

harmony

AUGUST 2005 Rs 20

celebrate age



Encounter!

Kiran Bedi

Memories of
radiant brides

Protect your
heart

DON'T BE A VICTIM

ELDER ABUSE. THE TERM THAT lurked in the shadows of so-called traditional households is now on the front pages of newspapers. Recently, *Times of India* carried a news report about a young man, and his wife, being arrested for physically abusing his elderly parents. Ironically, this was a few days after the government proposed the Older Persons (Maintenance, Care and Protection) Bill 2005. The Bill calls for setting up a tribunal in each district of the country to hear complaints of neglect or ill-treatment of seniors and to rule on them within six months.

Harmony welcomes the Bill. It has finally made speaking the unspeakable easier. Elder abuse encompasses a wide range of harm to the elderly. It can take many forms, including neglect, physical and sexual, psychological or emotional abuse or financial exploitation. Because it takes on so many forms, it's virtually impossible to say how many Indian seniors are abused each year. It's a hidden but a growing problem. There are both

mild and severe cases and lots of different causes, with victims coming from all cultural and socio-economic groups. And most of the abusers are family members.

Usually, it's part of a cycle of domestic violence—families with a history of domestic violence are not expected to improve when the members grow older. Or it could be perpetrated by greed—children or grandchildren helping themselves to some of their parents' and grandparents' things. It can also take the passive form of neglect, attacking the dignity and self-worth of silvers, and sometimes driving them to suicide.

While the law takes its course, I urge you not to pretend the problem doesn't exist. We must do something about it. To begin with, victims must come forward and admit to suffering abuse. Secondly, if you are a neighbour or a family member of the victim, report the case. Don't be a silent victim, or a silent spectator or a silent system.

RITU NANDA



Meanwhile, Delhi has formulated a state-level policy for silvers. In fact, Delhi is one of the few states to take a lead in this direction. As for the policy, it is a comprehensive document and covers all dimensions of ageing. However, I feel it can make a difference only if all the organisations for seniors—senior citizens' associations, retired persons' associations, old-age homes, day care centres and NGOs—work in tandem. Efforts are needed to link research, policy, practice and evaluation. I hope other states follow suit and draft their own policies, for the greatest common good of silvers in particular, and the society at large.

Tina Ambani

A Dhirubhai Ambani Memorial Trust Initiative

Harmony—Celebrate Age—August 2005 Volume 2 Issue 3

Publisher **Anthony Jesudasan** Editor **Tina Ambani** Associate Editor **Meeta Bhatti** Assistant Editor **Trina Mukherjee** Senior Writer **Arati Rajan Menon** Chief Sub-Editor **Amita Amin-Shinde** Correspondent **Teena Baruah** Consulting Editor **Sudeep Chakravarti** Design and Photo Editor **Ritu Nanda** Visual Co-ordinator **Anuradha Joshi** Production Manager **Rajeev Nambiar** Design & Imaging **Haresh Patel** Editorial Coordinators **Glenn Fernandes, Anita Rosario**

General Manager, Business Development **Shrenik Mehta** Senior Manager **Mahendra Ghule** Manager **Madhavi Tripathi**

Marketing Coordinator **Meghna Ghatge**

Editorial & Marketing Offices: 4th Floor, Maker Chambers IV, Nariman Point, Mumbai-400021. Tel: 91-22-30325423 (Editorial), 30325472 (Marketing).

Email: contact.mag@harmonyindia.org **Printed and published** by Anthony Jesudasan on behalf of Dhirubhai Ambani Memorial Trust, 505, Dalamal House, 5th Floor, Nariman Point, Mumbai-400021. **Printed** at Thomson Press India Ltd, 18-35 Milestone, Delhi-Mathura Road, Faridabad (Haryana)

Disclaimer: The material provided by *Harmony* is not a substitute for professional opinions. Readers are advised to seek appropriate advice from qualified and licensed professionals in the concerned field. © Dhirubhai Ambani Memorial Trust. All rights reserved worldwide. Reproduction in any manner is prohibited. *Harmony* does not take responsibility for returning unsolicited publication material. www.harmonyindia.org



32



56

contents



24

LINE UP

- 4 RESPONSE
- 6 ORBIT
- 12 YOUR SPACE
- 14 IN FOCUS
- 19 EXCLUSIVE:
The Shabana Azmi column

SPECIAL FEATURES

- 20 LEGACY
- 24 FOREVER:
When less was more
- 32 COVER FEATURE:
Kiran Bedi

BODY & SOUL

- 36 GET WELL SOON
- 40 SHOWING THE WAY
- 42 COLUMN: Yoga Rx
- 44 HEALTH BYTES
- 46 THE LAST WORD:
Maharishi Mahesh Yogi

Cover picture of Kiran Bedi
by **Ashwani Chopra**

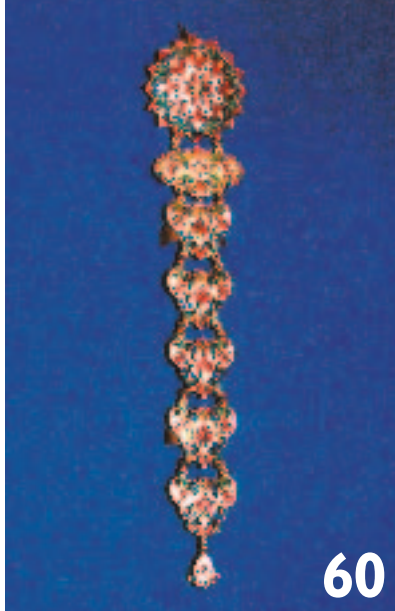
LOOK FOR



For subscription assistance contact: HarmonyCare, Living Media India Limited, 13th Floor, Videocon Towers, E-1, Jhandewalan Extension, New Delhi-110055. Phones: **New Delhi:** 011-51529556, 51020913 **Fax:** 23684841; **Kolkata:** 033-22821922, 22827726, **Fax:** 22825398, 22827254; **Bangalore:** 080-2212448, 2290562, 2218343 **Fax:** 2218335; **Mumbai:** 022-24444423/4/5/6 **Fax:** 24444358; **Chennai:** 044-28478525-44 **Fax:** 28472178; **Email:** harmony@intoday.com



40



60



36



62

FIRST AID

- 48** TECHNOLOGY:
Purohits learn to aim and shoot
- 50** LEGALEASE:
Elder abuse
- 52** SECOND CAREERS:
Crimebuster
- 54** HARMONY INTERACTIVE
CENTRE

ETCETERA

- 56** DESTINATION: Amarnath
- 60** TREASURES:
Hair ornaments
- 62** WHAT I LOVE:
Mary Anne Dasgupta
- 67** BOOKSHELF
- 70** COLUMN: Amita Malik
- 73** AT LARGE: Namita Gokhale
- 74** H PEOPLE
- 76** HEADSTART
- 80** SPEAK

column one

This month you will find two new sections in the magazine. 'Legacies' will feature people who refuse to let their family tradition fade away. We begin with Gopal Krishna Datt, Parliament's official photographer. He is following in the footsteps of his father and his grandfather, with the same Kodak camera that they used. And there's 'Get Well Soon', the section where medical experts will help you understand a range of medical conditions, and work out the ideal diet plan. 'Treatment for blockage in the coronary arteries' is the first in the series. Do take advantage of their expertise.

Elsewhere in the issue, Mary Anne Dasgupta speaks from her heart. The actor of popular Bengali television serial, *Ek Din Pratidin*, talks about what she loves most—recycling waste material to make teaching aids for poor children. Trained to be an educationist, Dasgupta has rearranged her life quite radically over time. She acts, and subtitles films for filmmaker Buddhadeb Dasgupta to support herself. Yet she hangs on to key bits of her identity.

Among the other pleasures in this month's issue is our photo essay, "When less was more". See what prominent Indians like Maharani Gayatri Devi, Margaret Alva, Saira Banu, Shahnaz Husain and Sitara Devi looked like on the day they got married and travel with them down memory lane. Going back in time is also our columnist Amita Malik. In the process of looking for a volunteer to put her family album in order, she urges *Harmony* readers to save their memories from turning to dust. It's a crop of inspiring writing this month. We hope you'll enjoy this issue.

—Meeta Bhatti

AN INVITATION FROM HARMONY



We are looking for contributions from our readers. Write to us if...

- You had an experience related to money or finance which others can learn from
 - You faced a serious health problem and conquered it
 - You know of someone who has done something exceptional after the age of 55
 - You want to share your hobbies and interesting travel experiences with others
 - You have a funny or insightful anecdote about your grandchildren
- ...and we'll print it in the column 'Your Space'

Mail us at 4th Floor, Maker Chambers IV, Nariman Point, Mumbai-400021. Or email at contact.mag@harmonyindia.org



When people plan their retirement, they think of spending time relaxing or indulging in their favourite pastime. Instead, I think this is the right time to share time and experience with those who need it. Devote a couple of hours daily to teaching poor children or spending time with

the critically ill. Retirement is not a time to stop working but a time to give back to society what we have got from it all our lives.

S SAMPATH KUMARI

New Delhi

The letter of the month wins a gift from Vimal

Your anniversary issue was amazing. Congratulations! Silvers finally have a platform to express themselves, especially in the 'Your Space' column. 'Orbit' and 'Health Bytes' are two informative sections that keep us abreast of recent happenings. The article "Turning Pain into Poetry" on Dr Angelee Deodhar's struggle to come to terms with her illness inspired me. I have a suggestion to make. *Harmony* should think about publishing short stories written by senior citizens. It will not only give amateur writers a chance to present their skills but will also be entertaining for readers.

SHOBHANA PARIKH

Mumbai

I wish you all the best on your first anniversary. Hope your magazine celebrates 50 years. The stories and news items you print are interesting and informative. And actor Om Puri on the cover of your June issue brought out the character of the magazine—strong and intense. Keep up the good work.

HANSA BHARUCHA

Mumbai

Congratulations to *Harmony* on its first anniversary. Your magazine has struck a chord in the hearts of thousands of readers. On this happy occasion, I would like to offer some suggestions that I hope will help the magazine and increase its popularity:

- You need to show the youth's perspective on the elderly.
- An ordinary person should get as much space as the Page 3 crowd.
- There should be more pages of quizzes and mind teasers.

VIJAYALAKSHMI ARVIND

Mumbai

Congratulations on the first anniversary of your magazine. I am 81 years old and the pollution-free environment of the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), PUSA, in Delhi, has been my favourite morning haunt after my retirement from Lok Sabha Secretariat in 1982.

I have been interacting with other regular walkers in IARI and, over a period of time, we have become friends. Apart from our daily walks, we sit and discuss current political and cultural activities, share jokes and recite couplets.

Organised into a club since August 15, 1990, we meet at least twice a month, over tea, on Saturday mornings. Apart from festivals, the club celebrates wedding anniversaries and birthdays of its 162 members and

their grand children. Recently, I introduced *Harmony* to my friends. Since then, our meetings have become more interesting.

MADAN MOHAN PRABHAKAR

New Delhi

My wife Prema suffers from a speech handicap owing to repeated paralytic attacks. Whenever she wishes to convey something, I give her a small blackboard to tell me what she needs. I have used several aids available in the market, but either the display screen is too small or too complex. I wish a simple gadget for the speech impaired were available. Can *Harmony* help?

DR N SACHDEVA

Indore

Harmony will certainly scan the market to help you find the right aid. Keep reading.

—Editors

On June 20, my birthday, the first anniversary issue of *Harmony* arrived at my residence. I received greetings from my children, grandchildren and loved ones living in ten different cities. Reading *Harmony* was a bonus greeting. Your magazine has ushered in a new era of peace and concern among those who care for silvers. My best wishes to all those who are involved with this initiative.

**S B BALAJAGANNATHAN,
LABOUR COMMISSIONER
(RETD),**

Sathyamangalam

In June, in a letter to *Harmony*, I G M Chopra introduced the readers of the magazine to Senior Citizens' Forum in Delhi. The forum is one of the many new

organisations for silvers coming up across the country. It looks like the West's idea of giving importance to senior citizens' interests and welfare is finally catching up in India. We have to acknowledge, though, that owing to barriers of religion, language and province, people have gravitated to groups where homogeneity and uniformity are the trademarks. *Harmony* has helped silvers come out of the closet. I recall Karl Marx's clarion call: "Workers of the world unite, you have nothing to lose except your chains." *Harmony's* clarion call is for senior citizens to unite and form a forum—like the one in New Delhi.

JOHN ALEXANDER

Nagpur

A few years ago, I suffered a severe heart attack. I survived and learnt the virtues of self-discipline. At 87, I now lead a healthy and positive life. I go for a three-mile walk every morning, and try to work from home for five to six hours every day. I read your magazine with great interest. It keeps me going. It is insightful and engaging, and has inspirational articles for seniors like me.

JAI RATAN

New Delhi

Ireceived my first issue of *Harmony* (May 2005) as a gift from my friend. I felt really happy going through it. After reading about Major General (ret'd) Ranbir Bakhshi's work ('Speak'), I want to share my encounter with Champak Sukhadia who recently died at the age 86. Sukhadia was working with people afflicted with leprosy in the tribal region of Rajpipla in Gujarat. I was moved to tears one

day when I saw him embracing a woman who had lost both her legs and hands to leprosy. I decided to make a short film on his life and work after that. The film received good response from the Gujarati media and generous donation offers poured in to help Sukhadia take care of poor tribals and lepers from the Bharuch district of Gujarat. I have also made another film on the demolition of a hutment colony in Vadodara that was appreciated by many, including the then chairman of National Human Rights Commission Justice Venkatachaliah. I now try and help accident victims and have already saved seven persons from death.

DHIRU MISTRY

Vadodara

CONTRIBUTORS



Namita Gokhale is a novelist and a columnist. Her first novel *Paro, Dreams of Passion* was published to critical acclaim in 1984. She has since written *Gods, Graves and Grandmother*, *The Book of Shiva*, *The Book of Shadows* and *A Himalayan Love Story*. Her latest novel *Shakuntala, the Play of Memory* was released earlier this year. Gokhale lives in New Delhi with her 69-year-old mother Neeraja Pant and 92-year-old grandmother Shakuntala Pande to whom she dedicated her latest book.

ANALYSE THIS

SEX IN THE 60S

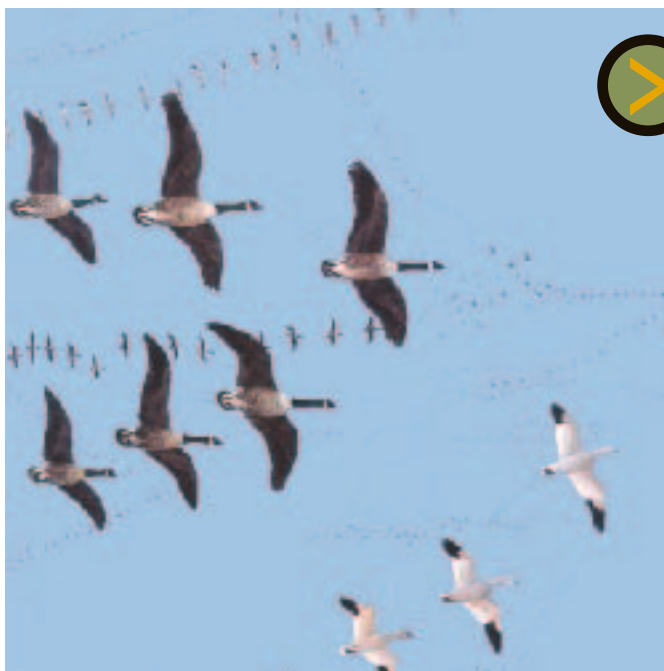
There's no expiry date on a satisfying sex life. According to a survey published in June conducted by US-based

advocacy group American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), sex remains an important part of the lives of elderly Americans. Researchers

spoke to over 1,600 people with an average age of 61. One-third reported having sex regularly and half said they were very happy with their sex lives. The study also found that drugs like Viagra have helped recharge the sex lives of many seniors interviewed.

This was AARP's second nationwide study on sex; the first one was conducted in 1999. And quite a bit has changed in the past six years. For one, the proportion of men who've tried potency-enhancing medicines, hormones, or other treatments has doubled from 10 per cent to 22 per cent. And the majority (68 per cent) of those men said the treatments have increased their sexual satisfaction. Men placed a higher value on sex than women: 66 per cent of men, compared with 48 per cent of women, said that satisfying sex is important to their quality of life. But 83-year-old Helen Gurley Brown, former editor of *Cosmopolitan* magazine and author of the 1962 bestseller *Sex and the Single Girl*, has an explanation for this. "So many older women lack partners," she says, "that they may just be making the best of a bad situation in saying that sex isn't all that important to them."





FAR FROM HOME

It's not easy to emigrate—especially for senior citizens. A study undertaken by four Indian silvers concludes that uprooting elders could not only be traumatic but, “in some cases, lead to a sense of isolation, depression, illness or a confusion of values and beliefs”. Chitta Ranjan Mukherjee, Ramji Patel, Thycaud Subramaniam and V Thyagarajan, who emigrated to the US after spending over 65 years in India, write, “The problem of transition is seen to be particularly acute in case of immigrants from cultures in which family ties are strong and family values are cherished.” As moving into a new country also affects self-confidence and lowers morale, the writers recommend regular get-togethers and social gatherings. The report, titled “Towards Fostering Family Values in Immigrant Community”, was published on hindustantimes.com.

