting for stem cell therapy for incurable conditions like spinal cord injury and multiple sclerosis. The treatment involves stem cells being removed from the patient's body and infused into damaged

tissue to facilitate repair. "On an average, we have seen 60 per cent improvement in patients after stem cell therapy," Dr Nandini Gokulchandran, head of medical services and clinical research at NeuroGen, tells *Harmony*. "We deal with brain and spinal cord-related disorders and injuries at our institute. This new field of regenerative medicine is being applied to various types of fatal disorders for which there was no available cure earlier. However, it is still at a very nascent stage." The wait-list is more than 200 at the municipality-run Sion Hospital centre, which offers the expensive treatment free of cost. However, cure with stem cells is dependent on many reasons including severity of the disease and other underlying conditions of the body, caution experts.



Made in India

In less than two years, the **Tropical Botanical Garden and Research Institute (TBGRI)** in Palode near Thiruvananthapuram is likely to unveil a plant-based *desi* Viagra. Derived from a plant commonly seen in several parts of Kerala, the research is being carried out for the past three years at TBGRI, an institute established by the local government for inventory, conservation and sustainable utilisation of plant wealth through research and development. One of the most popular drugs to treat erectile dysfunction in men, Viagra works by boosting the natural mechanism that leads to an erection. Details of the study are being kept under wraps to protect the identity of the plant till the formalities for obtaining the patent are complete. "As things stand now, the product will be available on the market within the next one or two years," principal investigator and TBGRI director A Subramonian tells *Harmony*. "Animal trials have already been done and the document for getting the patent has been worked out. Once the patent is obtained in the next three or four months, we will collaborate with hospitals and pharmaceutical companies to carry out necessary human trials before we go commercial."

A rare technique using an Inferior Vena Cava (IVC) filter implant enabled doctors at Fortis Hospital in Mumbai's suburban Mulund to operate 84 year-old Godavari Vegad's fractured hip bone. Vegad suffered from deep vein thrombosis, a blood disorder where clots form. The IVC filter helped trap the flow of impure blood and eliminate any risk of a clot dissolving during surgery.

promotion

Bridging the gap



Dr Kanir Bhatia
Diplomate of The International
Congress of Oral Implantology
(ICOI, USA)
kanirbhatia@gmail.com

Q1. I want to replace my missing upper front tooth. Should I go for a dental bridge or an implant?

Though a dental bridge can serve you satisfactorily, implants provide better support and usually result in more stable tooth replacement. For a bridge, the healthy teeth adjacent to the missing space will have to be trimmed down to make place for the supporting crowns. With an implant, the missing root is first replaced and a natural looking tooth replacement is fixed onto that. Today, unless one is replacing an old bridge or the adjacent teeth need crowns in any case, implants are the first choice in tooth replacement.

Q2. I fractured my front tooth and have to remove it. Can I get an implant and new tooth immediately?

Immediate implant procedures have become very common these days especially for front teeth. Here, after extracting the tooth, the implant is placed at the same time. As FDA has approved immediate loading for Nobel Biocare implants because of their special surface coating, placement of a temporary crown immediately after burring the implant is possible in the same sitting. Hence the patient can get a replacement on the day a tooth is removed.

Q3. Will my implant crown feel natural?

Dental implant-supported teeth look, feel and function like natural teeth. The dental implant itself is buried inside the bone and never seen—it's the crown, bridge or denture fixed onto the implant that the patient sees and feels. Also, as Nobel Procera provides customised tooth (coloured, high quality aesthetic crowns), the patient is able to walk out of the surgery with a beautiful smile.

Q4. What is 'Bone Grafting' and will I need it before implants?

Successful placement of implants depends on the presence of bone of sufficient quality and quantity. This is not always present in every patient. It was previously thought that in areas where there was insufficient bone it was not possible to place implants. There have now been great advances made in procedures to increase the amount of available bone, either by use of autogenous bone (belonging to the patient) or a range of artificial substitutes or a combination of both. These grafting techniques are simple and often carried out at the time of implant placement. For areas where there is significant lack of bone, more complex grafting procedures can be carried out to restore bone volume. In such cases, grafting may have to be carried out and left to heal for 4-6 months before implants are placed.

RISKY 50s

Menopausal changes are responsible for more than just hot flashes and mood swings. Researchers in the US reveal that high levels of the hormone oestrogen help protect the heart in most women till the age of 50. But **the considerable drop in oestrogen levels in the body after menopause significantly increases the risk of cardiovascular disease.** Another factor contributing to post-menopausal cardiac risk is weight gain. Hormonal changes result in most women gaining weight around the abdomen. Another study has shown that abdominal fat is a risk factor in the development of



cardio-metabolic diseases. Hormone replacement therapy (popularly called HRT) is believed to help protect women against abdominal fat gain and heart disease. "Before menopause, oestrogen has a protective effect unless the woman is diabetic or a smoker," Dr A K Sood, senior consultant cardiologist at Primus Super Specialty Hospital in New Delhi, explains to *Harmony*. "Men are at greater risk, but a post-menopausal drop in the hormone can make women come into the same risk zone. Oestrogen deficiency also increases the tendency to gain fat around the middle as compared to the thighs and hips. However, HRT is no longer recommended, as trials have shown it to increase the risk of cancer in women, especially cancer of the uterus, and vein thrombosis."



A 20-minute procedure can now restore near-perfect vision to those suffering from age-related vision problems. Developed by scientists in the UK, it involves implanting an artificial lens into the eye; the results are instant and permanent. Unlike laser treatment, which can correct distance vision but not near vision, the new technique is able to rectify distance, intermediate and near vision. Age-related deterioration of vision is common in ageing eyes and this revolutionary 'lunchtime' operation can help the growing population of older people to see the world through a clear lens without wearing glasses or using contact lenses. According to Oliver Backhouse, consultant ophthalmologist at Yorkshire Eye Hospital and Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust who is spearheading the technique, "The procedure has many advantages over other vision correction treatments including laser eye surgery." "The new technique involves implanting a multi-focal progressive lens called Crystalens," Dr Tushar Agarwal, assistant professor of ophthalmology at AIIMS, tells *Harmony*. Launched worldwide recently by Bausch & Lomb and available at a few centres in India, including AIIMS, these lenses help treat cataract. The fact that the lens is life-long gives it an advantage over laser surgery.

Rural healthcare is all set to receive a boost. Compared to Rs 195 billion during the previous financial year, fund allocations for the year 2010-11 are Rs 223 billion. Plans include a national annual survey to analyse the health profile of the rural population, which will help major public health initiatives to address gaps in the delivery of critical health services.

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Reason above religion

We are not truly free as long as we are shackled by our rigid beliefs, says **Robert Ingersoll**

The whole world has been filled with fear. Ignorance has been the refuge of the soul. For thousands of years the intellectual ocean was ravaged by the buccaneers of reason. Pious souls clung to the shore and looked at the lighthouse. The seas were filled with monsters... the people were driven in the middle of a narrow road while priests went before, beating the hedges on either side to frighten the robbers from their lairs. The poor followers thanked their brave leaders with all their hearts.

Huddled in folds they listened with wide eyes while the shepherds told of ravening wolves. With great gladness they exchanged their fleeces for security. Shorn and shivering, they had the happiness of seeing their protectors comfortable and warm.

Through all the years, wicked industry supported pious idleness, the hut gave to the cathedral, and frightened poverty gave even its rags to buy a robe for hypocrisy. Fear is the dungeon of the mind, and superstition is a dagger with which hypocrisy assassinates the soul. Courage is liberty. I am in favour of absolute freedom of thought. In the realm of mind every one is monarch; every one is robed, sceptered, and crowned, and every one wears the Purple of authority. I belong to the republic of intellectual liberty, and only those are good citizens of that republic who depend upon reason and upon persuasion, and only those are traitors who resort to brute force.

Now, forget that you are Methodists or Baptists or Catholics or Presbyterians, and let us for an hour or two remember only that we are men and women. And allow me to say 'man' and 'woman' are the highest titles that can be bestowed upon humanity.

Let us, if possible, banish all fear from the mind. Do not imagine that there is some being in the infinite expanse who is not willing that every man and woman should think for himself and



Priests have invented a crime called blasphemy, and behind it hypocrisy has crouched for years

herself. Do not imagine that there is any being who would give to his children the holy torch of reason, and then damn them for following that sacred light. Let us have courage.

Priests have invented a crime called 'blasphemy', and behind that crime hypocrisy has crouched for thousands of years. There is but one blasphemy, and that is injustice. There is but one worship, and that is Justice! You need not fear the anger of a god that you cannot injure. Rather fear to injure your fellowmen. Do not be afraid of a crime you cannot commit. Rather be afraid of the one that you may com-

mit. The reason that you cannot injure God is that the Infinite is conditionless. You cannot increase or diminish the happiness of any being without changing that being's condition. If God is conditionless, you can neither injure nor benefit him.