INNOVATION

ROBOT POWER

This one is straight out of a sci-fi film. Japanese engineers have developed a ‘robot suit’ that can help workers lift heavy loads—or assist people with disabilities climb stairs. “Humans may be able to mutate into supermen in the near future,” says Yoshiyuki Sankai, professor and engineer at Tsukuba University who led the project. The 15-kg battery-powered suit, code-named HAL-5, detects muscle movements through electrical-signal flows on the skin surface and then amplifies them. It can also move on its own accord, helping elderly or handicapped people walk. The prototype suit was displayed at the World Exposition that took place in Aichi, central Japan, in June.



NEWSWORTHY

MISSING THE BUS

Following a storm of public protest, the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) in Delhi is now considering a policy review on the issue of granting senior citizens concession on DTC buses. The DSW had introduced a new rule according to which only those with a family income of less than Rs 48,000 per annum could get a concessional bus pass. Prior to this rule, all senior citizens, irrespective of income, could travel in DTC buses at a subsidised rate of Rs 50

for three months. "The decision was taken owing to financial constraints but after we received complaints, we are reviewing the rule," says P P Dhal, deputy director in the DSW. We have our fingers crossed.



POST CARD!

In a move that will benefit millions across the country, the Department of Posts plans to introduce its own debit card. Account holders will have the freedom to withdraw money anywhere, anytime. The cards will be issued to all savings account holders, who also hold monthly income scheme (MIS) accounts. Senior citizens, irrespective of whether they hold an MIS account, will be able to avail of this facility. At present, depositors can withdraw money only during normal post-office working hours. Initially restricted to metros, the service will soon be expanded to other cities and rural areas. The move will also lead to a drastic reduction in workload for postal staff. According to official estimates, about 40 per cent of the department's 6 lakh employees work in the savings bank section. The Department of Posts is tying up with several nationalised and private banks to use their countrywide ATM network.

SILVER FORCE

At *Harmony*, we've always called silvers a force to reckon with. Authorities in the border city of Juarez in Mexico apparently feel the same. Grappling with a wave of kidnappings and murders, they have recruited people over 60 to patrol outside elementary schools. Called the *policia adulto mayor* (elder police force), the elders, armed only with a cell phone and wearing a uniform of black pants and a yellow shirt, work in pairs outside schools, watching for suspicious activities and alerting police. "Their presence helps deter criminal activity," says Gustavo Zabre, director of preventive police for Chihuahua state, where Juarez is located. Some 300 people applied for the job, but only 35 were selected. They were sent to a police academy for two weeks to learn observation and description techniques and to receive first aid and physical training. The seniors work 12 hours a week and are paid US\$ 185 (about Rs 8,000) and given US\$ 75 (about Rs 3,200) worth of groceries every month.





COMPELLED TO CARE

The Centre recently proposed the Older Persons (Maintenance, Care and Protection) Bill 2005, aimed at “compelling” earning adults to take care of their parents and grandparents. According to the Bill, a tribunal will be set up in each district of the country to hear complaints of neglect or ill-treatment of seniors and to rule on them. While we welcome the Bill, *Harmony* feels legislation alone cannot bring about any worthwhile transformation in hearts. What’s needed is a crucial change in mindset. We’re working on that.

GR8 CONNECTION

In association with Indian Posts, cellular phone services provider BPL Mobile has launched a scheme for silvers in Tamil Nadu. Available at all post offices, BPL’s prepaid plan costs Rs 499 for a SIM card that offers talk time worth Rs 200 and free incoming calls while roaming in Chennai. The card will be valid for six months and can be recharged at post offices. In return, BPL gives postal information. All you need to do is dial 150.

HEALTH NEWS

SPECIAL CARE

Some good news for silvers in Chandigarh, Mohali and Panchkula—the Fortis Hospital at Mohali has launched the Golden Age Club for people over 65. For an annual fee of Rs 500, silvers will be entitled to free consultations from 9 am to 6 pm, thrice a week. Members can also avail 20 per cent discount on all OPD imaging facilities and physiotherapy. Fortis honoured eminent local seniors—including Nek Chand, the creator of Chandigarh’s rock garden—by making them honorary members.



Stretch your rupee: Canara Bank has launched a new scheme for seniors. Called Canrelax, the annuity scheme will guarantee a monthly income on a deposit of Rs 1 lakh and more with the principal and cumulative interest calculated at bank rates.

OFFBEAT

VINTAGE BEAUTIES



The organisers call it 'a rolling museum'. And on June 27, the crowds sure rolled in to see the 23rd Annual Great Race at Limestone Landing in Maysville, Kentucky in the US. Billed as a time, speed and distance race for vintage automobiles, the race included rare beauties like a 1910 Selden, a 1934 McQuay-Norris van and a sleek 1934 Buick Schaefer Indy Car. "The Great Race gives drivers a chance to enjoy and experience old cars that were favourites long ago," says Mike Ewing, spokesman for the race. "People from all walks of life come here, fathers with sons sitting on their shoulders and kids in strollers, and old folks looking at cars and remembering their past."

TRENDS

NEED OF THE HOUR

While the developed world got rich before its people started living longer, in developing countries people are getting older before the countries have got rich, according to a recent World Bank study, "Old-Age Income Support in the 21st Century: An International Perspective on Pension Systems and Reforms". The study points out that nearly 60 per cent of the world's elderly live in developing countries, and that share is expected to rise to 80 per cent by 2050, and calls for creative thinking to ensure that silvers are looked after without jeopardising commitments to other important sectors. That is easier said than done. In India, 89 per cent of workers have no retirement benefits as only 11 per cent of the workforce is employed in the public sector and organised private sector. Experts in India feel the problem could be solved to some extent by offering well-designed personal pension accounts to workers and allowing them to take the accounts to their next job. There should also be flexibility to add contributions and make withdrawals.



PPF online: With ICICI Bank launching India's first online Public Provident Fund account, you can now invest in and manage the account from home. The bank has also been authorised to receive subscriptions and act as collecting and servicing agent for the 9 per cent Senior Citizens' Savings Scheme. This scheme is being launched in Mumbai and Delhi, to be followed by a nationwide rollout in a phased manner.

LOVE THAT!



HOT STUFF

Meet the hottest sensation on the American basketball circuit: The Miami Heat Golden Oldies. Yup, all 12 are over 60. And they dazzle crowds in Miami who come to see the home team play ball, bumping and grinding to hip-hop music. The crowds love the costumes; bikinis painted on baggy white T-shirts and shorts, and jerseys emblaz-oned on the back with their ages. Occasionally, they even rip their clothes off. The Golden Oldies were formed when the management of the Miami Heat wanted to launch an alternative form of entertainment during home games. They already had a children's dance squad and a group of scantily clad, professional female dancers. To find the perfect group of seniors, they enlisted the help of a Jazzercise instructor at a Florida senior centre and she delivered 12 of her best, one man and 11 women, ranging from 61 to 79. "We're like celebrities," said Cora Pakuris, 68, a retired schoolteacher. "People know who we are." The group does not get paid but receives free game tickets for families and friends.

H RECOMMENDS

ACTION PLAN FOR AUGUST

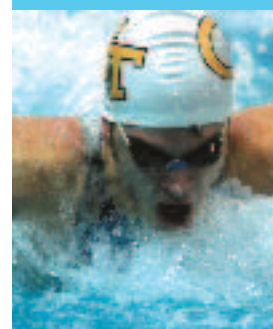
1. Back to school: Now that you have the time, enrol for a course in your local college or university. In the past year, nearly half the guest students at German universities were older than 60. And in Cuba, more than 30,000 seniors have graduated from the University Departments for Aged Adults since 2000.

2. Leave a legacy: Sign up for organ donation, taking a cue from the 6,000 members of the Jharkhand Pensioner Welfare Development Society, who have collectively decided to donate their eyes and organs after death.

3. Take the plunge: Just a few laps a day in the pool are proven to improve cardiac health, lower blood pressure and burn calories. "Swimming will keep you from needing a walker when you're 80," says Wyatt Earp, who coaches the Masters Swimming Program in Lincoln, Nebraska, in the US. Among the 300 members are two men who turned to swimming for recovery from heart surgery.

4. Voice your vision: If you have any ideas about how to improve your community, make them known. Someone might just be willing to listen. When members of the Older People Empowered Now Forum, a seniors' group in Edinburgh, sent a list of proposals to improve law and order to their MP Mark Lazarowicz, they never imagined he would pass it on to Prime Minister Tony Blair. Blair was so impressed he invited the group to 10, Downing Street, and then asked them to prepare another report with detailed recommendations for his proposed 'law-and-order and community respect' initiative.

5. Go stag: Form a lunch club and have a blast. In Weehawken, New Jersey, in the US, members of the Weehawken Elks, a seniors' organisation, formed the ROMEO club 20 years ago. The acronym stands for Retired Old Men Eating Out, and that's what they do once a month. And with the Elks inducting female members this June, the guys of ROMEO now get a chance to play the real McCoy.



Welcome to the section where you can share your thoughts and experiences on anything under the sun. Write in, and make this space your own

THE OPEN ROAD



Life at 50 was comfortable. I had an easygoing government job and a happy marriage. I never thought it would come to an abrupt end with the sudden loss of my husband. For five years, I couldn't come to terms with his death. I tried finding solace in experiences of those who suffered a similar loss but didn't lose their sanity. It helped a little. There was my work too. But I was far from happy. One day, on the brink of 55, I decided to take some concrete steps to overcome my grief—I enrolled myself as an external student for an MA in English—I had graduated in Sanskrit. William Shakespeare and his works helped drive my blues away. Soon, I got a degree.

A year later, I retired. Not one to take it easy, I started teaching children in my neighbourhood. In my spare time, I wrote fiction in Marathi. In 1987, at the age of 64, I published my first work of fiction, *Vaishali*. I also wrote short stories for local Marathi magazines.

Now I am 82, and remain as motivated. In May this year, on my daughter-in-law Jennifer's insistence, I accompanied her on a tour to Jammu & Kashmir. We went sightseeing, and I even climbed the 256 steps to the Shivalaya Temple in Srinagar.

Then came the trip to the Vaishnodevi shrine on top of the Aripura Mountains at a height of 5,200 ft. That meant a 14 km trek to the shrine and 14 km

back. We had the option of travelling to the shrine on horseback, *doli* (a chair attached to poles and lifted by four men) or a helicopter. We opted for the *doli*, but as luck would have it, *doli* bearers went on a strike that day. Out of the remaining two options, a horseback ride scared me and an expensive helicopter ride was out of the question—so we decided to trek. We started walking at 11 pm as it is cooler at night and hence the climb is easier. I never imagined I could walk continuously for more than five hours and manage the gradient at my age. It was delightful to watch the mountain curves lit with lights, like a beautiful necklace.

At 5 am, we still had a long way to go. Several kilometres later, we heard devotees chanting *Jai Mata Di*. At about 8.30 am, we entered the cave for the *darshan*. After that, we took another route to return to the hotel. I was tired but charged up. We reached at 3 pm. This pilgrimage has not only boosted my confidence, it has also taught me to enjoy the view from the road. And I have realised that if you set your heart to doing something, nothing is impossible.

—S G HURRY
Mumbai

A SOLDIER'S SON

I want to share this experience with readers of *Harmony* as I feel senior citizens who have grandchildren would understand the sentiment. A few years ago, my 14-year-old grandson Indervir Singh—known as Veeru at home—had an accident while he was studying in Chandigarh. As his father, an Army officer, was posted at Roorkee, Veeru was staying with his paternal grandfather, a retired Army General, at the time. The accident happened while he was waiting for the school bus. The bus tyre ran over his foot, injuring him badly. Immediately, students gathered around to help. One of the schoolteachers, Komal, drove Veeru in her car to the hospital.

A few days later, I went to Chandigarh to see Veeru. When I entered the hospital ward, my daughter Lavi (his mother) came to me crying bitterly. She asked,



FARZANA COOPER

"What will we do if his leg doesn't heal fully?" I tried consoling her by saying, "God will protect Veeru. Don't worry." She said, "The flesh on the foot is all gone. His ankle is also broken." My heart sank, but I kept a brave face for my daughter's sake. Lavi went on, "But you know what, I am told that when the doctors were cleaning Veeru's wounds with a small instrument without local anaesthesia, he did not cry!"

That surprised me. I sat by Veeru's bedside and said, "My darling, it must have hurt terribly when the doctors cleaned your wounds. You should have cried. It relieves the pain and agony to some extent." Looking at me, Veeru took my hand in his and said, "How could I cry? I am a soldier's son and a soldier's grandson!" It was my turn to cry!

Veeru's wounds healed miraculously. Today, he is a healthy and happy young man.

—Shan Gurdev Singh
Pune

GET KEYED IN

I am a former IAS officer and former managing director of Chandigarh Industrial and Tourism Corporation. At 68, I had some knowledge of the computers, courtesy of a stint in the UK in the 1980s and training at the IAS Officers' Academy in

Mussoorie. But my 64-year-old wife Nirmal, an Ayurveda doctor and former assistant director in the Haryana state health department, was clueless as to how to operate it. After retirement, the only time I went near a computer was to brush off the dust from it. My son used it a few years ago as a management student.

Life without feeling the need for a computer was blissful, until my grandchildren in the United States grew old enough to demand emails from us. I knew there was no way out but to become computer literate. Opportunity came knocking through an advertisement about a computer camp at DAV College. I decided to grab it. I convinced Nirmal to enroll for a six-week computer course.

The six-week workshop, held all days except Sundays, started with one computer for four people. Five days later, it shifted to another computer room in the college with a computer for everyone. For the first few days, the instructor from the DAV computer science department, Avneet Rangi taught us how to hold the mouse, how to open and close windows, before explaining what a word document is—I could do that easily as I had experience in composing letters to newspaper editors. Nirmal had difficulty learning initially. It took her some time to connect the movement of the mouse to the corresponding action on the screen.

Five weeks later, MS-Excel was voted the turning point in the course. Most people had no clue about the Excel sheet, a software that divides a screen page into rows and columns to feed data or make arithmetic calculations. My wife thought it was a great tool for homemakers to maintain simple accounts. But the most interesting was the internet session, something Nirmal was waiting for eagerly. She was keen on learning how to email.

After the course, the first thing we did was to compose a long mail to our grandchildren. I feel, seniors, especially those living alone, need to be Internet savvy. So enthused were we that we even booked our train tickets to Delhi online. One thing we learnt was, it's never too late to learn.

—D V Bhatia
Chandigarh

How green is my *valley?*

Alarmed by the environmental degradation in Dehradun, the Friends of Doon have been working relentlessly for over two decades to right the wrong, says **Teena Baruah**

A light breeze is blowing in the Dehradun valley. If one ignores the deep, grey mining scars running down the otherwise green Shivalik ranges, the scene is panoramic. Out of nowhere, a plastic bag floats in

the light breeze to settle on the branch of a dying eucalyptus tree. And reality hits you.

Residential colonies have sprung up in place of litchi orchards in Dalanwala, in central Dehradun, and tea estates in Vasant Vihar,

on the outskirts of the town. Majra, which once grew the prized Dehradun basmati, is now a dirty interstate bus terminus. The green slopes on the outskirts of Dehradun have been bought by developers and sold to affluent families from the plains.



ANAY GOYAL

(From left) Arijit Banerji, Shanti Varma, Ritu Chatterjee and daughter Chinmayi, Maria Ghosh and P K Ghosh

The deterioration of the valley, according to residents, started with rampant limestone mining in the 1980s. The quarrying stopped with a Supreme Court ban in 1986, but the damage was done. Meanwhile, concerned about what was happening to their home town, some retired residents of Rajpur Road took it upon themselves to right the wrong—they formed FOD.

“FOD doesn’t stand for Fuddy Ole Duddies,” points out member 68-year-old Arijit Banerji. “It simply means Friends of Doon.” The society was formed in 1982 after a truck carrying limestone almost ran over Mady Martin, wife of former headmaster of Doon School John Martin. She resolved to close the gates on mining and found support in Major General R N Bakshi of Cheshire Homes, retired headmaster of Doon School Gulab Ramchandani, former American School teacher Florence Pandhi and Colonel V N Mathur. Together, they strengthened support for the public interest litigation filed by Avdhash Kaushal, featured in *Harmony’s* April 2005 issue (see “*Son of the Soil*”), which resulted in the Supreme Court ban.

This victory set the wheels of change in motion. Today, FOD is a 110-member eco-taskforce breathing life into wasteland, popularising water harvesting and preserving natural habitats in the valley. Helping them are schoolchildren from the many schools in Dehradun.

One successful project by FOD was a tree-plantation drive in 1998, led by Maria Ghosh, a 70-year-old retired music teacher of

German origin. She says it was “bad conscience” that prompted them to get together. “We felt guilty about planting ourselves in these pristine foothills,” she says. “So, after we finished landscaping our gardens, we decided to carry on our green mission to the streets of Dehra.”

School students helped Ghosh carry the green mission to the streets. Ghosh teamed up with Surjeet Khaira, a geography teacher at Welham’s Boys’ School, and enrolled a bunch of students. Wearing gumboots, Ghosh and her team waded through three-inch deep mud to plant 300 cattle-proof saplings on

Today, FOD is a 110-strong eco-taskforce preserving natural habitats in the valley

the 22-acre Parade Ground in central Dehradun. The Mussoorie Dehradun Development Authority pitched in by fencing the plants. Unfortunately, when Ghosh returned a few days later, she discovered her plants had not survived the onslaught of a Russian circus that had camped in one part of the ground.