There was a Jewish gentleman who went into a restaurant to get his dinner, and the devil of temptation whispered in his ear: "Eat some bacon." He knew if there was anything in the universe calculated to excite the wrath of an infinite being, who made every shining star, it was to see a gentleman eating bacon. He knew it, and he knew the infinite being was looking, that he was the eternal eavesdropper. But his appetite got the better of his conscience, as it often has with us all, and he ate that bacon. He knew it was wrong, and his conscience felt the blood of shame in its cheek. When he went into that restaurant the weather was delightful, the sky was as blue as June, and when he came out the sky was covered with angry clouds, the lightning leaping from one to the other, and the earth shaking beneath the voice of the thunder.

He went back into that restaurant with a face as white as milk, and he said to one of the keepers: "My God, did you ever hear such a fuss about a little piece of bacon?" As long as we harbour such opinions of infinity; as long as we imagine the heavens to be filled with such tyranny, just so long the sons of men will be cringing, intellectual cowards. Let us think, and let us honestly express our thought.

Excerpt from a lecture delivered by Robert G Ingersoll at Washington DC in October 1880. Ingersoll (1833-1899) was an American politician and agnostic orator

“Having a purpose in life keeps me healthy; working with youngsters keeps me young!”

T S RAJAGOPALAN, 63

*Young
@ heart*

Chennai Pix

I was born in Kumbhakonam in Tamil Nadu. Thanks to my father's transferable job, I lived in several cities and went to many schools when I was growing up. After completing my engineering in Trichy [Tiruchirapalli], I began to work as an engineer with AIR in 1967. Life for the next 39 years was all about setting up transmitters and radio stations in remote areas.

After retiring from AIR in 2006, I settled in Chennai and began doing things I never found time for—reading, watching TV, walking on the seafront, attending music and dance recitals, visiting relatives. Soon time began to weigh on my hands. Till a call from Kartik, my nephew in Mumbai, changed everything.

Kartik's Mumbai-based company, Eureka Forbes, was starting a BPO in Chennai and he felt I would be the right person to head it. The fact that my experience was not in this area didn't merit any thought. The idea of doing something worthwhile encouraged me to make the trip to Mumbai. I was hired after some high-powered meetings.

However, there was some confusion in my mind once I joined work. What would I do in an organisation where the

average age of the people was one-third my age? Despite being a qualified electrical engineer, my computer experience was very limited. For them, life began and ended with a computer, with 'talking' translating to 'chatting'.

The enormous gap in mindset made me wonder if I would ever blend. But I learnt new things and unlearnt the old. Constantly adjusting, I began to master computer skills, learn from youngsters and understand them better. My hardest task was to prevent attrition, a malaise in the BPO industry. Though I soon began to enjoy managing my 300-strong workforce, it was like walking a tightrope all the time—trying to win their approval and trust, and do justice to my job. An old timer, I endeavoured to instil timeless values like respect, discipline and punctuality in them.

Retirement can create a void in one's life, which gradually starts filling up with imaginary aches and pains. Working again has given new meaning to my life. I have evolved as a human being, learnt people skills and how to cope with different situations and people in a totally new industry and environment. Doing something useful and being useful to society have given me a satisfaction deep within.

—As told to Radhika Mohan

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

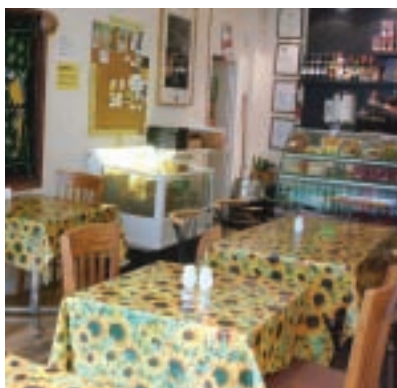
EXPERTS ANSWER YOUR QUERIES AND CONCERNS ON JOBS AFTER RETIREMENT

I will retire in a couple of months. My wife is keen to start a restaurant. Do you think it is advisable?

Starting a restaurant requires an investment of about Rs 1 million. It also involves tremendous mental and physical strain. The business is dependent on your workforce—master chef, assistants, waiters, cleaners, cashier, manager or supervisor—who require constant monitoring. Ensure they are regular, honest and don't pilfer food products or cut deals with suppliers. They also shouldn't have bad habits like alcoholism. There is extensive paperwork in terms of the licences and permits required from different authorities. Then, there's the location. A modest-size restaurant would require about 1,000 sq ft space. Rent in a central locality would be higher but would attract more clientele. The rate in an area like Nungambakkam in Chennai is Rs 100 per sq ft. Besides purchasing kitchen equipment and furniture, you also have to do up the interior. Money has to be earmarked for staff wages—master chef salaries range from Rs 15,000 to Rs 40,000—and running expenses like electricity, gas, provisions, vegetables and fruits. Managing wastage is another major issue. The restaurant may take a minimum of six months to a year before it yields returns, which again will depend on location and quality of food and service.

—C R Balakrushna Bhatt

Bhatt is proprietor of Raj Bhavan Group of Hotels, Chennai



I've always wanted to start my own business. Since retiring from service recently, I've been seriously thinking of setting up a cold storage with my settlement benefits. Is it a good idea?

A cold storage business can give you excellent returns. However, as there is always an element of risk, investing your entire savings is not advisable. First, ensure there is no competition nearby. Location matters—a cold storage in Vasai won't bring in profits like one in Bandra. Buying a shop would eat heavily into your savings. It's better to rent about 150 sq ft of space for Rs 8,000 to Rs 10,000 a month depending on the area. Apply for the Registration, Renewal or Modification of Shops & Establishment (Gumasta Dhara) license and health license. The basic requirement would include a couple of deep freezers (about Rs 30,000 each), manual or electronic weighing scales, wooden or metal slabs for cutting, and proper knives. In case of electricity problems, invest in an inverter. An agreement with a company like Godrej can get you a vertical see-through fridge for displaying their products on payment of a deposit. Keep shelves for items like tinned food and various condiments. An assistant is necessary, whether for cutting meat

or handling customers. It may take about six months to start earning but you can recover your investment fully if you run your business well.

—Valerian Fernandes

Fernandes is owner of Ave Maria, a cold storage shop in Virar in suburban Mumbai

I retired as a cost accountant from a bank a couple of years ago and settled down in Delhi. I would like to utilise my expertise and work in the social sector. Is this feasible?

The desire to give back to society is a noble sentiment. As you live in a metropolitan city like Delhi, there is no dearth of organisations you can contact. However, there will be no real prospects in the development sector for you because the profile of cost accountancy does not figure in social work. As you are aware, cost accounting basically relates to productivity or production-related work. In most business concerns, the management uses cost accounting to support decision-making to curtail company expenditure and promote profitability. Unlike the corporate world, NGOs have a different working environment. You need knowledge of how the non-profit and development sector functions. Moreover, it is important to be conversant with the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) and be aware of the rules and regulations related to handling foreign funds per se. However all said and done, even though your real expertise will remain underutilised, any NGO will benefit from your services.

—Debashish Mohanta

Mohanta is director, administration, at Human Rights Law Network, a Delhi-based NGO

Claim what's yours

Your rights don't end on acquiring disability in service. Here's what you need to know

An employee who enters service as an able-bodied person may acquire disability later, owing to accidents, medical complications, work hazards, or genetic factors. This excerpt from the *Handbook on Employment of Persons with Disabilities*, published by the National Human Rights Commission, addresses questions that could confront an establishment when an employee acquires disability.

Can an employee who acquires disability during service be dismissed from service or reduced in rank?

No. An employee cannot be dismissed from service or reduced in rank on acquiring disability during service. The **Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 in Section 47 (1)** prohibits retrenchment of an employee who acquires disability while in service. It stipulates, *"No establishment shall dispense with, or reduce in rank, an employee who acquires a disability during his service."*

Courts have consistently interpreted Section 47 (1) upholding the rights of employees who acquire disability service. In *Kunal Singh vs. Union Bank of India*, the appellant joined as a constable in the Special Service Bureau (SSB) and later lost his leg and was discharged from his duties with an invalidity pension under Rule 38 of the Central Civil Services (CCS) (Pension) Rules, 1972. The Supreme Court held that merely on the ground that the appellant received an invalid pension under Rule 38 of CCS (Pension) Rules, he cannot be denied the protection available to him under Section 47 of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995.

Is an employee who acquires disability while in service entitled to promotion to the next higher grade?

Yes, an employee who acquires disability while in service will remain entitled to promotion to the next higher grade. This is mandated in **Section 47 (2) of the Persons with Disabilities Act 1995**: *"No promotion shall be denied to a person merely on the ground of his disability."*

What are the categories and types of disabilities covered under Section 47 of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995?

If the disability acquired by an employee falls under the categories mentioned in Section 2(i) of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995, the employee will be considered eligible

for benefits under Section 47. According to Section 2(i) of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995, "disability" means blindness; low vision; leprosy-cured; hearing impairment; locomotor disability; mental retardation; mental illness. In addition, persons who are cured of leprosy, pleurisy and tuberculosis are also covered. The government has issued separate instructions for their reappointment in case they were discharged from service.



Can persons with disabilities be asked to go on voluntary retirement in public interest according to FR 56 J, Government of India?