Not one to give in, Ghosh roped in some more students to plant saplings along the 5 km stretch of Rajpur Road from the railway station to the main bazaar. The owners of the bungalows dotting the road also promised to water the plants regularly. “We bought indigenous plants like ficus (fig) and camphor from our local nursery,” she says. “We planted them along with tree guards. Within three months, all the tree guards were stolen and only 20 out of the 200 plants survived.”

The next time Ghosh was lucky. This time she planted sturdy trees with maximum water retention capacity in the Income Tax colony, Tibetan colony in Sahastradhara, a picnic spot on the outskirts of Dehradun, and 14 schools. The trees survived. “We try and contribute to the biodiversity by never planting the same plant over a whole acre of land,” she adds. Surjeet Khaira claims the project changed him for life. Today, he is an expert on the environment and writes a regular column on gardening in *Himachal Times*.

But just planting saplings was not enough. The need of the hour

was to spread awareness at the grassroot level. The late Meg Majithia—she died in April, 2005—an FOD member, realised that introducing environmental education in boarding and day schools was the answer. In 1988, she teamed up with another FOD member Jennifer Nandi to draft an environment education programme for students. She even translated her entire syllabus into Hindi with the help of Sandeep Puran Singh, a teacher. Sixteen years later, in 2004, the Supreme Court made it a compulsory subject in schools across the country.

Majithia selected a group of 10 to 12-year-olds and educated them for eight months before moving on to the next batch. Her sessions included forest safaris and bird watching trails. “We selected our venues carefully,” says 74-year-

old P K Ghosh, who is currently working on the project. "Safaris are conducted at the Wildlife Institute campus, while talks are generally held in the Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology museum and bird watching usually happens in the wee hours at the Forest Research Institute campus, the governor's house, Indian Military Academy campus and Survey of India campus."

Sixty-seven-year-old Shanti Varma, retired principal of Welham Girls' School, feels the sessions weren't conventional classroom lessons — they were lively and interactive." Varma is now busy holding a series of workshops on water harvesting. "Can you imagine water scarcity in a place where it rains 10 months a year?" she wonders. "If people can spend crores of rupees on mansions on Rajpur Road, why can't they spend a little more on water harvesting?"

Like Varma, other members are willing to push the envelope even further, taking on new projects.

Friends of Doon are now busy holding a series of workshops on water harvesting

Sujit Mukherjee, 63, conducts a nature safari for the students of the National Institute for Visually Handicapped on Rajpur Road. He teaches them how to identify birds like oriole, drongo, mynah and bulbul by their twitters. Another member, Rajan Brijnath, 68, an HRD expert retired from Imperial Chemicals Ltd, has added a new dimension to the group's eco-activism by introducing a nature quiz in 14 schools. Thanks to the Wildlife



School students help FOD take the tree-plantation drive to the streets

Institute of India, the winners were sent on a four-day forest safari to Corbett National Park accompanied by a field scientist.

The group has had its share of controversy too. In 1994, FOD set up a school in Pathri, on the outskirts of Dehradun, for Gujjar tribals evicted from Rajaji National Park. It led to confrontation between the FOD

Former director of the Rajaji National Park Samir Sinha also lauds the efforts of FOD in helping the Uttaranchal government relocate the Gujjar. "They have achieved so much in life that they don't need to prove anything to anyone," he says. "Yet they go about spreading nature awareness amongst political and government circles. Their concerns are also very different from most pensioners."

and environmental groups, who claimed FOD played a part in driving the tribe out of their natural habitat. On the other hand, FOD, struggling with absenteeism, ran the school for 10 years. It trained only 350 students during that period. Finally last year, the school was handed over to the state government.

Irrespective of these allegations, FOD lists Pathri School as one of its most significant achievements.

These include some who are not quite won over by FOD. Tehmi Kapadia, 93, a resident of Dehradun for over seven decades, feels FOD is an elitist club that people join because it has become fashionable. "It wasn't so in the beginning," she says. "But now only a handful of members are interested in making a difference." To this, Florence Pandhi replies, "We do not expect massive changes. And when you see who we are, greying and less energetic, and where we are, you will understand us better. All we want is small beginnings." ■



just the way you wanted to live...

our place is a dream facility for senior citizens, offering all the amenities for a good quality of life, taking care of all their needs, and most uniquely; offering unlimited access to medical help of any kind, anytime.

- * Located near International Airport, Mumbai
- * Life time occupancy
- * Air conditioned Luxurious Suites
- * Landscaped environment
- * Organised house keeping
- * Monitored security

- * Complete health care
- * Day-to-day health monitoring
- * Round the clock medical and nursing care
- * Physiotherapy
- * Nutritious diet
- * Gym
- * Yoga
- * Meditation

- * Prayer halls
- * Library
- * Party places
- * Indoor games
- * Chatting lounges
- * Bar & dining
- * Movie hall
- * Business center
- * Bank with ATM

our place
Unending Happiness...

for membership queries
India Toll Free: 1 600 225995

Adjacent to SevenHills Hospital, Marol Maroshi Road, Andheri East, Mumbai 400 059.
Tel: 022 5585 1579 Fax: 022 28374188 Web: www.ourplace.in e-mail: info@ourplace.in



Mudra/h3922

www.harmonyindia.org

You've enjoyed reading our magazine. Now enjoy the website too.



A Dhirubhai Ambani Memorial Trust Initiative

Quality of later life

I WAS WATCHING MOHAN KUMAR'S FILM

Avtaar, starring Rajesh Khanna and myself, on television the other night. In the 1980s, when the film was made, I didn't understand why was it phenomenally successful. I do now. It's about pride, dignity and self-respect. It had the courage to turn on its head the Indian notion of how self-sacrificing seniors are meant to be when it comes to their children. It is the story of a proud man who decides to turn his back on his children when they let him and his wife down. Instead of shedding tears and wallowing in self-pity, *Avtaar*, the protagonist, takes life in his own hands and carves his own destiny. He strikes his children out of the will he leaves behind and handsomely rewards his servant Sewak who had served him selflessly with love and devotion through all his hardship.

It was a revolutionary concept then. Today it seems to have become a necessity. Every day I read horrifying stories in the newspapers of elders being abused by members of their own family. Even as we lament the loss of traditional values when duty towards ones parents was a given, we need to take stock of life around us today. The hard lesson seniors need to learn is, they must fend for themselves first. What the children give them by way of nurturing and care must be regarded as a bonus, not a given.

The more I read *Harmony* and write for it, the more I think about the quality of later life. It has a lot to do with your assets, like property. Stop and think about it for a moment! Do you own it alone, jointly with your spouse or with your children, or have already transferred it to your children? As simple as the question may appear, the answer could have a considerable impact on your happiness. Of course,

your property is yours to use or give away without any strings or reservations, as you see fit. But I suggest don't pass it along to your heirs in your lifetime. Especially not after I read the newspaper report about a Mumbai-based young man, and his wife, torturing his elderly parents for money.

Your children may undoubtedly be the best children anyone could have. But if your children are the best, they would want to make it in life without acquiring or selling your assets and not by making you dependent on them or their resources. It's best you own your assets alone or jointly with your

spouse. Pay heed to everyday news for ills of society. A son using his father's pension cheque for personal use; another slaps an old parent; a family member locks a frail relative in a room without food; an old widow eats her usual breakfast, lunch and dinner of tea and stale *chappati*. These are all manifestations of elder abuse and the cause could be the elderly person's property.

It's best you retain your property and leave it for your heirs as a will. I have met so many seniors who have realised the need for this legality after being stabbed in the back by their friends, children and relatives. I don't want to make it sound alarming, as this situational drama may not apply to your

family and friends. However, it's better to be equipped with this legal document to avoid any potential problems that you may not be able to foresee now. But the more I read and hear such horror stories, the more I am convinced that seniors should not entrust their property with anyone else but their living spouse. After all, you have a life ahead. And homelessness is not a situation anyone wants to face. ■



RAM BHERWANI

It has a lot to do
with your assets.
I suggest don't pass
it on to your heirs
in your lifetime

Shooting stars

Being Parliament's official photographer is family business for Gopal Krishna Datt, following in the footsteps of his father, and his grandfather before that. The tradition shows no sign of fading, discovers **Teena Baruah**

Photographs: From the archives of **A R Datt**

Gopal Krishna Datt is 62 years old. And his Kodak circuit camera is 95. Together, they have kept alive a family legacy that dates back to 1908. That year, his grandfather Anant Ram Datt set up a tiny, cramped photo studio at 2-B Alipore Road in Civil Lines in Delhi. He went on to become the official photographer for the Viceroy in India. Remarkably, his successors have carried on in his footsteps—Gopal Krishna has been Parliament's official photographer since 1976.

It reads like a family saga—and is one. Anant Ram had to struggle to establish himself as a photographer. But soon, his uncanny skill of shooting large group photographs won him acclaim. He got the coveted job of shooting the members of the Chamber of Princes, an alliance of loyal princes and British officials who met annually to discuss mutual interests. Next was the honour of becoming photographer to the Viceroy, from 1915 to 1930.

It was only the beginning. His son and protégé Agya Ram took over the mantle and continued to serve as official photographer to the viceroys and governor generals from 1930 to 1947. After Independence, he was commissioned to take a group shot of the elected members of the first Parliament of India. Not convinced that this 41-year-old, lugging a cumbersome camera could deliver, then prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru asked him to shoot the empty gallery with Parliament House in the backdrop. Agya Ram

delivered. Nehru liked it and a tradition was born—the A R Datt studio has photographed all successive Parliaments.

Today, the studio is a landmark, standing on what was originally Lord Curzon's office. It houses a priceless record of all the luminaries photographed by Anant Ram, his son Agya and grandson Gopal Krishna. "I have over a thousand negatives of viceroys, governor generals, princesses, statesmen and politicians photographed by us," says Gopal Krishna, as he ferrets out an old file containing acknowledgements bearing impressive insignia and letterheads of powerful people, from then and now.

A yellowing parchment dated March 6, 1920 reads, 'The Honourable Baron of Chelmsford is pleased to appoint A R Datt as photographer to his



ASHWANI CHOPRA

Gopal Krishna uses his grandfather's camera for group photographs only

Excellency.’ An acknowledgement, dated March 12, 1925 from the Earl of Reading, then viceroy and governor general of India, also confirms A R Datt’s status as official photographer. There’s yet another recommendation from then king of Afghanistan Aman Ullah, who invited Anant Ram to Kabul thrice for photographing him.

Along with Anant Ram on many of his assignments went his Kodak circuit camera, one of the company’s earliest prototypes, which he bought in 1910. Initially, he found it suffered from a mechanical error with the pictures coming out of focus—in fact, the few hundred pieces sold all over the world were soon discarded by dissatisfied users. But soon he corrected the defect, and his grandson now uses the same camera for group photos. “No one else knew how to take huge groups using a single shot and negative,” says Gopal Krishna, with pride. “My grandfather created this unique technique. There is a special way to tilt the lens to get the desired effect. I learnt it from my father.”

The camera can take photographs 7 ft tall, accommodating up to 2,000 people in a single frame. Besides, the camera revolves 360°— the lens can start from one side of the frame and revolve all the way to the other side, making it possible for a person sitting on the left of the group to run all the way to the right and appear twice in the same frame! The camera uses 10 x 12 inches or 15 x 12

Kodak makes special negatives for Gopal Krishna’s camera

inch negatives, which are no longer manufactured. Kodak makes them exclusively for the studio, which also has a 10 mX10m photo enlarger, a legacy from Agya Ram’s time, which is functional even today.

After assisting his father for two decades, Gopal Krishna took over the studio after Agya Ram succumbed to Parkinson’s in 1996. While Agya Ram used the camera in natural light, Gopal Krishna has proved successful in using the camera in artificial light, and with coloured film. He has also won over today’s motley crew of MPs with his deadpan instructions—“Sit straight to look younger than you actually are”, or “Don’t keep your hands on the chair; they look like a bunch of bananas”.



Gopal Krishna knows all their quirks. Vijay Mallya, he says, always politely refuses when asked to shift places. Congress president Sonia Gandhi usually arrives five minutes before the shoot. Dr A P J Abdul Kalam loves being coaxed with "Smile Please". And Maneka Gandhi pulls a long face if asked to move closer to her sister-in-law Sonia. In November 2002, a day before he had to photograph 800 members of Parliament, Datt was corralled by a team of women MPs. They requested him to turn stylist and suggest a common colour scheme for their saris. He graciously assured them that whatever they wore would look stunning.

Women MPs often request Gopal Krishna to turn stylist

It is one among many treasured memories, which Gopal Krishna has little time to dwell on. His next project is to photograph an assembly of 400 tanks in a 6 ft frame for the Indian Army. Assisting him is his 22-year-old son Anuj. The tradition lives on. 🇮🇳

Members of Seventh Lok Sabha (24 August, 1984)

[illegible]

When less was more

Harmony walks down memory aisle with five radiant brides

A bride, looking like a character straight out of a Karan Johar film. The groom, looking like Shah Rukh Khan, in *sherwani*, *dupatta* draped around his shoulders. A soft *shehnai* in the background trampled by a blaring popular band. Today, style icons have taken over to dictate, from head to toe, the very essence of the once demure

day, and captured the imagery that speaks volumes of the decades gone by.

We knocked on Shaukat Azmi's door to hear about her wedding to noted Urdu progressive poet and lyricist, the late Kaifi Azmi. "We married in 1947, barely three months before Independence," she recalls. "I still vividly remember that day. The fervour

wedding of Maharani Gayatri Devi and Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II of Jaipur, an occasion so lavish it made it into the Guinness Book of Records for being the most expensive wedding. The charming 19-year-old Gayatri Devi, daughter of Maharaja Jitendra Narayan and Maharani Indira Devi of the Koch dynasty of Cooch Behar, later listed by *Vogue* magazine as one of the most beautiful women in the world, fell in love with the heir to the Jaipur throne. Their marriage was initially met with opposition by her parents as Man Singh had two wives, both daughters of the Maharaja of Jodhpur. However, they gave in and she was married in 1939. Her timeless elegance still remains.

Veteran designer Ritu Kumar met Gayatri Devi while researching her book, *The Costumes and Textiles of Royal India*. "She showed me a picture of herself, wearing a striking pink *gaghra choli* and *odhni* at a wedding, looking regal and stunning," she says. "As I complimented her, she said, 'If you can look like that when you are beautiful and young, can you explain to me

What she wore then was a clear reflection of the culture and tradition she belonged

Indian bride. What she wore then—clothes, jewellery, accessories—was a clear reflection of the culture and tradition to which she belonged. Social tradition now demands an evaluation of stature, wealth, and how much you can flaunt.

There was a time, though, when less was more. *Harmony* caught the grace and gravity of some prominent Indian brides who walked down the aisle when the flashbulb camera was the only mechanical witness to that special

of Independence was gathering pace and Kaifi *saab* was actively involved in the movement. We didn't have money for an elaborate wedding, so taking pictures was out of the question. He was a member of the Communist Party and earned Rs 45 per month, a sum that was barely enough to run the household and buy him cigarettes."

While money was an issue for Shaukat and Kaifi Azmi, it was an irrelevance at the elaborate

why does the younger generation want to look like colourless crows?"

Not looking any less royal was Kathak exponent Sitara Devi at her wedding. She had a registered civil marriage with filmmaker K Asif in 1944 at the Old Custom House in Mumbai. She wore a zari *lehenga choli*. "Those days, gold was cheap at Rs 22 a tola," she remembers. "That came encrusted with nine jewels (*navratna*)—diamonds, rubies, emerald, yellow sapphire, blue sapphire, pearls, coral, moonstone and turquoise—in the form of exquisite pieces of jewellery." Sitara Devi got her *navratna* set made from Amritlal Jewellers at Mumbai's Zaveri Bazaar. "Panna Maharaj, a well-known jeweller of my time, supplied genuine jewellery. As for my bridal dress, I bought it from my salary of Rs 1,500 a month." One of the highest paid stars at the time, the actor was

long top) with elaborate gold *zardosi* work. I wore a Hyderabad *lachha* (a choker with precious stones), diamond and emerald *karn phool* (earrings) and *tika* (adornment on forehead)," she says. In line with tradition, the bridal dress came from the bridegroom's family. "Those were not the days of designers. I have no idea how much the dress cost," she says, adding, "They took one of my dresses for size and the first time I saw the *gharara* was on my wedding day. It now lies neatly in a box covered with muslin."

Former Union Minister Margaret Alva nee Nazareth wore a shimmering gold sari when she married Niranjan in the summer of 1964 in Bangalore. They had a perfect Christian wedding at the Holy Ghost Church. The sari she wore covered her head for the ceremony. She changed into a magenta and gold outfit for the reception. Adding

tailored and embroidered by her mother Naseem Banu. She was 22 and he was 44. They had never acted together and fans were avid to see them as a couple. Film shootings were disrupted and eager fans would knock at their door at all times.