Rule 56 J and Rule 38 of the CCS (Pension) Rules provide for compulsory retirement of a government servant in cases where he/she has attained the age of 50 years and holds a group A or B post or the age of 55 years in other cases/completed 30 years of qualifying service. The guiding principle for such retirement in

public interest is inefficiency or doubtful integrity. In case of doubtful integrity of a disabled employee, retirement in public interest could be brought in force. However, where the decision of retirement in public interest is motivated by the question of decreased efficiency owing to disability, it is important to consider the provisions of Section 47 of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995. As discussed earlier, a person who acquires disability during service and is not found suitable to hold any post, should be maintained on a supernumerary post and paid full salary with all emoluments till the age of retirement.

Likewise, no employee can be discharged on invalidity pension under Rule 38 of the CCS (Pension) Rules as the Supreme Court in *Kunal Singh vs. Union Bank of India* has held that Rule 38 of CCS (Pension) Rules, 1972 does not override Section 47 of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 as the doctrine of *generalia specialibus non derogant* would apply. This doctrine can also be found in the Act itself in **Section 72**.

For a copy of **Handbook on Employment of Persons with Disabilities** (National Human Rights Commission; Rs 250; 508 pages), contact Utpal Narayan Sarkar, Assistant Information Officer, NHRC, Faridkot House, Copernicus Marg, New Delhi-110001; Tel: 011-23382911

Live fresh!

Now, you can prevent both dry and moist food from spoiling—and keep it fresh for up to five times longer. Jarden Consumer Solutions, a company that offers products for just about every room of the home, has launched FoodSaver, a vacuum packaging system, in the Indian market. Measuring 39 cm × 18 cm × 7 cm, the sleek gadget helps you retain the original colour, smell and taste of both cooked and uncooked food (vegetables, lentils, dry fruits, tea, coffee) and save it against the effects of humidity for months. You can prepare meals for an entire week or fortnight, vacuum-seal and refrigerate them, and enjoy the food any time by simply reheating.

The product comes with one canister, a 5-m roll for making bags, five readymade bags—all food-grade certified and microwave-safe—and a bottle stopper. The bags are reusable. FoodSaver also allows you to vacuum-seal non-comestibles like documents and photographs, silver jewellery and clothing, and keep them in good condition. It can help avoid oxidation in tools, photo equipment and utensils. Available in select stores in metropolitan cities, the electrically operated product comes with a two-year warranty.

Price: Rs 4,200; a set of two 5-m rolls comes for Rs 495



Courtesy: Jarden Consumer Solutions

RECYCLE

Coins are more than just purchasing power

- Make an opening in the bottom hem of a curtain, slide in a coin or two, and sew back the hem. This will help keep the curtain hanging straight and level.
- If you get an unsteady table during a meal out, put a coin under the leg to restore balance.
- Use a coin as a makeshift screwdriver to open anything with slightly large grooves.

C HERITAGE

Olá Portugal

Kochi-based Manual Oliver is rooted to everything Portuguese. "I remember the stories my *pappanhi* [Creole Portuguese for 'grandfather'] told me about how our great-grandfathers settled in India after a shipwreck in the Indian Ocean," says the 83 year-old, who is a descendant of the earliest Portuguese settlers in Kerala. Driven by a desire to connect with Luso-Indians (Indians of Portuguese ancestry), Oliver set up the Indo-Portuguese Cultural Society in 2007 after retiring as an interior designer. Three years ago, the society set up the Vasco Library at Fort Kochi, near the place where Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama breathed his last. The library, which shares ties with the Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon, has more than 800 books on Portuguese history and literature. Last year, the society hosted a symposium in collaboration with the Cochin Royal Family Historical Society to promote Portuguese history and culture. Members of the society have also helped revive ancient Anglo-Indian churches like St Sebastian's Church and Infant Jesus Church in Ernakulam, Kerala. Next on the society's agenda is the construction of a language study centre near the Santa Cruz Basilica in Fort Kochi, and revival of the *Chavittunatakam*. "*Chavittunatakam* traces its origins to the 16th century, when our great-grandfathers mixed Kathakali with the European miracle play [based on the lives of saints and the miracles they performed]," says Oliver. He has also started a newsletter circulated among the Anglo-Indian community to keep them updated on Portuguese culture and tradition. "The Anglo-Indian community in India needs to bond more closely as we are fast losing our identity and may disintegrate if we isolate ourselves," says Oliver. He has reason to be optimistic—the society started out with 21 members; today it has 100 from different parts of India.

—Nisary Mahesh



Vilas Kalgutkar

SHARED PULSE

BINDI MEHTA MEETS THREE GENERATIONS OF DOCTORS UNDER ONE ROOF

Born in Malvan in Maharashtra, Dr Rajajinath Satoskar grew up hearing stories about the valour and sacrifice of freedom fighters. He decided to pursue a career that could enable him to make a difference to the world. “Doing something for oneself and one’s family is normal,” says the 82 year-old. “One should strive to go beyond that and think of giving back to society in some way.” Satoskar went on to become a distinguished doctor—and his entire family followed his footprint.

The Satoskars are among the rare families in Mumbai that boast three generations of doctors. Satoskar’s wife Shashiprabha, 76, is a gynaecologist; his elder son Rajeev is an accomplished surgeon; Rajeev’s wife Purnima, 46, is a gynaecologist and daughter Savni, 19, is a second year MBBS student; Satoskar’s younger son, Abhay, who is settled in the US, is a PhD in immunology and professor at Ohio State University, and Abhay’s wife Anjali is a transplant pathologist. The family shares something else in common—all of them have studied and practised at the King Edward Memorial Hospital in Mumbai.

C LEGACY

After doing his MBBS and MD from KEM Hospital in 1953, Satoskar did his PhD in pharmacology from the UK. After returning to India he married Shashiprabha, an athlete and medical student at Seth GS Medical College. Shashiprabha pursued her MD in gynaecology and retired as deputy dean of KEM Hospital in the mid-1980s. “I’m happy my sons too are making a meaningful contribution to society in their own way,” she says. The proud mother is an even prouder grandmother. Her granddaughter Savni is studying at the same medical college where she did her MBBS 55 years ago. “Though I have never faced any pressure to become a doctor, when it finally came to deciding on a career, that’s all I could think of,” says Savni. “I am surrounded by doctors at home and it’s fascinating to hear them discuss cases.” According to her, her father’s passion for his job is exemplary. Rajeev, who is unit head of surgery at KEM, finds surgery immensely fulfilling as “it requires not just mere recall of knowledge, but analysis, synthesis and application”. Savni often discusses her academic doubts with her grandparents. Interestingly, many of the textbooks on pharmacology she refers to are authored by her grandfather.

Memories of MUSSOORIE

C COLLECTION

Time changes everything and no one really knows when that familiar place of our memories becomes a shadow of what it used to be. Thankfully, there are people like Mussoorie-based Gopal Bhardwaj (*see pic, below*) who are trying to keep the past alive. The 60 year-old historian and photographer has amassed a vast collection of archival photographs, maps and memorabilia on Mussoorie, many of which have been widely exhibited. Much of his collection is a legacy of his astrologer father R G R Bhardwaj who often interacted with freedom fighters and leaders of the pre-Independence era.



Courtesy: Gopal Bhardwaj

Bhardwaj's collection includes photos of Mullingar, Mussoorie's first building; photos of exiled Prince Duleep Singh, son of Maharaja Ranjit Singh; early photos of Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy which was shifted from Delhi's Metcalfe House to Charleville in 1959; images of Dalai Lama and Jawaharlal Nehru when the Lama first sought asylum; and lithographs of the East India Company. Apart from such rare insights into history, there are photographs of famous personalities, clubs, hotels, monuments, institutions and scenes from daily life in Mussoorie—all captioned with information sourced from old residents of Mussoorie, and books and documents from the National Archives, Delhi, National Library, Kolkata and

India Office Library, London. The oldest photograph dates back 150 years. Over the years, he has added 5,000 photographs to the collection, all shot by him on his various sojourns through the Himalaya.

Though his collection is impressive, it's not easy to maintain; the photographs need to be aired regularly; Bhardwaj keeps each wrapped separately in plastic. "I hope the government will allocate a museum or space in the city hall where the cache can be preserved," he says. While he waits for that to happen, he is busy these days lending the finishing touches to a large-format book on the 200-year history of Mussoorie.

—Natasha Pathak

CLASSIC MOMENT

LEGENDARY AMERICAN FILMMAKER MARTIN SCORSESE WILL RESTORE THE PRINTS OF 1948 CLASSIC *KALPANA*, CLASSICAL DANCER UDAY SHANKAR'S ONLY CINEMATIC FORAY. THE FILM, WHICH HAD A 26-WEEK RUN IN KOLKATA IN 1948, PROFILES THE LIFE OF A YOUNG CLASSICAL DANCER. SHANKAR'S WIFE AMALA PLAYS THE FEMALE LEAD. THE PRINTS WERE RETRIEVED THROUGH A CIRCUITOUS ROUTE AS SHANKAR HAD GIVEN THEM AWAY TO A STUDENT WHO LATER SOLD IT FOR A PITTANCE. AFTER AN 11-YEAR TUSSLE IN COURT, AMALA SHANKAR FINALLY MANAGED TO RECLAIM THE RIGHTS TO THE FILM. THE BLACK-AND-WHITE MOVIE IS BEING RESURRECTED UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE WORLD CINEMA FOUNDATION—OF WHICH SCORSESE IS CHAIRMAN—AN INSTITUTE DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION OF FILM CLASSICS.