Much has changed since then—from mindsets to bridal finery. There has been an emergence of designer labels, and imitations, for every occasion. To recapture the sheer elegance of the past, catch a glimpse of eternity in your own album—beautiful images separated by thin sheets of butter paper, crisp in the memory of your finest moment.

—Anuradha Joshi

Much has changed since then—from mindsets to bridal finery

working with Ranjit Studios. "I still have my wedding attire, which I have preserved carefully. Times are bad and I am scared to wear it often. The last time I wore it was on my son Ranjit Barot's wedding, almost 10 years ago."

Shahnaz Husain, the queen of herbal beauty products, hasn't worn hers even once since her 'child marriage' to IAS officer Nasir Husain. She got married in Lucknow in 1957 when she was 15. "I wore a red and gold silk *gharara* (a long flowing skirt with

glitter to her getup was sparkling diamond and gold jewellery that included a three-stringed chain or 'Suko Sor', a traditional Mangalorian ornament.

Ironically, Saira Banu, popular Bollywood actor who reigned as the glamorous siren of the late 1960s and early 1970s, was dressed simply at her nikah to actor Dilip Kumar. She wore a rose pink and silver *gharara kameez*



*Maharani Gayatri Devi and
Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II*



1939



*Margaret Alva and
Niranzan Alva*

1964

*Sitara Devi wed
K Asif*



1944



*Saira Banu and
Dilip Kumar*

1966

*Shahnaz Husain wed
Nasir Husain*



1957

Encounter



Photos: AJAY GOYAL

Top cop, prolific writer, meditation junkie, doting mother – there are many sides to Kiran Bedi. **Vatsala Kaul** meets the woman behind the uniform

June 1974, Bara Hindu Rao, Delhi: Seventeen women and children are trapped inside a haveli in the Walled City in Old Delhi. Rioters have set the building on fire. The only entry is up in flames. The IPS officer in charge asks the head constable to break open the gate; he balks. Then she moves in a way that is to become her trademark. Sitting under a hand pump, she drenches herself and smashes the gate open with a kick. The other policemen imitate her actions and soon everyone is safe. Kiran Bedi has been tested, literally, by fire and she has passed. She's 'madam' now. And soon, she is going to be addressed only as 'sir'—her gender forgotten, only the police officer in evidence.

Now, three decades later, Dr Kiran Bedi, former Special Commissioner, Delhi Police, is uncharacteristically flustered. Her BlackBerry has gone kaput, taking with it her address book. "What is this *tamasha*?" exclaims the 56-year-old. "It is writing 'abcd' on its own!" She darts from one room to another, switching off the fans and lights as she goes, jabbing away at the unresponsive BlackBerry.

Trophies and shields are displayed all over her Talkatora Road government bungalow in New Delhi. "Each is a memory, each symbolic of an internal victory," she says. There have

been many accolades—including the Ramon Magsaysay Award, the UN's Serge Sotiroff Memorial Award for drug abuse prevention and two honorary doctorates, one from Guru Nanak University, and from the City University of New York's School of Law for prison reforms. There is also the current 1000-strong global list of women nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize of which 91 are Indian—one of them is Bedi.

Bedi has been up since 6 am. She has meditated and worked out in her personal gym. It's a rainy morning and she is looking for a shaded spot in her garden where she wants to be photographed.

While everything about her is crisp and clipped—the signature *pathan salwar* suit, the neatly buttoned-up jacket, the close-cropped auburn-tinted hair, and stolid black sandals—there’s restlessness about her, like a chef dicing asparagus on a television show. But she laughs a lot, and her face softens in a trice when a car drives in with her daughter Saina—she calls her ‘Guchchu’. “That’s a cover picture, now that’s really glamorous,” says Bedi, the doting mom. Saina could well be the inspiration for Bedi endorsing jewellery from Nayaab Jewels, a Chennai-based company, who contacted her last year on the recommendation of her friend Leela Poonawala, while Bedi was posted in New York as the Civilian Police Adviser in the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Its print campaign shows Bedi in uniform, a sparkle in the background.

Bedi harbours a secret dream of going into a spiritual retreat when she retires

Bedi doesn’t like to pose, but has never really been camera-shy, often courting the limelight. “She was always media savvy,” says Gautam Kaul, member (full time) at the Public Grievance Cell in New Delhi, whom Bedi calls her mentor. Bedi trained under Kaul, then the SSP, North Delhi. “At 5 pm in West Delhi, she would be out in full uniform, pistol holster in place, leading a posse of 15 policemen, patrolling the main road, making roadside gamblers and bootleggers scurry into the shadows. It was like a movie, it looked great on camera.”

The quintessential pin-up police officer, Bedi’s unconventional methods turned the existing approach towards crime and criminals on its head. But not everyone was thrilled at her lack of deference for those in power. While many magnified her into a hero, some labelled her an attention-grabber. “Kiran proved that crime control is officer-centric, but she paid a price for it, depriving herself of the pleasures of a family life,” explains Kaul. Bedi has no regrets, though. “My family kept pitching in, coming in exactly when they were needed, because they knew this job is what I had grown for,” she says. Husband Brij Bedi, a businessman based in Amritsar, agrees. “She was always on call. With her job it would be foolish to expect her to look after the home,” he says.

Bedi’s most talked-about posting was as inspector general, Delhi Prisons. She turned Tihar Jail into a model for reform. It won her worldwide acclaim. Her seminal work on prison reform, *It’s Always Possible*, was published in Italy, Indonesia and now also in America. Her other two books, *As I See* and *What Went Wrong... and Continues*, based on her experiences, continue to be quickly picked off the shelves and *I Dare*, her biography (released in 1996) was declared by *India Today* as the biography of the decade in the 1990s.



Bedi in uniform; (Far left) attending a Vipasana session for policemen

But if one ran the ‘bookshelf test’ to graph Bedi’s interests, it would be cleanly divided into spirituality, leadership, sport and human values. There’s not one work of fiction, though as a young girl she liked Ayn Rand. “That’s a stage of life... one can sometimes overstretch a stage.” She shows off her collection of spiritual books—the *Vedanta Treatise* by Swami Parthasarathi, and her favourite, Pandit Rajmani Tigunait.

Bedi harbours a dream of going into a spiritual retreat, “to be one with nature and the divine”. But even she knows how far-fetched that sounds. Even when she retires from the police in 2009, even if she chooses to live at her farmhouse in Haryana and cycle to Damdama Lake 7 km away, she is likely to be found working away at one of the many causes close to her heart—surrounded by her books, laptop, spiritual music, mobile and newspaper of the day. And some prunes to eat when hungry. ■

5 Questions for Kiran Bedi

1. Are expectations higher of a woman in the police force?

Expectations are higher of any woman. Across the board, she is the untried person, untried gender, untried skill because she is among the few. Expectations are higher because they know that she hasn't been foisted on, that she has come by her own merit. The perception of the woman in the Indian Police Service is that she is not going to be macho, she is going to be more heart than brawn, bringing in an element of compassion and consideration, more flexibility and communication, more human skills rather than muscle power.



2. What's your trigger for the mind?

Meditation. The human mind is like a huge traffic junction. So thoughts are bound to clash or get jammed. Meditation helps untangle these thoughts. I learnt Vipassana from SN Goenka of the Vipassana Research Institute. It is a process of watchful disentanglement, to get the flow back. When your mind is packed with too many priorities and you meditate quietly by yourself, you readjust your priorities.



3. Have you felt your body and mind change over the years?

You can't stop ageing. The kind of energy that you bubble with as a 20-year-old doesn't happen at the age of 56. But what keeps you physically agile is your whole lifestyle. I follow a physical fitness regime – I walk, do floor exercises, and work out in my personal gym. Then I work energetically past 10.30 at night, sleeping not because I am tired, but because I have to wake up at six again next morning. Even food is a mere necessity. I can cook to survive, but not for other people – there are more important things to do in life than cook. I, in fact, stick to a simple low-calorie and healthy home-cooked diet.



4. How do you address stress?

By being happy with what I am doing and I'm happy doing it because I have chosen to be there. I am on a sabbatical until September. Yet there is no 'unwinding'. An instructor from NIIT comes every day to familiarise me with my computer. I have no patience to scribble anymore because I can't read my own handwriting. On the computer, you see it like it's going to be. Last week, one day I worked for 10 hours at a stretch on my new book on leadership and management. I wasn't tired writing and stopped only for lunch.



5. You are an unlikely candidate to endorse jewellery. You hardly wear any yourself. Have you become a brand?

Just because I don't wear jewellery doesn't mean it's not worth it. It is beautiful, it is precious, it's a security reserve for many, and it makes you look glamorous. I don't wear it because it doesn't go with me... probably I don't need it. That doesn't mean I am against jewellery. I admire it. I treasure it, though the fact is I have none at all. My daughter loves jewellery, though. ■

The truth about a healthy heart

In a new section, *Harmony* invites experts to help you understand a range of medical conditions. This month, **Dr D S Gambhir** talks about treatment options for blockage in the coronary arteries

Blockage in the coronary arteries resulting in angina and heart attacks is assuming epidemic proportions in our country. This is commonly described as heart blockage, where the three main arteries supplying blood to the heart muscles become blocked with cholesterol and fat deposits. According to a recent survey by the World Health Organisation, it was estimated that by the year 2020, India would have the largest number of heart patients in the world. It is a matter of

great concern and will have serious financial implications for a country like India.

Although prevention of heart disease through a disciplined lifestyle and control of risk factors like diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity and high cholesterol is of paramount importance, early detection and relief of blockages in susceptible individuals, particularly those who show symptoms of angina, helps to prevent major heart attacks and death.

INVASIVE AND NON-INVASIVE TESTS

Non-invasive tests such as exercise electrocardiography (treadmill testing) and echocardiography (cardiac ultrasound or sonography) are good but lack sensitivity and specificity. More recently, a technique called multi-slice spiral CT scanning of the heart is being developed as a non-invasive way to detect blockages. This is similar to a conventional CT scan, except that the device is able to generate images, making the



dilkhush

Call us now on 022-56986666.
Offer open for a limited period only.

At the Asian Heart Institute, the patient always comes first. So if you have an angiography and need to undergo further cardiac procedures, **the cost of your angiography is waived.***

ASIAN 
HEART INSTITUTE

The place with a heart
Visit us on www.ahirc.com



* Conditions apply.

Asian Heart Institute Research Centre, Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra (E), Mumbai 400 051. Tel: 91-22-5698 6666 Fax: 91-22-5698 6506 Email: info@ahirc.com

procedure faster and more comfortable for the patient. However, coronary angiography continues to remain the gold standard for detection of blockage anywhere in the coronary arteries. It also provides the most reliable information on future course of treatment.

Coronary angiography is performed in a specialised centre with a cardiac catheterisation laboratory along with a cardiologist with vast experience in these procedures. It is performed under local anaesthesia by injecting radio-opaque dye into the coronary arteries through a tube called the catheter, introduced through a large artery in the thigh. The images are recorded digitally.

Coronary angiography is indicated for patients with angina, abnormal stress test, heart attack, unexplained fall in blood pressure, or resuscitated sudden death situations to rule out suspected blockage in the coronary arteries before contemplating angioplasty or bypass surgery. In experienced hands, it is a very safe test without any major complications. Patients at high risk include those with severe blockages, poor heart pumping function and unstable blood pressure. Hence, angiography in a modern cardiac care facility is relatively safe. The

information provided by this test far outweighs its risks. Most of its complications are manageable.

ANGIOPLASTY OR BYPASS

After the blockage has been confirmed, only angioplasty or bypass surgery can provide relief. Coronary angioplasty and 'stenting' is a procedure by which the narrow passage in the artery is compressed or dilated using a balloon catheter following which a stent, which is a balloon-like expandable coil, is implanted at the site. This is done non-surgically under local anaesthesia. Stents are of two varieties:

In experienced hands, angiography is a very safe test without any complications

non-drug coated or drug-coated. Drug-coated stents are coated with a drug that prevents the development of recurrence of blockage at the same site. The procedure has a success rate of 98-99 per cent in patients with single artery disease and 95-97 per cent if there are multiple blockages. However, bypass surgery is still a good option for these patients.

Angioplasty during a heart attack, however, should only be done provided the patient reaches a cardiac centre within the first 12 hours after the onset

of chest pain and the centre has the experience as well as expertise to perform this procedure on a highly vulnerable patient. Angioplasty has even been performed on high-risk patients over 80 suffering a heart attack and low blood pressure. It is normally done for symptomatic patients with more than 75 per cent blockage.

Coronary artery bypass surgery (CABG) is a major procedure involving bypassing the stenosis (constriction or narrowing of a passage) using either an artery from below the anterior chest

bone or veins from the leg. CABG is recommended for someone with severe triple vessel disease with left main artery stenosis, long diffuse multiple blocks, diabetics or someone with another heart condition like a valvular leak (a condition that causes the heart to pump the same blood twice) that may require surgery.

DIET AND LIFESTYLE

Diet and lifestyle-related heart care programmes as propagated by Dr Dean Ornish, president and director of the non-profit Preventive Medicine Research



dilkhush

Call us now on 022-56986666.
Offer open for a limited period only.

At the Asian Heart Institute, the patient always comes first. So if you have an angiography and need to undergo further cardiac procedures, **the cost of your angiography is waived.***

ASIAN 
HEART INSTITUTE

The place with a heart
Visit us on www.ahirc.com



* Conditions apply.

Asian Heart Institute Research Centre, Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra (E), Mumbai 400 051. Tel: 91-22-5698 6666 Fax: 91-22-5698 6506 Email: info@ahirc.com

Institute in Sausalito, California, help in decreasing weight and cholesterol, thus reducing the risk of progression of the disease. Limiting the intake of saturated fat, trans-fatty acids (fatty acids that have been altered by food processing) and cholesterol reduces the risk of heart disease. According to his recommendations, saturated fat intake

should be less than 7 per cent, polyunsaturated (fat found in vegetable oils and margarines) less than 10 per cent, monounsaturated (fat found in olives, nuts, seeds and avocados that may help lower cholesterol) less than 20 per cent, total fat 25-35 per cent, carbohydrate 50-60 per cent and protein 15 per cent of total calories.

Such strict dietary regimens are helpful but cannot substitute other forms of definitive therapy like angioplasty or bypass surgery. There is no significant decrease in the constriction of arteries just by treatment with drugs and diet—treatments like angioplasty and bypass surgery are a must along with these measures. ■

Dr D S Gambhir is Director, Kailash Heart Institute, Noida

“EDUCATE YOURSELF TO AVOID INVASIVE TESTS AND SURGERIES”

Know your heart, says Dr Bimal Chhajer. He heads the Science and Art of Living (SAAOL) heart programme and believes that “prevention is better than cure through expensive surgeries”. Dr Chhajer worked and lectured at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in New Delhi for six years before he completed his research on treating heart patients non-invasively (without inserting any foreign object inside the body) to cure and even reverse heart blockages less than 70 per cent – more than that, he says, may have to be treated invasively.

Dr Chhajer propagates American practitioner Dr Dean Ornish’s theory. He, in fact, trained under Dr Ornish, a pioneer of the Ornish Programme that calls for changes in diet and lifestyle – complete with exercise, yoga and meditation, a zero-oil nutritious diet, and stress management – to reverse the progression of severe heart diseases without drugs or surgery. Dr Chhajer is not averse to drugs such as blockers, thinners and dilators but will have nothing or little to do with invasive tests and, in most cases, surgeries too. In particular, he has strong reservations about angiography. “It is painful and can cost around Rs 10,000,” he says. “And it can lead to unstable angina, late arterial bleed, perforation of the heart, infection, fever, allergic shock and, at worse, death.” Dr D S Gambhir, cardiologist and director of Kailash Heart Institute, Noida, disagrees. According to him, coronary angiography is “a very safe test, and without any complications, in experienced hands. And very rarely can a patient die because of bleeding from the place of insertion of the tube”.

Like Dr Chhajer, Dr Alok Chopra, cardiologist at Aashlok Hospital, Delhi, is all for lifestyle-related heart care programmes too. “I don’t practice invasive treatment,” he says. But he concedes that sometimes, there’s no escaping it. “Lifestyle corrective measures cannot reverse severe blockages,” he admits. “At most, they can help open new channels, facilitate smooth flow of blood over the blockage and enable people to lead a normal life. However, to prove their point, sometimes doctors overlook the needs of the patient. The result can be fatal.”

Dr Chhajer, however, would rather go by the statistics gleaned from the 7,500 odd patients treated at SAAOL, and his previous stints at Dr Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital and AIIMS, New Delhi, “At least 95 per cent do not require surgery if they opt for a healthier lifestyle,” he insists. Surgeries like angioplasty, according to him, are complicated, expensive and offer only a temporary solution. “The blockage may come back in three to six months at the earliest,” he says. “Bypass surgery is also aggressive and expensive. It can be conducted on the three main coronary arteries and their major branches but not on smaller branches that also affect blood supply to the heart. Blockages will recur after two to 12 years—the average being five years.”

According to Dr Chhajer, the best way to counter heart problems is to understand them at their very onset. “Educate yourself on your heart,” is his advice. “A holistic approach under expert guidance should ensure a healthy heart for a lifetime.”

DIETING TO A DIFFERENT BEAT

PROTECT YOUR HEART WITH A HEALTHY FOOD PLAN

If you are suffering from coronary artery disease, your diet should be fat and oil-free as fats are largely responsible for arterial blockages in the heart. Other cholesterol-rich products like meat and eggs should be avoided, if not excluded.

WHY A ZERO-OIL DIET?

Remember, coronary artery disease, the most common of all heart ailments, is caused by blockages in the three major arteries, which occur owing to accumulation of cholesterol and triglycerides—the chemical form in which most fat exists in food as well as in the body. Unless we can stop consuming these fats and oils, we cannot tackle the problem. Often, people with heart problems are tempted by advertisements selling a particular brand of oil that supposedly contains low fat or cholesterol that is good for the heart. It is important to understand that almost all oils have 100 per cent fat in various combinations. All are harmful for heart patients, and none can help in reversing arterial blockages.

Research has proved that our body doesn't need more than 10 per cent of fat in our daily calorie requirements, which can be easily obtained from other food items in our diet as hidden fat. You don't need to douse your curries and dal with oil to get your fat requirement. Even for a person who is not suffering from any heart ailment, not more than 15 gm of oil per day is recommended. For those suffering from heart blockages, it should be a zero-oil diet.

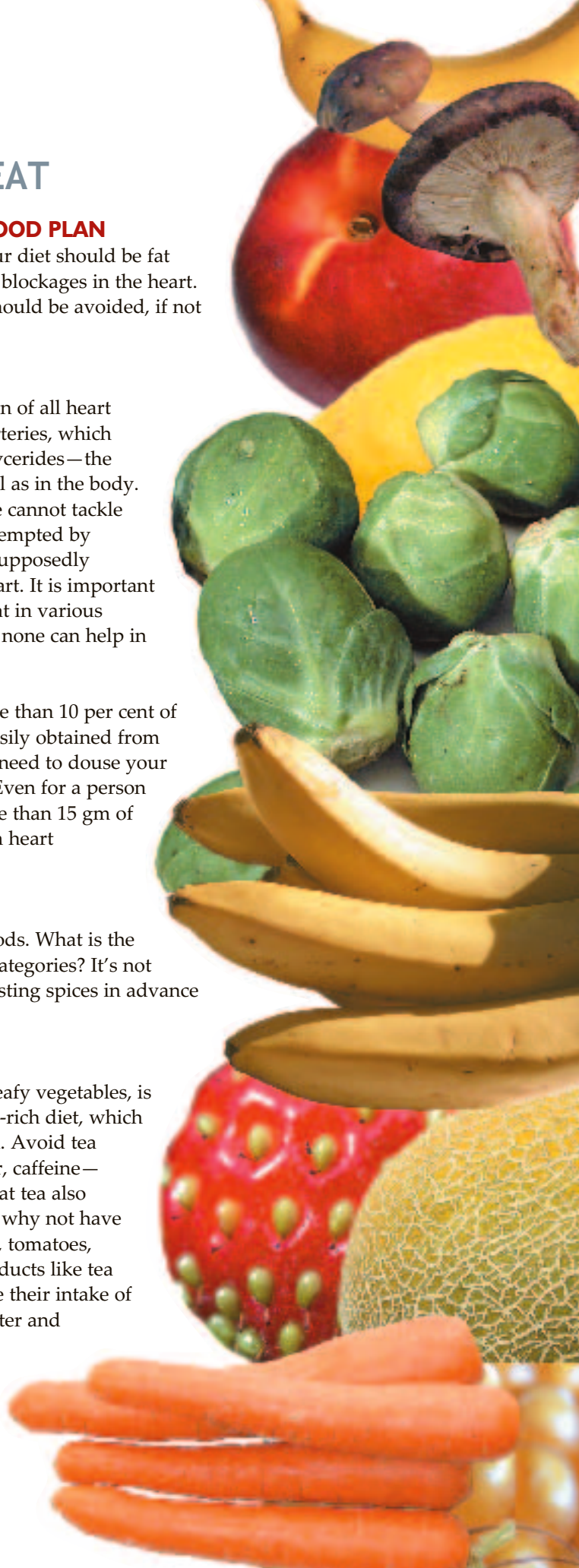
OIL DOES NOT EQUAL TASTE

We have taste buds for sweet, salt, sour and bitter foods. What is the taste of oil? Does it fall under any of the above four categories? It's not true that spices cooked without oil get burnt. Try roasting spices in advance and cooking them in water next time.

HEALTHY DIET

A diet rich in fresh fruits and vegetables, especially leafy vegetables, is good for seniors, irrespective of any ailments. A fibre-rich diet, which includes fruits with 'skin', helps prevent constipation. Avoid tea and coffee; the former contains nicotine and the latter, caffeine—both are harmful for the body. The theory today is that tea also contains antioxidants that are good for the body. But why not have other foods rich in antioxidants like green vegetables, tomatoes, carrots, lemons, which have no other harmful by-products like tea and coffee? Underweight seniors should also increase their intake of cereals like whole grains to boost weight. A lot of water and other fluids should be taken at regular intervals.

By Dr Bimal Chajjer, head of the Science and Art of Living (SAAOL) heart programme; SAAOL is based in Delhi and has centres in Bangalore, Hyderabad, Chennai, Mumbai and Kolkata





MUJEEB FARUQUI

Finding her feet

Yoga has given Hemlata Singhai a new lease on life after being bedridden for years owing to a spinal cord complication, says **Adnan Ahmad**

Hemlata Singhai walks about briskly from one room to another in her home in Rachnagar, Bhopal, as she prepares for her yoga class. A few years ago, she was bedridden after she was afflicted with lumbar canal stenosis, a neurological complication involving her spinal cord (*see box*). For a decade, Singhai was unable to take even a few steps, now she is a yoga instructor, active 18 hours a day.

A former teacher at a nearby *balwadi* (pre-primary school) that shut down owing to lack of funds, Singhai was a contented homemaker until her life changed. "In 1987, I had a terrible back pain and started taking painkillers," remembers the 63-year-old. She was diagnosed with lumbar

canal stenosis. Her husband R C Singhai, a general practitioner—he is now retired—and his colleagues advised spinal cord surgery.

It didn't help much. By 1989, she was in pain again. "Though I was wearing a belt to relieve the pain. I also meet orthopaedic surgeons in Nagpur and Mumbai. "Singhai was put on complete bed rest. Three months later, she was able to walk a bit. However, one day, when she was walking in front of her house, her legs went numb again. Doctors told her to consider microsurgery—but that meant risk of paralysis.

Then, in 1996, a family friend advised her to try yoga. A decade of semi-mobility, accompanied by problems such as urinary incontinence and a prolapsed

uterus, had taken its toll and she was ready to clutch at any straw. She picked up her medical reports and reached the yoga centre of K M Ganguly, a noted yoga *acharya* in Bhopal.

"He asked me to sit on the floor, an apparently simple task that I was unable to do for at least six years," recalls Singhai. "And I barely managed it. He then told me to do some simple *asanas* like *marjari* [cat stretch; it improves flexibility of the neck, spine and shoulders] and *katichakra* [involves lateral or forward bending of the waist to enhance flexibility of the spine]." The yoga lessons continued and, after a year, she was able to do the *suryanamaskar* with ease. Her persistent back pain and complications like urinary incontinence gradually disappeared.

Her family and friends were amazed. In fact, many of her friends were keen to learn yoga from her. Deciding that she required professional training, she enrolled for a one-year diploma course at the Yoga Training Centre in Kotra, Bhopal, and received her certificate at the age of 58. In 1998, Singhai opened the Yoga Sadhana Kendra at M P Nagar, near her residence. Now the Kendra runs two centers in Gautam Nagar and Arera Colony. With around 40 women attending the sessions, her yoga demonstrations offer natural remedies to heart disease, hypertension, diabetes and cervical problems.

“With Hemlataji, I have learnt that patience and discipline can change one’s life,” says Nirmala Rajesh, 45, one of Singhai’s students. Ten years ago, Rajesh started yoga to treat a nagging back ache. Regular yoga has helped her avoid painkillers. Singhai recounts how a woman



Hemlata Singhai’s family is happy to have her back on her feet again

Convent, Bhopal, where she conducts summer classes. She charges Rs 50 in order to run her organisation, Paropkarini Mahila Mandal, founded in 2000, which works for women and the elderly. “We use the money to help women and seniors in need,” she says. “Often they have no money to pay for their

A year of yoga helped ease Singhai’s back pain and other medical complications

suffering from osteoporosis, sciatica and back pain had come to her for help. She went away cured in a few months. But learning yoga is not as simple as replicating *asana* from television, she warns. “Yogic *asana* need expert supervision,” she says. Radhey Shyam Singh, 67, has been practising yoga for five years. Singh was suffering from high blood pressure and severe cold. “I do my yoga, but I also take medicines,” he says.

Singhai is flooded with offers to hold classes at schools like Carmel

medication and other basic requirements.”

That’s not all Singhai does. She knits, cooks, reads, writes religious verses, and volunteers for social work. Her family is justifiably proud of her. “She has amazing tenacity and her achievement is nothing short of a miracle,” says her husband. Along with their children Manjila, 42, and Sanjiv, 38, he too practices yoga now. “I don’t treat my *kendra* as a place for yoga classes, says Singhai. “It’s like a *yoga parivar* (family) for me.”

DID YOU KNOW?

- Lumbar canal stenosis is a narrowing in the space in the lower spine that carries the nerves to the legs. This narrow space gets even smaller if the bone and tissue around it grow. Arthritis, falls, accidents and wear and tear on the bones and joints in the spine also play a part in stenosis. As the lumbar spinal canal shrinks, the nerves that go through it are squeezed.
- Symptoms include back pain, leg pain, weakness and numbness in the leg.
- Is it age specific? To a large extent. Spinal stenosis generally affects middle-aged and elderly people. It could be caused by osteo-arthritis, Paget’s disease—a malfunction in the normal process of bone remodelling—or an injury that causes pressure on the nerve roots or the spinal cord itself.

Beyond boundaries

Should age determine the intensity of yogic practice? **Shameem Akthar** answers

MOST PEOPLE WRONGLY BELIEVE YOGA TO BE one of those gentle things that must be endured and learnt in old age, just to keep fit. Actually, it is an extremely youthful science that bestows youth on all its practitioners, whatever their age.

While undergoing advanced training to be a yoga teacher, I was always amazed by co-participants older than me. One was a 70-year-old teacher from Kerala who could not only do a better headstand than most of us, holding it longer, but could also do the most complicated of twisting poses with greater flexibility than all the younger teachers. In fact, inspired by him I started learning advanced poses much later in my *sadhana* (practice), after turning 40. I never dreamt I would be able to negotiate these poses, including the exotic headstand.

I am not suggesting that if you have a neck problem you can push yourself up into a headstand. There are contraindications that need to be respected. But once you have tackled the physical problem with discipline, you can advance in your yoga *sadhana*. The intensity of practice has nothing to do with age, but with health. You can start with gentle practice initially. Do not practice with a sense of boredom. Rather, imagine yourself

advancing into a more intense level of *sadhana*. This will create a spark of enthusiasm that will ensure that you never miss your practice.

I bought a book, *The New Yoga for People over 50: A Comprehensive Guide for Midlife and Older Beginners*, by Suza Francina, published by Health Communications, thinking it would be full of simple practices. While there are sections that deal with props to facilitate difficult poses, the book is full of amazing photos of silvers negotiating truly advanced poses. Here's what Francina, herself over 70, writes about her octogenarian students: "It is a source of inspiration and encouragement to see someone over 60 practicing poses that people half my age may find difficult. But when you see even older students and teachers practicing difficult poses with relative ease, poses that your poor stiff body can only dream about, then you start to wake up and realise that yoga really works!"

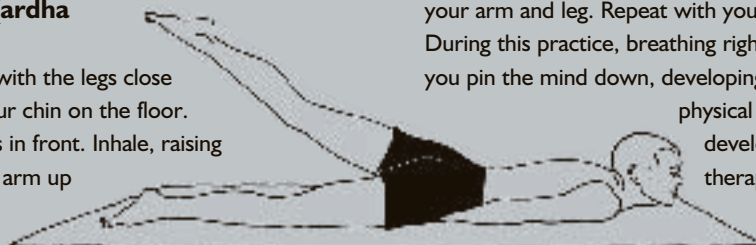


This is proof enough that your chronological age as entered on your birth certificate is certainly not the same as your biological age as recorded by your body. It's said that there are over 84 lakh yoga practices—don't let your age stop you from trying to learn as many of them as you can! 🧘

Yogic moves

Half-locust pose (*ardha salabhasana*)

Lie on your stomach with the legs close to each other. Put your chin on the floor. Stretch out both arms in front. Inhale, raising your left leg and right arm up as high as possible. Retain the position



as long as comfortable, breathing normally. Exhale, lowering your arm and leg. Repeat with your right leg and left arm. During this practice, breathing right is crucial, since it helps you pin the mind down, developing mental clarity. On the physical level, it is a superb pose to develop spinal strength. It is therapeutic in all back problems, particularly for a stiff lower back.

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)

HEALTH BYTES

GENTLY DOES IT

Learn how to move in slow motion and avoid falls. According to a recent study conducted by Chung Nam National University in South Korea, T'ai Chi, a Chinese exercise characterised by slow, gentle moves, helps strengthen ankle and knee muscles and improves balance, mobility and flexibility. For the study, published in the July issue of the Journal of Advanced Nursing, 29 participants, aged 78 and

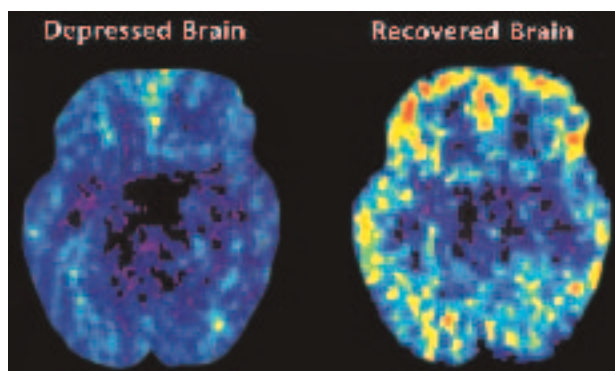


over, took a 12-week T'ai Chi course, three times a week. Researchers compared the results with a control group of 30 people who didn't exercise. The physical fitness levels of the exercise group showed considerable improvement. After 12 weeks, the participants took 25

per cent less time to walk 6 m than they did earlier. The control group, on the other hand, took longer to cover the distance.

WIRED FOR HEALTH

For hard-to-treat depression, experts in the US and UK believe fitting patients with a brain pacemaker could help. The technology, already used to treat Parkinson's disease, uses wires and a battery source to stimulate deep parts of the brain with electric current. The device consists of a matchbox-sized, battery-powered generator that sits in the chest like a cardiac pacemaker, and produces the current. The current is relayed to the brain via tiny wires, channelled under the skin on either side of the neck. A team led by Professor Helen Mayberg of the Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta, US, implanted the device, under local anaesthetic, into six patients with severe depression. A year later, four of them said their mood had improved. Experts at Bristol University and the Queen Elizabeth II Hospital in Welwyn Garden City are currently looking to recruit patients for a trial later this year.

**BACK IN CONTROL**

Researchers at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, US, have come up with a promising therapy to reduce falls among women over 60 caused by osteoporosis-related curvature of the spine – a unique weighted back support devised by the clinic and a special exercise programme. The researchers studied a group of 25 women over 60 years of age. Twelve of them suffered from kyphosis, a progressive curvature of the spine that includes severe, progressive muscle weakness. Their risk of falling was studied and compared to a group of 13 women without the condition. The women with kyphosis used a weighted 'kypho-orthosis', a back support (it could weigh between 1.75 and 2.5 pounds) that centres its weight on the posterior of the spine and helps the wearer position the torso better. As a result, the women with curvature of the spine showed improvements in balance, gait and back pain.



ENCAPSULATED

MEDS MACHINE

Now you've seen it all – a drug-dispensing machine that serves up prescription refills like a can of soft drink. It's called ScriptCentre and was installed in a California medicine shop recently to do away with long queues. Once the customers have filled an initial prescription with the pharmacist, they can retrieve and pay for their refills at a vending machine, even when the pharmacy counter isn't open. Consumers order their refills in the usual way, either online or by phone. The pharmacist then places packaged medicines in the machine. To pick up the order, consumers log on with a user name and password and swipe a credit or debit card. Their pre-wrapped package drops into the bin. The California and Virginia pharmacy boards have cleared the way for the machines in their states, granting waivers of rules that require a pharmacist be present in order for drugs to be dispensed.



COLOUR THERAPY



When Deborah Adler's grandmother mistakenly took her husband's medication, the 29-year-old graphic designer from Washington set out to redesign the pill bottle. Her radically unconventional container, which recently debuted at US pharmacy chain Target, includes a different colour-coded band for every family member with easy-to-read text and a drug information card tucked behind the flat-sided bottle's label. There are no plans yet to market it elsewhere.

DRUG ALERT

Talk about side-effects. Doctors are warning that in rare cases, some drugs for Parkinson's disease can trigger uncharacteristic behaviour, including gambling, obsessive housecleaning, compulsive tinkering with electrical components, and a robust increase in sex. Based on clinical trials, Dr Alok Gupta, senior neurosurgeon at Vimhans in New Delhi, says that a small number of patients are complaining about new habits like gambling. Parkinson's is a progressive disease and as it advances, higher doses of drugs like Syndopa, Mirapex and Pacipane are prescribed. When consumed in larger quantities, this can cause obsessive behaviour. Instead, Dr Gupta recommends 'deep brain stimulation' surgery. "Only three hospitals are capable of handling it – Vimhans and All India Institute of Medical Sciences in Delhi, and Srichitra Thirunal Institute of Medical Sciences in Thiruvananthapuram – and it can cost about Rs 5-5.5 lakh," he says. The same surgery costs about Rs 35 lakh in Europe.