SPANtastic!

Many visitors at the World Book Fair held in Delhi in February took home a copy of SPAN with their photo on the cover. The unique offer was commemorative of the magazine's 50th anniversary. Launched in November 1960, SPAN is known for its engaging features and articles reprinted from top American magazines like *National Geographic*, *The New Yorker*, *Smithsonian*, and *Wired*. Published by the US Embassy in Delhi, SPAN presents interesting perspectives on education, travel, technology, public policy, environment and media; contributed by both Indian and American writers. The magazine has often commissioned prominent Indian artists to design its covers.

Published in three languages—English, Hindi and Urdu—the magazine has 500,000 readers. Many of its first readers continue to be subscribers even today. Editor Laurinda Keys Long recalls how a reader, Dr Sree Ramulu from Coimbatore, wrote to the magazine stating how his family, after hearing about the landing of the Apollo astronauts on radio, had waited eagerly for their monthly issue of SPAN to pore over the images of the momentous event. Besides holding contests and exhibitions throughout the year at the US Embassy and US Consulates around the country, the magazine is also urging readers to share essays of their



LITERATURE

memories associated with the magazine. Reader submissions will be published through the year. "We are also asking readers to send in articles, photographs and artwork on the themes of clean environment, US-India entertainment and culture, technology, science, business innovation and entrepreneurship, education and sports," says Long. The magazine will also carry an interview with a prominent person in each issue this year. The latest one has one with US Ambassador Timothy J Roemer. Future issues will also feature widely appreciated articles published in the past. Readers can access the magazine in English, Hindi and Urdu on the newly redesigned SPAN website www.span.state.gov

—Neha Bhatnagar



TRUTH VS. FALSEHOOD



A PLAY WRITTEN BY SHAKESPEARE, BUT WHOSE AUTHORSHIP WAS STEEPED IN DISPUTE FOR 300 YEARS, HAS FINALLY BEEN RECOGNISED AS A GENUINE WORK OF THE BARD AT THE END OF 10 YEARS OF RESEARCH BY PROFESSOR BREAN HAMMOND OF NOTTINGHAM UNIVERSITY. THE PLAY *DOUBLE FALSEHOOD* IS PURPORTED TO BE A VERSION OF SHAKESPEARE'S LESSER-KNOWN PLAY *CARDENIO*, WRITTEN IN COLLABORATION WITH JOHN FLETCHER. WHEN PUBLISHER LEWIS THEOBALD RELEASED AN ADAPTATION A CENTURY AFTER SHAKESPEARE'S DEATH, IT WAS DISREGARDED BY CRITICS AS AN ILLEGITIMATE CLAIM. TODAY, THE ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY IS WORKING ON A RECONSTRUCTION OF THE *CARDENIO*.



RISE AND SHINE

Push harder to reach higher, says **Timeri Murari**

There comes a time with all men and women when we have to surrender to age. We have to give up a pleasure that sustained us from childhood and accept that our bodies can no longer perform the way it once used to. I am talking about sport. My father, who had a passionate love affair with cricket, and many other sports, was forced to quit the game. He was 70, and his team was very concerned that a fast rising ball or a hard cover drive could hurt him. His reflexes had slowed down, and his eyes weren't that quick. He took this enforced retirement gracefully but was saddened he couldn't spend his Saturday afternoons on a cricket field. Time then becomes a heavier burden.

A knee injury had sidelined me from cricket, hockey and football, while a back problem forced me out of squash. I still have my doubles tennis to push the limits of my muscles and ligaments. I am an urban walker too, when not on the tennis courts, and not for a moment did I consider trekking as a possible exercise. It was by chance that, applying for the pilgrimage to Mount Kailas, the computer picked out my name. My knee had continued to plague me but the idea of trekking through the Himalaya was too strong a seduction.

Six weeks before the start, a surgeon performed a swift arthroscopy on my left knee and assured me I could not only trek, but run up and down the mountains. Of course, I was optimistic enough to believe in his assurance but had to pass the medical in Delhi. I thought, being in my early 60s, I'd be the oldest but there were some

men and women older than me, and as optimistic as I was. A few failed the tests while, despite my knee, I passed. However, I wasn't the oldest to start that journey. A spry, lively man of 70 was on his second pilgrimage, and I realised that age itself wasn't the barrier. The medicals were tests for

The trek made me realise how much I had lost touch with our natural world by living in cities. The added advantage was that I lost 7 kg in the month-long trek and made good friends with my fellow travellers

the heart and the lungs as we would be climbing to 5,550 m where the atmosphere was so rare that with each step I had to stop and suck in air for a few minutes before taking the next step. I also passed the medical at Gungi (3,500 m).

The journey to Mount Kailas—up through Uttaranchal to the Liu Lekh pass (5,334 m), into Tibet and then circling the mountain itself crossing the Dolma La Pass—is one of the most brutal treks ever devised to test the body and spirit. It's a distance of 200 km and, though we had ponies to ride, most of the terrain had to be made on foot. The young men and

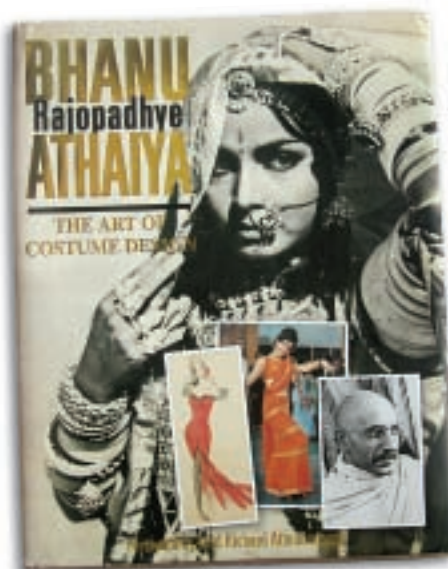
women raced ahead like hares for the finish line, while we senior citizens walked at our leisurely pace. After the initial pain of my knee, I found myself in an awesome, wonderful world that I had never imagined existed, except in the movies. The air was clean and cold, so clear I always had the snow-capped peaks in view; the silence was soothing; the landscape of mountains, forests and rivers inspiring; and at night the stars and planets appeared so close that if I raised my hand high enough my fingers would brush through their silvery dust. The trek made me realise how much I had lost touch with our natural world by living in cities. The added advantage was that I lost 7 kg in the month-long trek, and made good friends with my fellow travellers.

Since then, I've discovered I've wanted to trek again, and possibly among the mountains. I doubt I'll make it to Mount Kailas again but there are many treks to be made, though none will be as brutal or as testing as that one. I had discovered that my body could withstand the gentler pace of walking, and that I didn't mind the Spartan conditions of roughing it. Today, there are organised treks that amble into forests and hills, and along rivers. I miss that close kinship I had briefly with the natural world that surrounds us all. It won't be there forever as we destroy our environment. Nor will I. But while it's still there, I intend to keep visiting what's left of our natural world as often as possible.

Timeri Murari, 65, is an author and screenplay writer living in Chennai

Star & style!

For over 50 years, Bhanu Athaiya's creations adorned the bold and the beautiful of Indian cinema. **Arati Rajan Menon** leafs through her incredible portfolio



American costume designer Edith Head, an eight-time Oscar winner, once described her work as “a cross between magic and camouflage”. Bhanu Rajopadhye Athaiya, herself the winner of an Academy Award for costume design—for Gandhi (1982)—would no doubt agree, only adding the word ‘fashion’ to the description. For, in a country where cinema is akin to religion, millions have slavishly copied the trends set by their screen idols. And many of these trends emerged from the fertile imagination and prolific sketchpad of Athaiya over a career that has spanned half a century, from Shahenshah in 1953 to Swades in 2004. That remarkable career is chronicled in The Art of Costume Design (Collins; Rs 2,995; 188 pages), which is not just a portfolio of her work but a collection of Athaiya’s experiences in cinema; a tribute to the directors that inspired her; and a paeon to the artistic family that nurtured her own nascent talent in the bosom of their 300 year-old sprawling ancestral home in Kolhapur. Her future was sewn up once she arrived in Mumbai to study art—while she was good enough to exhibit along with the Progressive Artists’ Group, she also began to work as ‘fashion illustrator’ for women’s magazine Fashion and Beauty and then Eve’s Weekly. Fashion won out and how; clothes both avant garde and impossibly rustic, adorning the bold and the beautiful. In this book, you see them all; from Nadira’s slinky dress with its snake-like border in Shri 420 (1955) and Mumtaz wound tight and sexy in an orange sari in Brahmachari (1968) to the ethereal Dimple as a Rajasthani village belle in Lekin (1990). Iconic images, vintage Athaiya.

Bhanu Athaiya speaks to *Harmony*...



Lord Richard Attenborough celebrates *Gandhi*'s fantastic haul of eight Oscars with Athaiya

Inspirations: I'm always bubbling with ideas. As soon as I get an assignment, the ideas start spinning.