Fulfil your potential

All suffering is due to ignorance, says **Maharishi Mahesh Yogi**

EXPANSION OF HAPPINESS IS THE PURPOSE OF life, and evolution is the process by which it is fulfilled. Life begins in a natural way, it evolves, and happiness expands. The expansion of happiness carries with it the growth of intelligence, power, creativity and everything that may be said to be of significance in life.

The purpose of creation is the expansion of happiness, and this purpose is fulfilled through the process of cosmic evolution. The purpose of individual life is the same as that of cosmic life. The difference is that of scale.

Individual life is the fundamental unit of the life of the cosmos. If the purpose of individual life is served, automatically the purpose of cosmic life is served.

If a man is unhappy he has missed the very essence of life. If his intelligence, power, creativity, peace and happiness are not constantly developing, he has lost his direction. Life is not meant to be lived in idleness. Life is dynamic, not static. When a child is born, his means of expression are limited and his powers undeveloped; but as he grows up and engages in the field of activity, there is no limit to the development of his strength, intelligence and creativity. A man's nervous system is so developed that he can, through the right activity, make use of his unlimited potential.

A man of limited mind is unable to appreciate the purpose of life. The conscious mind of an ordinary man is so limited that he is not even able to enjoy life. By not using his full potential, man is unable to

fulfil the purpose of his life. He suffers in many ways. He is like a millionaire who has forgotten his wealth and position and goes begging in the street.

All suffering is due to ignorance to the divine glory, which is present within one. Without divine consciousness, man lacks energy, intelligence and clarity of thought. Human existence and intelligence have reached such a deplorable level that in the field of psychology—the great science of the mind—it is even suggested that tension is necessary for creative intelligence. How tragic it is to believe that

tension is necessary to improve life! It is said that poets and artists have created their most inspired work under tension. All such statements are due to ignorance and an inability to distinguish between tensions and pressure of time or circumstances. Pressure of time or circumstances can sometimes produce much finer work but only from minds that are free and relaxed.



A man of limited mind is like a millionaire who has forgotten his wealth and goes begging in the street

Man today is blind to the purpose of life, unable to see that he is born to enjoy, create and live a life useful to himself and others. He plunges into whatever activity lies ahead, working hard to the best of his ability. This is commendable, but when activity increases a man often finds himself unable to cope with the resulting pressure and responsibility. Unless his efficiency increases proportionately, tension and strain

develop. As a man engages in greater activity, he should be able to produce more energy and greater intelligence within himself to deal with this increased activity. When he does not know how to do this, he misses the entire purpose of life. ■

Excerpt from Science of Being and Art of Living — Transcendental Meditation; Meridian Books; Rs 475. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi founded the Transcendental Meditation Movement, which gained popularity in the 1960s and 1970s

Aim and shoot

The Purohits have a new mobile phone that lets them take pictures and make videos.

Dinesh C Sharma helps them along the way

I was pretty annoyed when my mobile interrupted me with an insistent beep a couple of weeks ago. I was in the middle of an important meeting and didn't want to read yet another text message offering credit cards or loans. When I picked up the phone and read the SMS, though, it made me smile—it was from Mr Purohit, crisp as a teenager's attitude. "Nu ph arrvd frm US," it said. Whn r u cmng?" I replied immediately, "Congrats! C u nxt wk."

A week later, I was at their door. Mr Purohit opened it and Mrs Purohit was nowhere in sight. Her husband grumbled that she was in the bedroom, "glued to the mobile and exchanging SMS with god-knows-who". The lady then made her entrance. "You know he is just jealous because I can type messages much faster than him," she shot back.

Before things got heated, I reminded them that I was here to see their latest acquisition: a Panasonic X 500, sent by their

daughter Ankita from the US. Mrs Purohit revealed it to me with a flourish and, I had to admit, it was a beauty, with a colour screen, in-built camera, and video recorder. The phone was also enabled with GPRS (General Radio Packet Service), a network that supports wireless Internet access. In the Indian market, a phone with a similar configuration from well-known companies such

as Panasonic or Samsung would cost between Rs 7,500 and Rs 9,000, while costs for Nokia and Motorola run higher—from Rs 15,000 to Rs 20,000. The other option is to buy a lesser-known Chinese brand such as Aux, Granding, TCL (Huizhou), Soutec and Bird, where you would get a phone from as little as Rs 5,000 with a camera, but without video recording.



FARZANA COOPER

"We have already inaugurated the phone," said Mr Purohit with pride, "but we still haven't taken pictures with it. We thought we'd check with you, although looking at the phone commercials on TV, it seems fairly easy." It is very easy. First, you need a service provider whose network supports picture messages—like Reliance Infocomm, Airtel and Hutch. They normally charge an additional fee for such messages—Rs 3 to Rs 5. "Ask for a detailed tariff for all services," I cautioned them. "For example, some operators may charge per picture, while others may allow a specific number of picture messages as part of the deal. Also, all these applications guzzle power. So keep an eye on the battery all the time."

print it out or transfer it onto a computer, higher resolution is necessary. High-resolution pictures, though, occupy more space on the mobile, so only a few can be stored at a time. The saved picture or video clip can be sent to another mobile as a picture message—it's called MMS (multimedia messaging service). "Oh, people are doing naughty things with this facility, aren't they?" giggled Mr Purohit.

Mrs Purohit wasn't amused—she still had too many questions. "How do we email or print them?" was her next one. She wanted to email some photographs to Ankita. You can connect your phone to a printer or a PC using a USB cord [Universal Serial Bus; a plug-and-

recorder that could record up to 10 minutes of streaming video. "People can do even naughtier things with that!" Mr Purohit interrupted again. "Well, there's no danger of that with us, is there?" was his wife's retort as she urged me to continue explaining how to use the video option. "In your phone, there's a slot for a memory card," I went on. "You can buy these for Rs 1,000 to Rs 2,500 from mobile phone shops or shopping sites like www.indiatimes.com and www.rediff.com. Insert the card in the slot, save your video clip on the memory card by using the 'Menu' option, and transfer this data to your PC by using a USB cord. This can be sent as email."

Now, Mr Purohit had some questions of his own. "What about the Internet option that the help book mentions? Does it mean I can check my Hotmail account on the phone?" he asked. "Of course," I replied. "You can surf the Net on the phone and send email, but it is a premium service with a separate tariff." For example, Idea Cellular's monthly Web Access Plan costs Rs 500 in Delhi, Airtel charges Rs 600 per month for GPRS and CellOne (BSNL) charges Rs 349 for GPRS. I advised the Purohits that they should use the Internet facility sparingly on their phone.

Mrs Purohit had no trouble with that. "Yes, Mr Purohit can spend all the time he wants on the computer checking his email and surfing the Net," she told me. "I'll find other ways to keep busy on the new mobile phone." ■

In more advanced models, you can transfer pictures to a computer or printer

Mrs Purohit was really excited now. "So all we do is aim and shoot?" she asked. "Yes," I assured her writing the process down on a piece of paper. Go to 'Menu'; select 'Camera'; and shoot. After taking the picture, choose between 'send via multimedia' and 'send via infrared'. Select an email or phone number, add your text message and choose 'Send'. Alternatively, save the image. "The same drill has to be followed for video clips," I added.

You can select low resolution if you only want to save the picture on a mobile. But if you want to

play interface between a computer and a mobile phone for data transmission] and print the picture." In more advanced models, you can transfer pictures to a computer or printer wirelessly using a function called Bluetooth, provided the receiving gadget is also Bluetooth-enabled. Bluetooth is a technology that specifies how devices like mobile phones, computers and personal digital assistants (PDAs) interconnect with each other, with computers, and with office or home phones. Bluetooth-enabled phones begin at about Rs 15,000.

In addition to the camera, the Purohits' phone also had a video

Call for help

Amitava Ganguly addresses the legal provisions against 'senior abuse'

Q What are the legal provisions for a senior seeking help against abuse—physical, emotional or financial?

A To begin with, the expression 'senior' is yet to get a specific meaning either in civil or criminal law. In revenue law, we find the expression 'senior citizen'. Anybody, not necessarily a senior, if abused physically, depending on the nature and the purpose of the injury (a simple hurt, grave injury, attempt to murder), can initiate a criminal investigation after registering a complaint before a magistrate or police authority. Depending on the facts revealed, the charges are framed against the offender.

As far as 'emotional exploitation' is concerned—except in case of sexual exploitation in a promise to marry—it is not particularly a part of criminal law, although the expression finds frequent use. It is more appropriate for attracting civil action such as claiming compensation, provided the particulars furnished in its support are specific, clear and quantifiable. Allegations like not paying proper attention, ignoring while in family discussion or insufficient expression of love find, at best, a gentle rebuke from the court than judicial remedy. However, Maharashtra has recently proposed a bill that will make harassment of the elderly an offence. Another provision of the law will make it necessary for children to set aside a part of their income for parents who live separately.

Q If a senior is made to part with his property or compelled to sign documents to give away his savings, can he go to court?

A The key issue here is how the person is made to perform such an act. Is it an action translated as an offence under the Indian Penal Code? If yes, it is

punishable. Commonly, the court finds that the nature of such action comes under the fold of fraudulence, or fear of bodily harm. However, the offender may be punished but that will not make him return the property. For the recovery of the property, a civil action is required.

Q Can parents legally demand a monthly maintenance amount from their children?

A Yes. Here is an extract from a popular decision on the point: "During the course of time, this moral duty assumed a legal character. The Legislature, therefore, enacted Section 125(1)(d) of Criminal Procedure Code (Cr. P C) to enforce social and moral obligations. Section 125(1)(d) of Cr. P C

reads: Order for maintenance of wives, children and parents: (1) If any person, having sufficient means neglects or refuses to maintain... (d) his father or mother, unable to maintain himself or herself, a Magistrate of the first class may, upon proof of such neglect or refusal, order such person to make a monthly allowance for the maintenance of his wife or such child, father or mother, at

such monthly rate not exceeding Rs 500 in the whole as such Magistrate thinks fit, and to pay the same to such person as the Magistrate may from time to time direct."

In the old Cr. P C, 1898, parents did not find place in Section 488. However, on witnessing the plight of old parents, the Joint Committee of Parliament observed: "The Committee considers that the right of the parents not possessed of sufficient means to be maintained by their son should be recognised by making a provision that, where the father or the mother is unable to maintain himself or herself, an order for payment of maintenance may be directed to a son who is possessed of sufficient means." ■



Amitava Ganguly is a Kolkata-based High Court advocate

Work your blues away

Experts at www.monster.com answer your queries on jobs after retirement



I am a 67-year-old woman living in Lucknow. I retired from my job nine years ago. Since then, I have been writing short stories in English. Recently, a friend suggested I get my stories published. Do you think a publisher would be interested? I don't want to raise my hopes and run around for nothing.

Unless you try, how will you know whether your work will be of interest to publishers? Give it a shot, and be prepared to handle both success and failure. Besides, getting a book published isn't as difficult as it sounds. Here are some publishers you can begin with: **Shree Book Centre**, 022-24377516 (Dalmia Building, T H Kataria Road, Matunga—West, Mumbai-16); **Jaico**, 022-22676702 or 011-22144204 (127, Manikji Wadia Building, Opposite Mumbai University, M G Road, Mumbai-23); **English Edition**, 022-25274464/65 (105, Jogani Industrial Complex, V N Poorav Marg, Chunabhatti, Mumbai-22); and **Popular Prakashan**, 022-24941656 (35 C, Popular Prakashan Building, Tardeo, Mumbai-34). **The Pioneer** (011-23717505/011-23755271) also publishes short stories.



I currently run a small business in Kanpur. I will turn 60 later this year. Before that, I plan to hand over my business to my son. Then I will have a lot of time on hand. I want to do some work in Sanskrit as I hold a Masters degree in the language. Can you suggest where and how I can put this skill to use?

Your skill can be put to use in various ways. The first option is to identify schools or colleges that teach Sanskrit. You can get in touch with the institute and let them know that you want to teach. The second option is to check out websites like www.sanskrit.org, www.samskrutam.org, www.samskrita-bharati.org and www.alkhemy.com/sanskrit/. These

sites usually need people like you who can translate, provide inputs for articles, write short stories and poems, and answer queries from visitors to the site. You could write to these sites to see if they are interested.



I am a 67-year-old retired colonel. After leading an active life, retirement is a little unsettling. I am not interested in being a security officer in some firm. Please suggest some other part-time job options.

Human resource management could be a great field for you. There is a dearth of HR professionals in the industry today. You can either work as a consultant or be hands-on with staff/policy management. Another option is to start something on your own. This could be in any field of interest to you, from taking contracts for landscaping gardens to consultancy on security issues.



I have been a homemaker all my life. The only time I contributed to the family income was when I was paid for baby-sitting my neighbour's children. Do you think a crèche or a playschool will employ me? I don't have any formal education in this field and I am 53 years old. Am I too old to start?

Crèches are always on the look out for an experienced hand. There is no need for formal education in this field. Other than teaching the children, there are other roles like managing the place. If you have an entrepreneurial streak, you could start a crèche on your own, in your colony. All you need to do is employ one or two qualified teachers and probably an *ayah* (help) to manage the place. And your neighbours would only be too happy to leave their kids behind with someone they can trust. All the best!

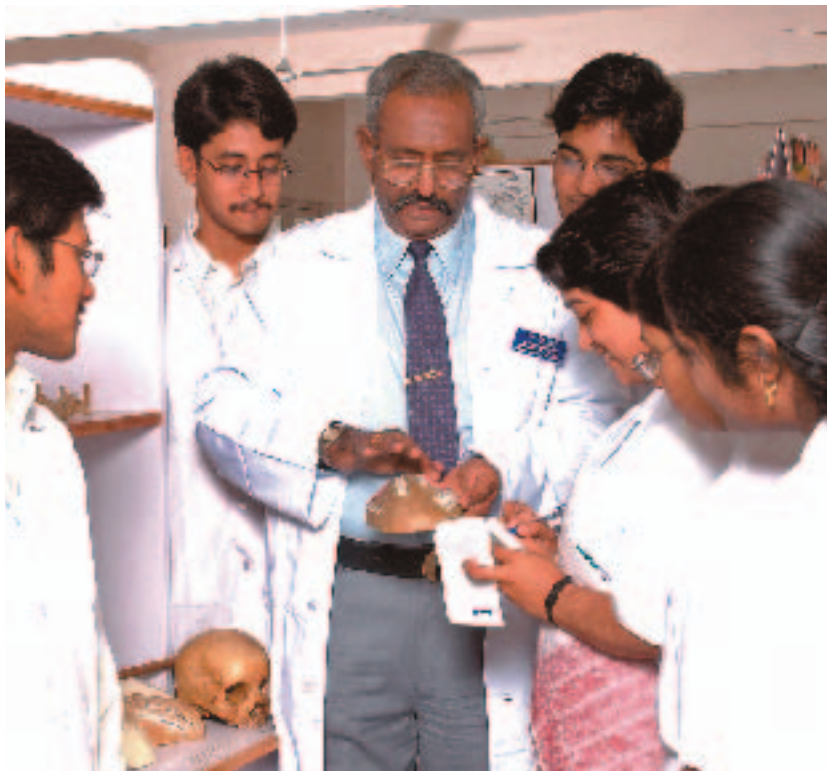
CRIMEBUSTER

Dr K K Naidu changed tracks from being a police surgeon in Libya to teaching in India

Dr Tekkyam K K Naidu, 53, teaches forensic medicine at the Prathima Institute of Medical Sciences, Nagunoor, Karimnagar, in Andhra Pradesh. After an exciting life in Libya as chief police surgeon with the Crime Investigation Department (CID), he now inspires others to take up the profession.

After completing his MBBS in 1984, Dr Naidu wanted to join the police force but parental disapproval forced him to shelve his plans. So he decided to do his MD in forensic medicine, hoping that it would give him a backdoor entry into the police department one day. His prayers were answered when, in 1986, a friend who worked for the Ministry of Justice in Tripoli, Libya, invited him for a job in the CID. "I was unmarried then, with no major responsibilities, and the job promised me a lot of adventure and excitement," recalls Dr Naidu. "So I went to Libya to work."

For 18 years, as a forensic expert he investigated crimes, conducted post mortems and prepared crime analysis reports. He says the job gave him exposure to many international crimes, something that would not have been possible in India. "Libya was a great country to work in," says Dr Naidu. "We were free to celebrate all our festivals and have *bhajan* in our



K PHANI KUMAR

Dr Naidu misses a life of criminal twists and turns

temple." He returned to India three years ago to be with his ailing mother and for his 15-year-old son Sandeep's education.

Giving up a life full of criminal twists and turns wasn't easy. Not willing to part with it, he decided to make the best use of his experience. Soon he was offered the post of head of department, forensic medicine at the Pratima Institute of Medical Sciences. He teaches the nuances of the subject to 150 students every year. Dr Naidu is also the vice president of the Indian Medical Association, Karimnagar, and is active in

promoting local community activities.