My best work: *Gandhi*. The protagonist's costumes change through the different stages of his life from a westernised look to a basic loincloth and shawl.

Star moments: In *Reshma aur Shera*, Sunil Dutt and Waheeda Rehman did complete justice to my designs.

The book: As I have worked for over 50 years and done some outstanding films, I felt it was time to put my work on paper to serve as inspiration for future designers.

Global pick: I admire the work of Emi Wada, who won an Academy Award for Costume Design for her work on Akira Kurosawa's *Ran*.

Great escapes: I love to travel the world. I visit museums and get the taste of every country I visit.

What next? A book that covers work produced for theatre and exquisite calendars. I have a huge collection of reference material and sketches. I couldn't include all my work in the first book and want to put it all down.

Celebrating age: Every morning, I wake up feeling like a 16 year-old, ready to explore the beauty all around me. I am always on the go. I work with young people and gel with them. I feel part of the gang.

Support system: Me and myself.







(Opposite page) The vivacious Mumtaz captivated the heart of India with her scintillating dance—and her sexy stitched and draped sari—in the song *Aaj kal tere mere pyar ke charhe* in the film *Brahmachari* (1968), putting even the ebullient Shammi Kapoor in the shade. "It was a departure from the typical Indian sari and I draped it to give her freedom of movement for her dance," recalls Athaiya. (Above) This dream sequence from *Satyam Shivam Sundaram* (1978) is from the city-bred hero's point of view. "He visualises the heroine almost like a beautiful apparition from heaven," says Athaiya. And the voluptuous Zeenat Aman in her dazzling costume, dripping with jewels, does not disappoint.



In the famous song *Mud mud ke na dekh* from *Shri 420* (1955), Nadira is slinky and seductive in her costume with a snake-like border coiling from hemline to neck. Raj Kapoor provides the perfect foil.

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PASSAGES

The Taj's forerunner

AN EXTRACT FROM *HISTORY OF INDIAN AND EASTERN ARCHITECTURE* BY JAMES FERGUSSON, FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1876, ON I'TIMADU-D-AULAH'S TOMB IN AGRA

There is one building—the tomb known as that of I'timadu-d-daulah—at Agra, however, which belongs to this reign, and though not erected by the monarch [Jahangir] himself, cannot be passed over, not only from its own beauty of design, but also because it marks an epoch in the style to which it belongs. It was erected by Nur-Jahan, in memory of her father, who died in 1621, and was completed in 1628. It is situated on the left bank of the river, in the midst of a garden surrounded by a wall measuring 540 ft on each side. In the centre of this, on a raised platform stands the tomb itself, a square measuring 69 ft on each side. It is two storeys in height, and at each angle is an octagonal tower, surmounted by an open pavilion. The towers, however, are rather squat in proportion, and the general design very far from pleasing as that of many less pretentious tombs in the neighbourhood. Had it, indeed, been built in red sandstone, or even with an inlay of white marble, it would not have attracted attention. Its real merit consists in being wholly in white marble and being covered throughout with a mosaic in pietra dura—the first, apparently, and certainly one of the most splendid examples of that class of ornamentation in India.

It seems that in the early part of the 17th century, Italian artists, apparently from Florence, were introduced into India, and, it has been said they taught the Indians the art of inlaying marble with precious stones. In the time of Shah Jahan it became the leading characteristic of the style, and both his palaces and his tombs owe their principle distinction to the beauty of the mode employed.

It has been doubted whether this art was really a foreign introduction, or whether it had been invented in India. The question never, probably, would have arisen had one of the fundamental principles of architecture been better understood. When we, for instance, having no art of our own, copy a Grecian or Roman pillar, or an Italian mediaeval arch in detail, we do so literally, without any attempt to adapt it to our uses or climate; but when a people having a style of their own wish to adopt any feature or process belonging to any other style, they do not copy but adapt it to their uses; and it is this distinction between adopting and adapting that makes all the difference. We would have



allowed Italians to introduce with their mosaics all the details of their Cinque-cento architecture. The Indians set about reproducing, with the new materials and processes the patterns which the architects of Akbar had been in the habit of carving in stone or inlaying in marble. The style remained the same, so did all the details.

As one of the first, the tomb of I'timadu-d-daulah was certainly one of the least successful specimens. The patterns do not quite fit the places where they are put, and the paces are not always those best suited for this style. But, on the other hand, the beautiful tracery of the pierced marble slabs of its windows, which resemble those of Salim Chishti's tomb at Fatehpur-Sikri, the beauty of its white marble walls, and the rich colour of its decorations, make up so beautiful a whole, that it is only on comparing it with the works of Shah Jahan that we are justified in finding fault.

LOST AND FOUND

LESSONS IN FORGETTING

BY ANITA NAIR

HARPERCOLLINS; RS 399; 329 PAGES

The cyclone is a hell of a metaphor—a deceptive calm that is shattered by the storm only to be replaced by calm again, this time, though, tinged with an acute awareness of what has come before. Author of acclaimed books like *Ladies Coupe* and *Mistress*, Anita Nair uses the vagaries of nature to great effect to portray the cyclical nature of life and, yes, happiness in *Lessons in Forgetting*. Two separate lives, Meera and Jak, undergo tumult: while one is a corporate trophy wife and cookbook author abandoned by her husband in her crumbling family home, the other is a cyclone expert who returns from the US to investigate why his 19 year-old daughter

is lying comatose and catatonic, her body and spirit crushed. Their worlds not so much collide as come shoulder to shoulder as Nair finds solace from her pain in aiding Jak's quest. As they discover a shocking trail that underscores the shame of female foeticide—and the cottage industry that abets it in our country—they come to terms with their own yesterdays. Nair weaves her tale of love and pain with skill, blending the darkness with just enough strands of light to offer readers, and her protagonists, the hope of redemption. Indeed, Meera's favourite fruit is the pomegranate—the symbol of Greek goddess Hera, something of a leitmotif for Nair—which represents



death and the promise of resurrection. "She savours it best when it is eaten seed by seed rather than as a handful thrown into her mouth. She will take a cue from that. Of how resurrection is to be fashioned one day at a time." That's worth remembering.

—Arati Rajan Menon



THE OTHER SIDE

SECRET SON

BY LAILA LALAMI

PENGUIN VIKING; RS 599; 291 PAGES

"Perhaps home is not a place but simply an irrevocable condition," Laila Lalami quotes legendary writer James Baldwin from *Giovanni's Room*. In *Secret Son*, both home and identity are immutable conditions. Youssef El Mekki's life is hopeless in the slum alleyways

of Hay An Najat in Casablanca. On discovering that he isn't fatherless after all, and that he is the son of industrialist Nabil Amrani, he decides to leave his past behind and give in to his newly found parent's aspirations. Hostile over his daughter Amal's love life in America, Nabil contemplates handing over the reins to Youssef, but he would rather have his daughter back. Rachida Ouchak, Youssef's mother, had left her tribal life and mother tongue (Tamazight) behind to bring up Youssef speaking impeccable French, but now he was not hers as well. She finds life slipping away when he returns home fatherless yet again. With no friends, no degree and no job, Youssef is vulnerable when Islamic radicals veer him away. Amal comes looking for her brother but Rachida wouldn't let her. There's a certain rootlessness to all their lives—Youssef's, Nabil's, Rachida's, Amal's and Youssef's friend Amin's. In blogger Lalami's tale of social ladders and injustices, one finds there's more to Morocco than wintering heavens for European tourists enjoying the un-Islamic, sanitised version of a country running away from its own reality. There's greed, intolerance, narrow-mindedness, social biases and the filth and muck we all want to run away from. And we wondered if only life here was different!

—Meeta Bhatti

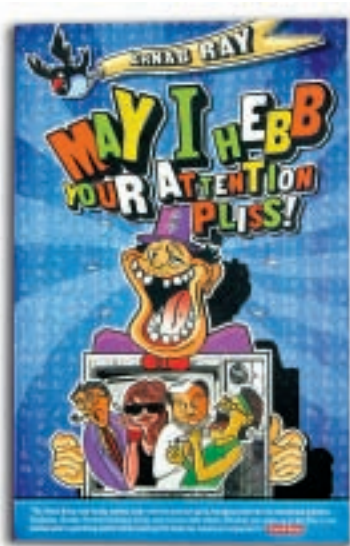
of Hay An Najat in Casablanca. On discovering that he isn't fatherless after all, and that he is the son of industrialist Nabil Amrani, he decides to leave his past behind and give in to his newly found parent's aspirations. Hostile over his daughter Amal's love life in America, Nabil contemplates handing over the reins to Youssef, but he would rather have

It happens only in India!