Money is, thankfully, not a problem. Though the job in Libya was very lucrative, the Naidu family has lived in Karimnagar for four generations and has enough land to sustain several generations more. What he misses is his friends, neighbours and colleagues in Libya—but he more than makes up for it by discussing his high-profile cases and investigative procedures during his lectures to a captive audience.

—Vinitha Naidu

Readers are requested to send in their queries to contact.mag@harmonyindia.org

Moving ahead

The centre has big plans for the year ahead



HIREN MEHTA

WITH ONE YEAR UNDER ITS BELT, THE HARMONY Initiative isn't sitting back and putting its feet up. Instead, it's moving full steam ahead with new programmes, surveys and policies. For its part, the Harmony Interactive Centre in Girgaum, Mumbai, is planning several workshops, events, lectures and interactive sessions.

"Such activities give us a clearer perspective to understand and even quantify the aspirations and needs of seniors," says Professor S Siva Raju. A former faculty member at the Unit for Urban Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, he has recently joined the Harmony team. "The very concept of having a centre for seniors is relatively new in India," he adds. "Several nationwide surveys of seniors have revealed the need for such an interactive platform."

On the anvil at the centre are an eye camp, astrology session and picnic. The website harmonyindia.org will include news and nuggets on events and talks at the centre every week from August. There is also a newly revised fee structure with effect from July 1, 2005—for membership to the centre, you need to pay a one-time registration fee of Rs 250 and a monthly subscription of Rs 150.

To know more about the centre and its activities, call us at (022) 30976440/6441 or email centre.thakurdwar@harmonyindia.org

"Centres like this offer more than just a platform for seniors," observes Professor Siva Raju. "They benefit the family setup too. Young members and caregivers get more time to pursue their own interests." Such centres, according to him, are superior alternatives to institutional arrangements that ignore the specific needs of seniors," he adds. "Here they can meet, talk and spell out their needs."

That's a trend that has already been established in the past year. And the Harmony Initiative is looking forward to achieving even more in future.

—Trina Mukherjee

IN AUGUST

COMPUTERS

Monday to Saturday; 10.30 am to 12 noon and 3-4.30 pm

YOGA

Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays; 10.30 am-11.30 am (men); 4 pm-5 pm (women). Classes by instructors from Kaivalyadham Centre, Marine Drive

GROUP THERAPY

Wednesdays; 5.15-6.15 pm. Conducted by Dr Anjali Chabbria, Aruna Prakash and Dr Sharita Shah

MUSIC

Thursdays; *bhajan* from 4 pm-5 pm. Marathi *sugam sangeet* from 5 pm-6 pm

INTERACTION

August 6. 4.30-5.30 pm. Astrology session with Yogeshbhai

HOBBIES

August 16. 5 -6 pm. Demonstration on fun cooking by Deepa Agarwal

COMMON BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

August 30

Programmes are subject to last-minute changes



Government of India Senior Citizen Savings Scheme



**1st private sector bank in India
to distribute Senior Citizen Savings Scheme**

*Hum hain na!*TM

Visit the nearest ICICI Bank branch
for more details.

ICICI Bank
Senior Citizen Services

IMUSRMA0705

Chennai-based retired railway officer, 73 years old, currently a SEBI registered investment adviser; can advise senior citizens, especially those living in Chennai, on mutual fund investments and process investments.

Contact P Sankaran at (044) 24618962;

Email: rukmini.sankaran@gmail.com

I am 58 years old and living in Borivali (West), Mumbai. I am looking for persons who can either help with fund-raising or assist in running a senior citizens' home with 76 rooms at Umbargaon in Gujarat, near Mumbai, on non-profitable basis. The home has medical help on call and all basic amenities like water and electricity.

**Contact Vineshchandra Chotai at
(022)-28996340; mobile: 9820793132**

Kolkata-based 71-year-old man, proficient in computers, would like to communicate with persons working from home. Those interested in reading, music, health and personal finance

can also get in touch.

Contact Narain Sagar Wadhwani at

(033) -24666673; Email: nsw16@rediffmail.com

Pune-based retired executive, 60, interested to form nationwide family support groups for schizophrenia patients. Have detailed database on medication and psychological counselling. Also interested in exchanging old rare LP records.

Contact Ambrish K Verma at 9371000966

We provide a number of services such as career counselling, matrimonial consultation, horoscope matching, answering queries related to astrology, numerology, copy writing, messages for greeting cards, creative writing, yoga, meditation and more.

**Contact Astro-Mirrorr, 5, Jhalla Chambers, 167,
M G Road, Near Old Pool Gate, Pune-411001.**

ONE
-on-
ONE
Personal Classifieds



The Trek of Faith



What drives people to undertake the arduous, and sometimes dangerous, Amarnath Yatra? 55-year-old **Shyamola Khanna**, a *Harmony* reader, has some answers

I stood at the threshold of a cave at 14,000 ft, cold, wet and a little bewildered, gazing inside. The strident chant, *Har Har Mahadev*, rang out. All around me were Shiva worshippers, saffron bands around their heads, dressed sparsely—many men with just a loincloth and another piece of cloth around their shoulders, joined by women, even adolescents, all chanting with the same fervour. The ambient temperature was between five and six degrees centigrade, but no one looked cold.

It was July, the best time to visit the Amarnath shrine. Located at the end of the Lidder valley in the Pahalgam area of Anantnag District in Jammu & Kashmir, the shrine is snowbound for almost the whole year. Only in the two months leading up to the full moon night in August, does the Jammu & Kashmir tourism facilitate pilgrimages here.

By March, the valley begins to shed the torpor of the winter and the daffodil, poppy and iris begin to bloom, covering entire hillsides in yellow, red and blue.

This is also the time when the snow begins to melt in the upper reaches of the Himalaya feeding innumerable rivers and streams. One such stream enters the Amarnath cave and, in two to three weeks, forms a stalactite or mound of ice.

THE LEGEND

To believers, this is a *lingam* or manifestation of Shiva, the destroyer of the Hindu trinity.

The cave is called Amarnath because it is situated in the heart of Mount Amarnath, which is

(Left) Pilgrims on a pony trek;
(right) base camp for the devotees;
and one of the Muslim boys who
help you ride the pony

almost 18,000 ft above sea level. Another version is that Parvati convinced Shiva to tell her the story of creation in this cave and therefore the cave became *amar* or immortal.

The origin of the Amarnath Yatra dates back to 1850, when Buta Malik, a Muslim shepherd, first discovered the cave with the *lingam*. The Dogra king Maharaja Gulab Singh, pleased by the discovery, decreed that a representative of the Malik family would always be present at the shrine during the pilgrimage and would receive one-third of the offerings. Legend also has it that the same shepherd led Adi Shankaracharya to the cave.

THE JOURNEY

Thousands of devotees make the arduous trip here every July to witness the phenomenon. Tents are set up along the way and refreshments and food are provided by a host of charitable organisations. Route 1 takes you from Srinagar to Amarnath through Pahalgam, Chandanwari—where the Army is rebuilding the bridge blown up by militants recently—Pissu Top, Sheshnag and Panchtarni, while Route 2 goes through Sonamarg, Baltal, Domail and Barari.

On Route 1, from Chandanwari, the trek and pony trail begins—uphill all the way. You halt for the night at Sheshnag Peak at 12,000 ft. The next day, after walking up towards the Mahagunas Pass at 14,000 ft, you descend to Panchtarni (about

11,000 ft) on a route dotted with beautiful flowered meadows. Another night halt at Panchtarni, and you're on to the last lap. Once you reach the cave, you take a series of concrete steps—with bamboo banisters to help the elderly—to the entrance. On the other hand, if you decide on Route 2, once you reach Srinagar, you transfer to a bus that takes you up to Sonamarg. After spending the night there, you begin the 14 km Baltal pony trek or walk early next morning. Route 2 is shorter but steeper and more arduous.

FREEDOM FROM FEAR

The toughness of the trek and the looming fear of a militant attack, however, do not deter pilgrims—this year the Jammu & Kashmir tourism department is expecting at least 5 lakh visitors. Age is also not a factor here. Many of the pilgrims around me were in their 50s and 60s.

Most of them come here because they have promised to make the trip in return for a wish fulfilled—the birth of a grandchild, the marriage of a child. Then, there are those who hope Lord Shiva will grant their wish.



Shoma Sen, a young woman in her 30s, and the wife of an Air Force officer, had lost two infants within the first year of their birth. She was here, having walked the 14 km Baltal route, to pray for a healthy child.

It must be the conviction that God will take care of it all, I thought. With the same faith, I had stayed on at the Air Force Station, Srinagar, while the Kargil war was raging nearby. My husband was responsible for the air operations there and I spent many nights watching the stars under a clear night sky while the



Pilgrims wait in a queue to enter the Amarnath cave for *darshan*

blackout was enforced. On top of my wish list before leaving the valley was a visit to the Amarnath shrine because I wanted to see for myself what it was that brought people here, every year, from across the country.

MY JOURNEY

My own trip to Amarnath, I must confess, was far from arduous. I was fortunate enough to go by helicopter from Srinagar. From the skies, we had a fantastic view of the mountains and I could see the meandering trail of people along the Baltal route. We landed half an hour later at the base of the cave where I saw a huge embankment of yellow and blue tents—there must have been at least 200—close together. Some people were getting ready to return to Srinagar while a fresh batch was coming up the hillside.

We walked up to the platform deep inside the cave from where one could get a good look at the *lingam*. There, I met Kalpana *ben*, in her 60s, who had come from Jamnagar in Gujarat. She had changed three trains to get to Jammu. From there she had

boarded the bus, organised by the Department of Tourism, for Srinagar. Another bus brought the pilgrims right up to Baltal, where they transferred onto ponies or walked. The last lap on the pony had hurt her knees. Yet, here she was waiting patiently, happily, for the *darshan*, saying *Har Har Mahadev* with every breath.

Then, it was my turn. After I received the *prasad* following the *puja*, one of the pundits pointed to a white dove sitting in a niche, high up on the roof of the cave. He told me to look for another one. According to him, the two doves were a manifestation of Shiva and Parvati, and they had been there for millennia. If your faith was strong enough, you could see both of them. Many did not see any at all while some saw only one dove—I saw both.

I touched my head on the icy platform, and quietly said to myself: *Har Har Mahadev*. On the trip back, I reflected on what I had experienced. Fundamentalists would have us believe that the Amarnath Yatra is a very Hindu affair. Perhaps,



FACT FILE

When to go:

Between June and August

How to get there:

The closest airport is Srinagar and the closest railway station is Jammu. At Jammu and Srinagar, J&K state buses take over

Where to stay:

There are a range of hotels in Jammu and Srinagar for every budget

For contact details, see page 79

but intrinsic to the event is the help of Muslims. For example, the family that opens the cave is the Muslim one that has been doing so for generations. The boys who take your pony up the Baltal route are Muslim. And so are the boys selling flowers and coconuts near the entrance. In the midst of such surging faith, paradoxically, religious difference becomes a non-issue.

Two days later, we said our final goodbyes to the valley. And two years later, I met Shoma Sen again. Her husband was now posted to Delhi. We learnt that she had conceived again and had delivered a healthy baby girl. It's been another two years since then, and Shoma's daughter is doing just fine. Was it faith or better medical care this time around? I wouldn't hazard a guess. ■

Winning by a head

Veena Shroff has devoted much of her life to collecting traditional hair ornaments from across India. **Aparna Narayanan** meets the octogenarian with a passion for coiffure



SAMEER PATHAK

Indira Gandhi had lovely hair—short, admittedly, but soft and curly. Veena Shroff knows this because she styled the hair of India's very own Iron Lady. "I could do a very nice bun for her," says the 81-year-old who lives in Delhi.

It was 1962 when Shroff, a stylist to Hindi film actors, organised her first demonstration of hairstyles, which Gandhi had inaugurated. Gandhi was so impressed with Shroff that she asked to learn "different hairstyles" for a party to be hosted for then American first lady Jacqueline Kennedy.

For her, hairstyling has never been just a profession or even a vocation. It was, is, an art—an honoured part of the *solah*

shringar, the 16 aids to female beauty described by the Sanskrit poet Kalidasa. Ancient Indian sculpture and art also pay tribute to *keshalankara*, the decoration of hair. Shroff has dedicated much of her life to researching it and collecting hair ornaments.

Keshalankara: A Romantic Tradition, an exhibition of hair ornaments from Shroff's private collection, was held at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Sanghralaya in Kalaghoda, Mumbai, from May 3 to July 31. The exhibition featured hair ornaments along with sculpture, paintings and photographs. It included copper hairpins from Indus Valley sites; Maharashtrian *phul* ornaments that attach with a spring to the braid or bun and move in rhythm with the wearer's movements; the

mirrored *bor rakhdi* from Gujarat, a silver forehead ornament worn only by married women; and tortoiseshell *chiruni*, little combs embossed with gold foil and given to brides in Orissa. The display was interwoven with a narrative about the role of hair ornaments in Indian tradition.

As a child growing up in Kolkata, Shroff had been fascinated by classical dance—and the elaborate hairdos of the dancers. She persuaded young women she knew to model for her, in order to copy hairstyles seen in paintings and photographs. The elders in her family dismissed her hobby as "*hajam ka dhandha*" (barber's work), but the derision didn't shake her faith.

Shroff moved with her mother to Mumbai when she 12, after her father's death. A few years later, she joined a ballet group run by the brothers of dancer Uday Shankar. Impressed by the attention to detail lavished on the tresses of the dancers, she began her study and documentation of traditional Indian hairstyles. In her late teens, she began writing columns on the subject for *Eve's Weekly* and *Marg*.

Her writings brought her to the attention of a Gujarati artist. He referred her to filmmaker Sohrab Modi, who was making India's first colour movie, *Jhansi Ki Rani*.



(Clockwise from left): Hair tassels from Maharashtra and Andhra; betel leaf shaped hairpin from Orissa; hairpins from Bengal; tassel from South India



That film assignment led to others—she styled actors such as Sandhya, Vyjayantimala and Suraiya. “I could telephone anybody. It was not like today.” Shroff appreciates today’s hairstyles, describing them as “very westernised” but her favourite remains a classic—“a plain bun with a little ornament made of gold or pearls”.

Supporting Shroff in her passion, “with money and time”, was her husband I N Shroff, a Supreme Court lawyer. His work involved extensive travelling and wherever they went—to the bazaars of Jaipur, and beach stalls in Goa —she sought and found

an offer, in 1994, to exhibit at the prestigious India International Centre in New Delhi. It was the first major recognition.

Her collection now includes 500 hair ornaments, 150 combs, 300 photographs of traditional hairstyles and 200 photographs of her own hairstyling work over the decades. Despite this, she hardly ever wears a hair ornament herself, and her long silver hair is rarely tied. “I’m very fashion conscious, but long loose hair looks very nice on me,” she says with nonchalance. “I wear lots of ornaments on my body, but not on my hair.” Childless and conscious of her



Shroff’s collection includes 150 combs, 500 hair ornaments and 200 photographs

hair ornaments indigenous to the region. The couple lived in New Delhi, a hotspot for exhibitions, which Shroff attended in quest of that elusive, rare design.

Even after the death of her husband 24 years ago, she continued to build her collection and to display it at hairstyling demonstrations for galleries and ladies’ clubs in Delhi, Kolkata and Kanpur. Then, as word about her unique collection spread by word of mouth, Shroff received

age, she would now like to find a buyer for her prized pieces. “If it would go to a collector, it would be very nice,” she says.

“You will never find such filigree, *karigari*, anywhere in the world,” she says, speaking of her pain when exhibition viewers tell her they “broke” their own gold or silver hair ornaments for other uses. “If we do not encourage our artists,” Shroff warns, “the original designs will be gone.”

Building blocks

Shreds of a green plastic bag, bicycle valves and bindis stuck on cardboard—these are the tools with which Mary Anne Dasgupta, 68, goes to work, says **Anjana Basu**

ALL WORK AND PLAY

You don't need shiny plastic blocks, colourful jigsaw puzzles and expensive Fisher Price activity centres to teach children math and how to read, and perfect their hand-eye control. I turn waste into ingenious teaching aids. My favourite is the word fan—strips of cardboard held together with a clip, with words on one side and corresponding pictures on the other. It's good to look at, and, at the same time, it teaches you your consonants phonetically, running through 'At', 'Bat', 'Cat'... My book, titled *Low-Cost No-Cost Teaching Aids*, published by the National Book Trust, is currently available in English, Hindi and Telugu and will soon be translated into Assamese and Oriya.

It doesn't take much to make these aids. Of course, in some cases, the cutting has to be precise. Like, the Matchstick Meccano. Teachers in rural schools have used it successfully to teach children geometry and pattern making. It is made of matchsticks and small pieces of cycle valve tubes, precisely cut and joined together. Unless the pentagons and triangles are cut just so, they will not fit together well.

SHILBHADRA DATTA



Mary Anne recycles waste material to make teaching aids

SO FAR SO GOOD

Like the words of the song, I was born in the USA. My maiden name was Bauer. I came to India from the US in 1963 after I married Pranabendu Dasgupta. He was head of the economics department at Jadavpur University. My mother-in-law, like most Bengali mothers-in-law, thought I wasn't educated enough for her son. So I joined Calcutta University to do my Masters in Education. Within four months, the American International School opened in Kolkata and they asked me to be its principal as I had majored in education in the US. The school ended at 1 pm, just before my university classes began, so I was able to handle both. After my Masters, I joined Modern High School as assistant principal, in 1970. In those days, teachers had to submit their weekly teaching plans to the principal and I got to see those plans. They set me thinking about how I could make little things that would help the teachers with English and math.