Two books that combine anecdotes, observations and heaps of humour to reflect a nation in evolution

Raised stock indexes and hemlines, new languages like COBOL and Java, TRP-competing sitcoms and mushrooming dot-coms contributed to a sweeping change in India in the liberal 1990s. Providing “a different, radically alternative, *hatke* perspective—a perspective through the lens of popular culture”, **Arnab Ray** grabs your attention right at the title. **MAY I HEBB YOUR ATTENTION PLISS!** (HarperCollins; Rs 199; 237 pages) is a

humorous, politically incorrect and irreverent look at a selection of random topics ranging from politics, Bollywood C-grade *masala* movies and implausible reality shows to a socio-cultural study of sexual frustration, pretentious non-resident Indians and temperamental toilet flushes. Generously interspersed with *desi* terminology, the imagery and observations flowing through the book activate recall switches and ring familiar echoes. With research playing a marginal role, the author admits “the pages are in general bereft of numbers, statistics and the other inscrutable artifices of pedantry”. In the introductory chapter “The ‘Nut’ Shell”, Ray tells readers “straight up” what the book is all about. Written in a conversational style with generous dollops of personal trivia, the 14 chapters before the epilogue are a rollercoaster ride of hilarity. For instance, discussing the conundrum of arranged-cum-love-marriage in “An Indian Wedding”, readers get a ringside view of Ray’s own marriage—from wardrobe malfunction worries about the *dhoti* to retakes of different rituals for the benefit of the photographers. Another highlight: a tongue-in-cheek analysis of celluloid classics like *Clerk* (1989), *Tahalka* (1992), *Aatish* (1994) *Mohra* (1996) and *Gupt* (1997) in “How Bollywood Made Me What I Am”. Ray not only gets our attention, but holds it.



Santosh Desai has India on his mind too. **MOTHER PIOUS LADY: MAKING SENSE OF EVERYDAY INDIA** (HarperCollins; Rs 399; 380 pages) knits individual essays together to focus on the changing urban middle class. Desai confesses to in-built biases creeping in as the narration is filtered through personal experiences. Making “no bones about the fact that it is composed of little scraps of observations that are sewn to-

gether” to provide a larger picture held together as a single piece, the author examines middle class India from within. “The essence of growing up as Indian... is really in understanding what it takes to actually experience India in all its trivial everydayness.” The symbols of the past are being replaced with a totally new genre—remixes brought alive by undulating “well-ventilated women”; bikes that hug the curves of roads making scooters passé; family ties “loosening into discretionary affiliations”. Fundamental clichés imply a new energy—a tiger has been uncaged, a sleeping giant has risen—and acknowledge an evolution in the essential character of the Indian view of itself. Organised in three sections—‘Where Do We Come From?’, ‘New Adventures in Modernity’ and ‘Dilemmas of Change’—introductory paragraphs in each chapter succinctly encapsulate randomly arrayed themes. This gives the reader freedom to read the crisp pieces in a non-linear fashion. From housewives who sneak additional value to their transactions with free *dhaniya* and *hari mirch* (“The Dhaniya Factor”) to the inimitable language and culture invented by matrimonial ads where just 25 words can abbreviate a person into marketability (“Mother Pious Lady”), Desai’s India is all too familiar—and incredibly entertaining.

—Anjana Jha

BRIEFLY

It is a brave thing to follow up vanilla (*Darlingji: The True Love Story of Nargis and Sunil Dutt*; 2007) with grit. But seasoned journalist **Kishwar Desai** doesn't seem to be afraid with her second book, **WITNESS THE NIGHT** (HarperCollins; Rs 225; 210 pages). Gender discrimination—and the brutal depths to which it can descend—forms the centrepiece of this thriller that intrigues and shocks equally. When urbane, hard-drinking social worker Simran Singh takes on her latest 'case', 14 year-old Durga, she is actually confronting centuries of deep-seated prejudice and oppression. Brutalised, broken and traumatised, Durga is found in her Jalandhar home while 13 of her family members lie around her murdered. When the



police decide to lay the blame for the massacre at Durga's feet, Simran sets out to discover the truth, in the process exposing the corruption and venality of the police and politicians and the rank lawlessness of small-town India. Desai writes matter-of-factly; all literary artifices dispensed with in the face of gruesome statistics and heartbreaking realities. Why dress up ugliness in any other garb?

The sceptics will find enough fodder to scoff at this one. **ROAD TO SHIRDI** (Wisdom Tree; Rs 245; 170 pages) by **Kaushalya Kuwadekar** introduces us to a path to spirituality that's often littered with superstition and irrational occult musings. The book begins in Zambia where the author was born and brought up by parents who are often undemonstrative, unreasonable and hostile. The utter absence of spirituality in her life all through her childhood in her parent's house almost stands out as a deliberately orchestrated contrast to the plethora of deities and god men that Kuwadekar reveres in her youth. The author grows up with two siblings, seeking solace in mysterious angels and aliens that prowl the tree outside her house. Eloping into the arms of the man she loves, she finally attains domestic bliss after marriage; a phase in her life that runs parallel with the beginnings of her quest for spiritual succour. From novenas, Soka Gakkai, and the Japanese religious movement of Sukyo Mahikari to Kriya Yoga, encounters at the Oneness University and finally the mendicant saint Sai Baba in Shirdi, Kuwadekar moves in full earnest and fickle abandon from one spiritual philosophy to another. She believes there is no one road to spiritual enlightenment. Maybe there isn't. Or maybe the one true road is right there inside us.



"Olly, Olly, Olly, with a big nose on a trolley, and his wig all painted green..." New characters, a brand new story and the unaffected Ruskin Bond style! The much-adored Mussoorie-based author is back (**MR OLIVER'S DIARY**; Puffin Books; Rs 150; 121 pages) with hilarious Mr Olly (oops, Oliver) guiding his preparatory school boys at a Shimla boarding with a feather-light stick. Bald and bony, he knows he will never be any match for his young boys winding up the whole school and the neighbouring girls' school as well; though, he does match punches with visiting middleweight boxing champion Buster Bragge. Adding munch to an otherwise serene setting, the

boys sleepwalk on roofs, let loose a thousand frogs, run away on rickety buses, bring down the school bell on April Fools Day, disfigure the founder's portrait, and fling around Mr Oliver's wig. Between all this, the headmaster and his wife get trapped in their cottage during a storm, and, on another occasion, the headmaster goes missing looking for a tiger to shoot. Miss Babcock does her best to rein in the elements and Miss Anjali Ramola brings romance to Mr Oliver's life; until then Tota (the parrot) gives him company with his two famous words: 'Bottoms Up!' Read and laugh out loud.



“If death meant just leaving the stage long enough to change costume and come back as a new character, would you slow down? Or speed up?”

—American author Chuck Palahniuk

libel tourist *n.* A person who sues for libel in a foreign country, particularly one that has libel laws favourable to the plaintiff.

Also: libel tourism

Example: The committee also wants it to be made more difficult for foreign **libel tourists** and big companies to bring British libel actions.

—David Leigh, “In the line of fire: ‘toothless’ PCC and the cost of libel”, *The Guardian*, 24 February 2010

Cyberdisinhibition

n. A temporary loss of inhibition while online.

Also: cyber-disinhibition

Example: A recent study confirmed what we all suspect: the anonymity afforded by the Internet emboldens people to spread their inner creepiness. The authors of the study, published by Euro RSCG Worldwide, even coined a new term, **cyberdisinhibition**, to describe the phenomenon.

—Joe Livernois,

“Joe Livernois: Wild Web deserves to be tamed”, *Monterey County Herald*, 24 January 2010

ORPHAN CANCER *n.* A rare cancer that gets little attention and little funding for research.

Example: The treatment is being tested at Stony Brook University Medical Centre as a therapy for cancer of the appendix, a malignancy so rare it is known as an **orphan cancer**.

—Delthia Ricks, “New York doctors testing heated chemo for rare cancer”, *Newsday*, 5 March 2009

VEGANGELICAL *n.* An extremely zealous vegan who is eager to make other people believe in and convert to veganism. [Blend of vegan and evangelical.]

Example: Isa Chandra Moskowitz and Terry Hope Romero are **vegangelicals** with a sense of humour, a sense of proportion and a sense of adventure. What else would you expect from two gals who host a podcast called The Post Punk Kitchen (ThePPK.com)?

—Ted Scheffler, “Eat your veggies”, *Salt Lake City Weekly*, 31 January 2008

robocall

n. An automated phone call that plays a recorded message.

Also: robo-call

Example: Obama also recorded an automated **robocall** to urge Massachusetts’ voters to support the Democrat, and he cut a Web video with the same message.

—Janet Hook, “Healthcare overhaul may depend on Massachusetts senate race”, *Los Angeles Times*, 16 January 2010



GAELIC GETAWAY

This summer, if you’re planning to head overseas, pick the Republic of Ireland. International visitors over the age of 66 can now crisscross the verdant countryside on the Irish rail absolutely free of cost. This includes all ‘mainline’, ‘dart’ and ‘commuter trains’. The scheme was launched by Irish Prime Minister Brian Cowen on 17 March on the occasion of St Patrick’s Day and will be valid at least for a year to begin with. For more details, go to www.discoverireland.ie

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The first time you rode the bicycle.
The first crush you had at thirteen
The first drama you got a part in
The first day at college
The first date you went on
The first kiss
The first time you proposed
The first job interview
The first board meeting you addressed
The first day after retirement

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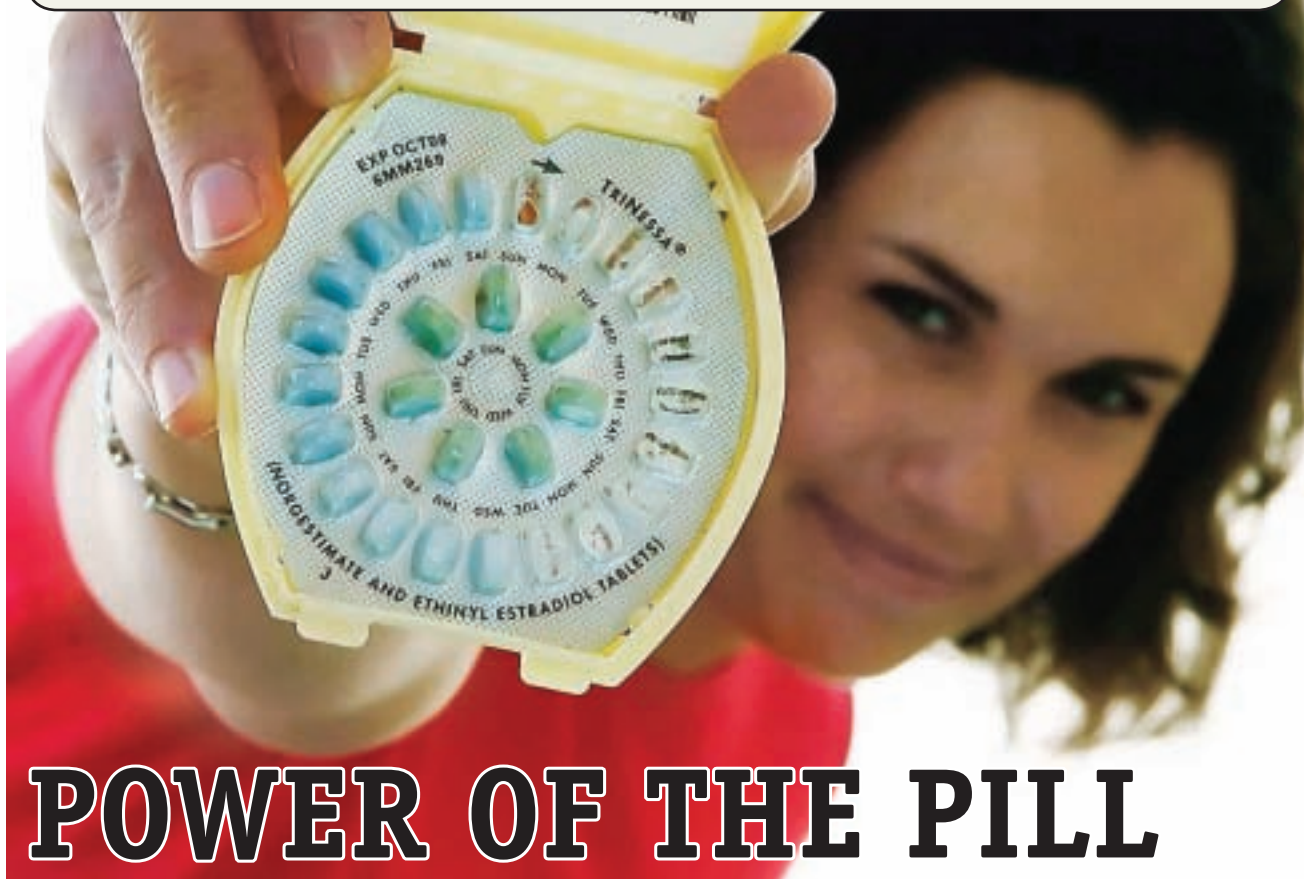
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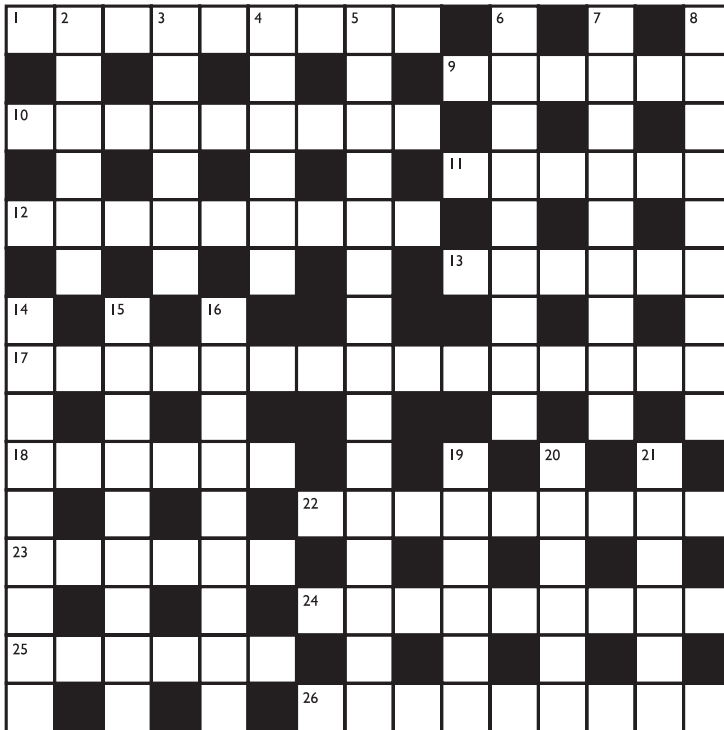
POWER OF THE PILL

Fifty years ago, a small white pill kicked off a revolution for women across the world. Indeed, American chemist Frank Colton's invention of the first oral contraceptive, Enovid, is often cited as one of the most significant events in history as it provided a reversible method of birth control that remains close to 100 per cent effective when used as instructed. The contraceptive works by suppressing ovulation through the actions of hormones—oestrogen alone or a combination of oestrogen

and progestin—present in the pill. Besides preventing unplanned pregnancy, it reduces risk of developing uterine and ovarian cancers; regulates irregular menstruation; reduces menstrual cramps; and relieves the symptoms of premenstrual syndrome (PMS). The hormones contained in oral contraceptives also provide a protective cover against pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), a major cause of infertility. Today, it is estimated that about 16 million women use the pill on a regular basis.

THIS MONTH, THAT YEAR: APRIL 1960

- On 1 April 1960, the US launched the first weather satellite, TIROS-1. Through the 270-pound television infrared observation satellite, weather photos were introduced to the world on television for the first time the same evening.
- On 4 April 1960, *Ben-Hur* won a record 10 Oscars, including Best Picture, at the 32nd Academy Awards.
- On 13 April 1960, France became the fourth nuclear nation after it exploded an atomic bomb in Sahara.
- On 19 April 1960, the first x-ray photograph of the sun was taken with a pinhole camera on an Aerobee rocket.
- On 21 April 1960, the Bahá'í faith was established in Washington DC.

EXCLUSIVE HARMONY CROSSWORD 66**BY RAJU BHARATAN****ACROSS**

- 1 A single for the IPL-taking there is even as news breaks of massive cash withdrawals from the bank! (1 3 2 3)
- 9 An urging by Kapil Dev (having already interviewed him in *Extraa.a.a.a Innings*) to emulate the athlete in Akshay Kumar on the field (2 4)
- 10 Aim straight at the stumps and score a direct hit, a form of dismissal acquiring an exciting new running-out dimension in 20Twenty Cricket (3 6)
- 11 Kind of *manual* wonder scorer you need to be, to be able to 'pencil it all in still', while an IPL game is in progress (1 5)
- 12 Seh in front and you have the number of IPL runs expected from Viru (9)
- 13 Look another Gower ('striking' without appearing to be hitting) in the modern edition of the game (1 5)

- 17 Cricket, IPL style, rewritten in the name of Sachin? (3 6-6)
- 18 'Mark' how freewheelingly, on the Little Screen, he taught 'swinger' Mandira the way to operate with the new ball, so that no such lady was the Bedi babe to the commentator of that name (6)
- 22 What Keith Miller, walking back following a first-ball duck, was in the spectacle of Don Bradman's England-touring Australians hitting 721 (inside 6 hours during the opening Saturday of 15 May 1948), while playing Essex at Southend (3 3 3)
- 23 'Dada' style of counter to Steve Waugh, as the TV buff saw it, was Sourav's studiously turning up late for the toss (6)
- 24 What bowling bouncers, all the time all the way, meant in cricket, until the IPL came along to create lucrative openings for the fast ageing in

cricket (5 4)

- 25 It happened, at long last, on Indian TV with the 1984 Asian Games, thanks to the vision of Rajiv Gandhi (6)
- 26 Where Gary Kirsten caught Mohammed Azharuddin on the Indian stylist's 6 March 2000 century-comeback to international cricket with 102 of the best, before the Hyderabad stalwart mishooked Shaun Pollock in the Second Test at Bangalore (2 4-3)

DOWN

- 2 Strongly protest about it, Lara (4 2)
- 3 Fresh blood flowing through the IPL auctioning (3 3)
- 4 Hardly justified in going for the second run? (2 4)
- 5 No BCCI Pooh-Bah can quite wear it and there's the new-ball rub! (3 5 4 3)
- 6 'Tails up' and yet not looking pleased at the prospect? (5 4)
- 7 The tortuous Hindi-English Voice of India from the early '80s (9)
- 8 Yadav's ID's Preity, Juhi and Shilpa having the spotlight upon them, by turns, during those IPL knockdowns? (5 4)
- 14 What staying in the highest grade of the game sadly became for one-day specialist Mohammad Kaif (1 4 4)
- 15 Trust Diana Eduljee to be, seeing how she was as good a fielder as any man in the game during her prime days in women's cricket (2 3 4)
- 16 A four, all run, following a vain long-distance fling to knock down the wicket, only for the overthrow to race to the ropes! (3-2-4)
- 19 Thank heaven the across-the-Board bans in Pakistan Cricket left our Gul guy and his bowl buy untouched for the future (4 2)
- 20 As his 75-85-scoring Test admirer from 'Melbourne 1968' down, on which, as Sharmila sees it, Tiger Pataudi would have fitted into IPL Cricket (3 3)
- 21 The agent's share in what a foreign cricketer IPL-collects? (3 3)

For answers, see Page 79

RAJU BHARATAN is the originator of the 'Sunday Cryptic' crossword in *The Times of India*, where he set the first 1,500 puzzles

Tips for beginners: A whole variety of clues goes into framing a cryptic puzzle. For instance, the anagram. The clue here could be: Unresting opponent of authority (Unresting being the 9 letters of insurgent rearranged). Another variety of clue is the palindrome—DEIFIED, when viewed backward or when viewed up in a Down clue, reads DEIFIED all the way. Next, there could be the clue (8-letter answer) reading: Complete view of daughter sandwiched between parents—PANORAMA (PA/NORA/MA). The 8-letter solution to the clue, The framework of our constitution, is SKELETON. At times, what looks straight could prove tricky. For example, the clue, How we stand, has UNITED for its 6-letter answer. The clue, How we fall, has DIVIDED for its 7-letter answer.

BRAIN GYM

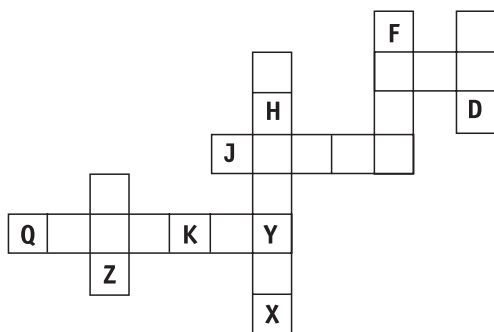
WORK IT OUT

By changing the second letter of each word below, you can make another valid word. Can you change each word so that the second letters will reveal an 11-letter word when read downwards?

BAKE
SWAP
OPAL
DYED
ARKS
SNOW
LUMP
ACES
MELT
SPUN
RANT

WORD WEB

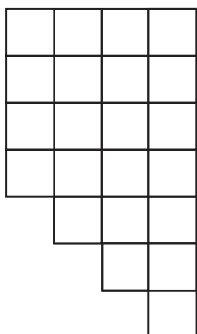
Complete the grid by using all the letters of the alphabet. Nine letters have already been placed for you.



A B C D E F G H I J K L M N
O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

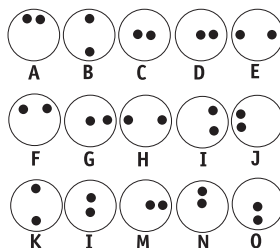
SQUARE ROUTE

How many squares are there in the image?



ODDITY

Can you find the odd one out?



SUDOKU FOR YOU

	7		3		2	9		
				9		4		6
3		1		6			2	
9		6	8					
		8				5		
					9	8		3
	8			2		3		5
7		2		1				
		3	7		8		9	

Choose a number from 1 to 9, and place it in the grid. Every digit from 1 to 9 must appear once, and only once, in each of the columns, rows and in each of the sets of nine boxes.

KOFFEE WITH KAKURO

	14	19			10	12		13
14				5			10	
12			29	10			9	
		15						
	20				11	10	8	
	7			7			13	
				6			9	
	19	27						17
17			7			7		
15			15			10		
			3	13	8			

The object of a Kakuro is to insert digits from 1 to 9 into the white cells to total the clue associated with it. However, no digit can be duplicated in an entry. For example, to total 6, you could have 1 and 5, 2 and 4 but not 3 and 3. You may, however, use a number again in the same row or column.

SOLUTIONS TO EXCLUSIVE HARMONY CROSSWORD 66

ACROSS: 1 A run on it's (A run on it is); 9 'Be Akki'; 10 Hit Wicket; 11 A Dossa (Anandji Dossa); 12 (*Seh*)wagonload; 13 A David (Gower); 17 'Ten' Twenty-Twenty; 18 Sahiba (Mandira vis-a -vis Mark Nicholas); 22 Odd man out; 23 Rebuff; 24 Short life; 25 Colour; 27 At long-leg

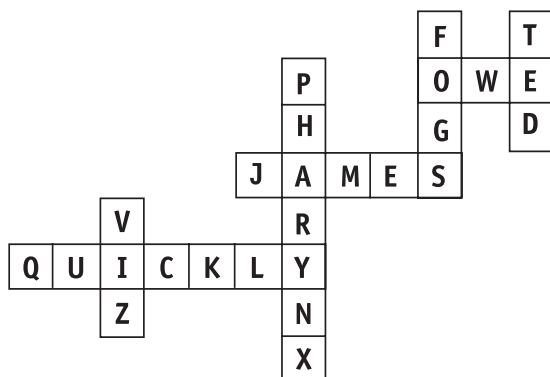
DOWN: 2 Rail at (means *Strongly protest about*, 6 letters of Rail at rearrange into *it Lara*); 3 New lot; 4 No call; 5 The Lalit Modi hat; 6 *Heads down* (coin with Heads down makes it *Tails up*, *Heads down suggests not looking pleased at the toss prospect*); 7 Akashvani; 8 Diva's days (its 9 letters rearrange as *Yadav's ID's*); 14 A Test race; 15 On the ball (You had to watch Diana fielding as dazzlingly as Brijesh Patel); 16 Two-by-four; 19 Umar (*Gul*) go; 20 one leg; 21 Cut fee (agent's *cut* in player's *fee*)

SOLUTIONS TO BRAIN GYM

WORK IT OUT

BIKE
SNAP
OVAL
DEED
ASKS
STOW
LIMP
AGES
MALT
STUN
RENT
INVESTIGATE

WORD WEB



SQUARE ROUTE

40

ODDITY

G

All the others can be paired

A-J

B-E

C-L

D-N

F-I

H-K

and M-O.

SOLUTIONS TO SUDOKU

6	7	4	3	8	2	9	5	1
8	2	5	1	9	7	4	3	6
3	9	1	5	6	4	7	2	8
9	4	6	8	3	5	2	1	7
2	3	8	6	7	1	5	4	9
5	1	7	2	4	9	8	6	3
1	8	9	4	2	6	3	7	5
7	5	2	9	1	3	6	8	4
4	6	3	7	5	8	1	9	2

SOLUTIONS TO KAKURO

	14	19			10	12		13	17
14	6	8		5	2	3	10	3	7
12	8	4	29	4	8	9	5	2	1
	20	5	9	6	11	10	8	4	1
	7	2	5	7	4	3	13	7	6
			17	1	4	2	7	3	
17	8	9	7	2	5	7	1	6	
15	1	8	6	3	13	8	2	5	1
32	3	6	9	2	4	8	12	3	9
11	7	4	10	1	9		15	7	8

“Every child who is willing to learn deserves to learn.”

Sudarshan Mitter, 75, New Delhi, for giving the gift of education to the poor



Mihir Singh

At first glance, the park opposite No. 964 in Sector 17, Faridabad, appears like any other. But for the families of rickshaw pullers, mechanics, domestic help, sweepers and labourers living in the area, it's a temple of learning; its high priestess 75 year-old Sudarshan Mitter. For almost 20 years, the former teacher's 'coaching centre' has educated poor children free of cost, getting them admission in schools and enabling them to become teachers, engineers, management professionals, even artists. "I began alone with 15 children," she says. "Now, I have three paid teachers and nine volunteers teaching 160 students. Over the years, we have taught over 2,000 students." Her only criteria for admission: the parents of the child should be teetotallers and not engage in any kind of domestic abuse. Many public

schools including DAV Public School and Dayanand Public School have joined cause, giving the students admission, even as teachers at the centre continue to help them with their homework. The curriculum includes vocational training, like auto repair, music and painting. To finance the centre, she set up the Vishwa Darshan Charitable Trust, which is sustained by funds from philanthropists, well-wishers and her former students. "One of my former students Raju Singh, 27, runs an auto repair workshop in Lucknow," says the proud silver. Now, Mitter is turning her sight to widows and destitute women. The Trust already gives monthly rations and clothes to 15 young widows. "I want to help more women," she affirms. "We have enough resources. We have to target genuine cases."

—Nitika Bajpayee

At 60,
life is
more
interesting!



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2 years to less than 3 years	7.25	7.75
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