Job offers poured in one after the other. M Kanoria, an industrialist, asked me to start a school for his daughter Archana. That was a challenge I could not resist—I left Modern High and started a Montessori school, which became New Vista, one of the most popular of its kind. After Archana was able to take over

from me, I went on to brief stints at Calcutta Girl's School and Calcutta Boys' School. I also taught at a Muslim private school, Saifi Hall. Then, I moved to Mussoorie and was headmistress of the Mussoorie High School for a while. My husband's health was failing and

corporate clients, but Jo wanted to add a new dimension to his business and thought my teaching aids would come in handy. I had a trunk full of experiments when, 15 years ago, a German friend told me about German poet and philanthropist Matthias Weber, better known as

When I'm really old, I will set aside a room for someone who can take care of me

I needed to find a means to support myself financially.

CRAFTING A DREAM

In my spare time, I pursued my dream. I experimented with low-cost teaching aids for charitable schools. I also worked with A K Deb, known in Kolkata as Jo, in his New Wave Advertising Agency. New Wave specialised in designing exhibitions for

Tias. The friend took my proposal for crafting toy kits to Germany and gave it to him. Tias was moved by my proposal for poor Indian children and gave me Rs 1 lakh on an impulse to experiment further. I parted ways with Jo Deb and devoted myself full time to crafting aids from recycled materials.

I went on to work with UNICEF, providing little pull-out pictures to help children understand their rights better. I have also designed stickers that read, "My mother was a girl child". But the aids and stickers don't make money, so, to support myself, I write textbooks and educational storybooks, which have been published by Orient Longman and Rupa. I make some money acting in a Bengali television serial, *Ek Din Pratidin* (A Day at a Time). And I help filmmaker





Mary Anne likes to live surrounded by colours; her personal art collection comprises works by Jamini Roy

Buddhadeb Dasgupta subtitle his films in English.

TRUST IN ME

At Washington University in Missouri, in the 1950s, I was a very good student. I had three majors: early childhood education, fine arts and English. They all came together when I started the Sharehouse Charitable Foundation 10 years ago. I called it Sharehouse because I felt that the name best represented what I wanted to do, share my work with others to help teach poor children how to relate to their world.

When I went to register Sharehouse under the Income Tax Act, Harshad Mehta was busy going backwards and forwards with his suitcases full of money. The income tax man looked at me in horror and said, “Shares! Madam, what do you have to do with shares?” I explai-

ned to them what Sharehouse was, and, to prevent further misunderstanding, the officer wrote the words ‘Charitable Foundation’ after ‘Sharehouse’. The trust organises workshops for teachers in West Bengal and teaches them about recycling. The corridors of all the schools I worked with were always scattered with crayon stubs. The trust workers collect these used crayons and gather them into plastic bags to give rural schools. All children feel the need to learn and play.

A FULL LIFE

I am a cancer survivor. I survived because I looked after myself and got checked regularly, as an old lady should. I am part of Hitaishini, a cancer self-help group. Every morning, I wake to the chirping of birds, and I live surrounded by colour. I have a personal art collection that comprises works by Jamini

Roy and other masters of the Bengal School.

HUMAN CAPITAL

Thankfully, people have always been good to me. My pharmacist gives me blister packs for my educational aids, the dentist sings Rabindrasangeet and gifts me his latest cassette when I go to have a tooth extracted, and the teachers at a workshop I am holding in Kharagpur surprise me by agreeing to stay the whole day to listen to me, after initially threatening to walk out at 2 pm. I live on my own—my husband requires special care so he cannot be with me and we never had any children— but I do not feel alone, the lane is peaceful and my neighbours are friendly. When I am a really old lady and can’t move around any more, I plan to set aside a room in my house in Jadavpur for someone who will look after me. ■

WHERE ELSE
WOULD YOU FIND
SOMEONE ABOVE
55 YEARS
WHO'S PERFECTLY
IN TUNE WITH YOU?

HARMONY, OBVIOUSLY.

Cooking. Reading. Fitness. Whatever your interests are, you're sure to find a silver citizen who shares your passion. Thanks to One-On-One, our personal classified section. You can post your messages in our columns absolutely free (for a limited period only). For more details, please refer to the form on the next page.

ONE
-on-
ONE

h
celebrate age **harmony**
the magazine

Name of Advertiser:

Address:

..... Age: E-Mail:

Tel: Signature:

Tick chosen category

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Travel | <input type="checkbox"/> Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Pet & Animals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hobbies & Interests | <input type="checkbox"/> Health & Sports | <input type="checkbox"/> Jewellery & Watches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment & Events | <input type="checkbox"/> Computers | <input type="checkbox"/> Exchange |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Books & Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Antiques & Collections | <input type="checkbox"/> Others |

Please fill in the space provided below

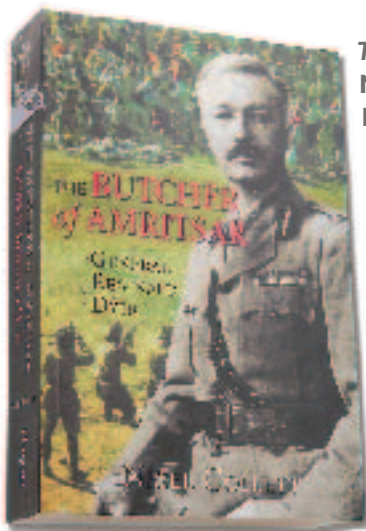
Terms and conditions

1. Advertisers are required to read and approve the text and other details of the advertisement before sending the form.
2. The Publishers reserve the right to decline, change or reschedule any advertisement.
3. Advertisements are accepted in good faith and the Publishers accept no responsibility whatsoever regarding the bonafides of the Advertisers, not the contents of the advertisements. No interviews shall be granted or correspondence entered into regarding any advertisements published.
4. Under no circumstances will we be liable for any loss to the Advertiser for any error or omission by us.
5. The above conditions and any other conditions stipulated by us will govern the acceptance and publication of any advertisement.
6. One-on-One is a free readers service only for bonafide readers of Harmony.
7. Please fill up the enclosed form along with all the necessary details and mail it to: 'One-on-One', Harmony- The Magazine, 4th Floor, Maker Chambers IV, 222, Nariman Point, Mumbai - 400 021.
8. Harmony shall not be responsible for any loss/delays in transit for the forms.
9. The offer is open for a limited period and is on first cum first serve basis.
10. No correspondence shall be entertained regarding non-publication of One-on-One.
11. Harmony reserves the right to modify/change the One-on-One received at their end.
12. Maximum number of words allowed per One-on-One is 30.
13. All forms should be sent by ordinary post only. No registered post or courier shall be accepted for One-on-One.
14. Only one entry per person shall be accepted.
15. Each entry should be in the original form printed in Harmony. No photocopies shall be allowed.

For office use only

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advt. No. | <input type="checkbox"/> Heading | <input type="checkbox"/> No. of Words |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|

Death and the General



The Butcher of Amritsar
Nigel Collett
Rupa; Rs 875; Pages 575

Almost eighty years after his death, history's verdict on General Reginald Dyer is firmly cemented and whatever non-partisan sympathy might exist is quickly driven out by the title of Nigel Collett's book, *The Butcher of Amritsar*. Collett has written an immensely readable recreation of

Dyer's life in an attempt to explain the Jallianwala Bagh massacre through the personality of the man and not as a mistake by the empire. But like most stories, this too comes around in a circle and we discover that Dyer's peculiar attitude towards the natives was shaped entirely by his government.

In the first chapter, Rex Dyer is a surprisingly likeable child - not at all the kind to torture kittens in the backyard as his posthumous title suggests. Born in 1864, the youngest son of Edward Dyer, the first beer baron of India, Rex spend the first ten years of his life in the wild hills of Simla, nicely contrasted with its chic mall and tea shops. He was a brave boy. Once confronted by a hyena, he slowly led his younger brother out of its path, walking backwards all the way so that he could stare the animal down. He was eight then. He also disliked

hunting. Once after accidentally killing a monkey, he couldn't sleep properly for months.

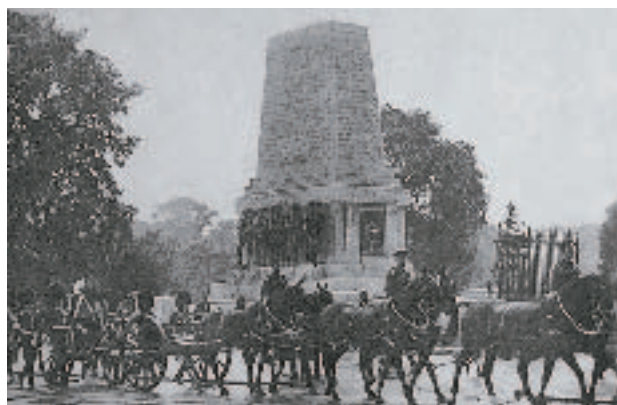
But Dyer also grew up in the post-mutiny era when relations between Indians and Britishers were completely poisoned. His parents who started their life in India during the mutiny had lived in the fear of the rioting and raping that had happened then. No familiarity or friendship was possible, the "natives" were only meant to be controlled and tolerated. Merciless bullying in his boarding school in Ireland, where he was sent off when 11, turned him into a shy, reticent man but one who was also always called fearless by his colleagues in the Queen's army. So much bravado that he often found his superior officers an obstruction to his actions.

Reginald Dyer was not the kind to go by the book and, in April 1919, during the riots that had spread all over Amritsar, Dyer assumed an authority that had actually not been clearly stated. Did he break military rules when he shot at the 20,000 plus peaceful crowd? Many. Did he have reasons to worry that the meeting would lead to violence? Many. If you take out humanity and just view the events as a military chess games, the arguments can go to and fro. As Dyer said a few days before he died in 1927, "So many people who knew the condition of Amritsar say I did right...but so many others say I did wrong. I only want to die and know from my Maker whether I did right or wrong."

—Anuradha Kumar



The Jallianwala Bagh, 1919



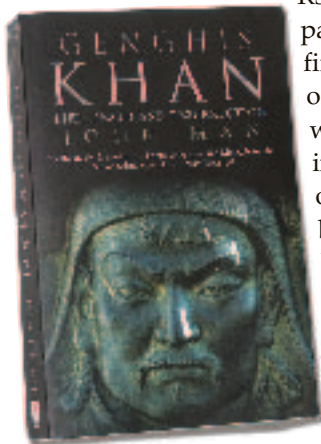
Dyer's funeral procession, in London

BOOKSHELF

BRIEFLY

Why should you read **GENGHIS KHAN—LIFE, DEATH AND RESURRECTION** (Bantam Books;

Rs 385; 430 pages)? Well, first because of Babur, who rode into India on the bombast of being a descendant of both Timur the Lame and Genghis



Khan, and pummelled

Indian history into a new direction. Second, **John Man** has done a great job of recreating the life of this 12th century nomadic conqueror who was the grandson of a chieftain who tweaked the beard of the Chinese Emperor in drunken bonhomie; the son of a colourful nomad who stole somebody else's bride for his own; and a self-made emperor declared "the most important man of the last thousand years" by *The Washington Post*. The new links forged between the East and West by Genghis and his successors were ultimately responsible for the phenomenon of the global village, the *Post* concurred. If you still need a reason: a DNA study, whose results were printed in *American Journal of Human Genetics*, discovered that around 16 million men in the world today share the genes that came from one ancestor. The most likely perpetrator—Genghis Khan.

The first five pages of **Thomas Friedman's THE WORLD IS FLAT** (Penguin; Rs 728; 488 pages) are devoted to the author's amazing epiphany that gave him the book's title—an apt metaphor, he says, for globalisation. The book starts in Bangalore and its tone of awe about India's English speaking population, call centres and outsourcing is initially annoying. But if you can ignore that, Friedman, who writes chiefly for Americans and has won the Pulitzer thrice, does an interesting, fast-paced dissection of the 10 recent forces



that have made the world a smaller place, starting from the collapse of the Berlin Wall.

DARK HARBOUR (Simon and Schuster; Rs 518; 418 pages) by **David Hosp** is another dirty-lawyer-discovers-his-guts thriller. It starts with the discovery of a beautiful dead woman murdered in the trademark style of 'Little Jack', a serial killer terrorising Boston. But detective Linda Flaherty, who plays the part of the beautiful alive woman, thinks it's just an imitation murder. The

chief suspect is the dead woman's colleague, lawyer Scott Finn who discovers a multi-layered gangster-politician nexus as he tries to extricate himself from this situation, while battling unbearable sexual friction with the lovely detective. Not bad for a rainy Sunday but not as good as Grisham either.



A good read for those who love war fiction, **Terence Strong's WHEELS OF FIRE** (Simon & Schuster; Rs 518; 451 pages) recreates the trying times of the ethnic conflict in Bosnia in the early 1990s with flair. It all starts with a phone call in the middle of the night to former Special Air Service (SAS) officer Jeff Hawkins, who at 44 is just a year away from retirement. In a few hours, he's on a plane to Bosnia, where he's assigned to keep United Nation aid convoys on the move at all costs. Hawkins realises the task at hand is not easy as he has to work his way through a company commander who's not up to his job and an uneasy alliance of local Muslims and Croats against the Serbs.



All titles available at Oxford Bookstore, Mumbai, Bangalore and Kolkata, and on www.oxfordbookstore.com

A tale of four cities

Replaying the evolution of four cities, inside out

And, after the London blasts, it's good to lay one's hands on a book that pays tribute to the London spirit, warts and all. In **Peter Ackroyd's** hands, London becomes a living, breathing organism, with its own laws of growth and change.

LONDON: THE BIOGRAPHY combines fact, fiction, history, and personal narrative in a uniquely atmospheric work. Vignettes about sex, religion, war and homelessness bring the city to life, criss-crossing London's centuries of history in a delving into the city's character.

The book is not a chronological record. There are chapters on the history of light, the history of childhood and the history of suicide, and the history of drink. A lifetime of research seems to have gone into the book. And it almost cost the author his life - the day after he submitted his manuscript, Ackroyd suffered a massive heart attack. That gives an indication of the passion that went into this monumental work.

Random House; Rs 1,000; 432 pages

Teresa Albuquerque's BOMBAY—A HISTORY chronicles the quarter century—from 1840 to 1865—that turned it from a town of warehouses into a super city. The concerns that plagued Bombay then are startlingly familiar - shortage of land, exorbitant rents, corrupt police and terrible drainage. Albuquerque relates how all these problems were deftly handled by the city's 19th century administration filling her account with characters, anecdotes and intrigues of a budding metropolis. Here is a sampler: Bombay's first postmen were all Parsis. Strange but simple because the city's first postal service was a private enterprise started by a Parsi, whose service was obviously called Postwallah. And when you read that nautch girls were an appreciated part of Bombay then, unlike today, you really begin to wish for some 19th century maturity in our politics.

Price not available; 216 pages

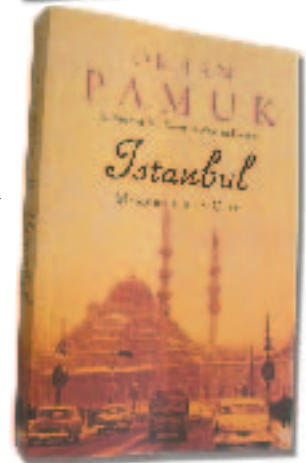
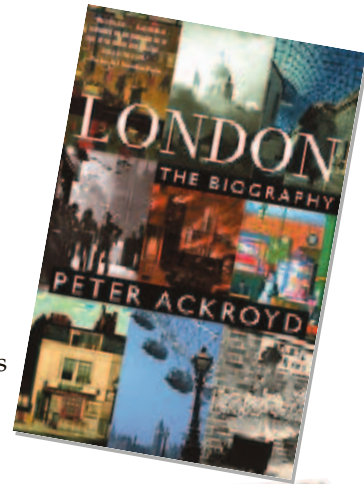
Orhan Pamuk's ISTANBUL is as much a personal memoir as a portrait of a city. Born in a city melancholic with the pervasive decay of the Ottoman Empire all around, living with his extended family layered on various floors of one building, all loving and hating each other as only families can, Pamuk narrates how he grew up in a dying empire. Affable fathers who never worked, various palaces of Shahs and concubines pulled down for high-rises, love affairs in art museums, and a fatalistic weariness that permeates everything and everybody, Istanbul is a slow, sometimes sad, read.

Knopf; Rs 450; 400 pages

City of Dreadful Night, City in Extremis, City of Palaces, City of Joy—the world knows Calcutta by many names and most of them are not complimentary.

Geoffrey Moorhouse's CALCUTTA, THE CITY REVEALED traces Calcutta's fall from its position as the second city of the British Empire to the capital of West Bengal. Why did he write it? Because, he says, "like Everest, it was there." In a sense it is a story of how and why the Empire was created and how, after the Empire finished, the people turned to communism for salvation. It is, of course, the West's view of the city, warped by poverty and saved by Mother Teresa. One critic even described it as Geoffrey Moorhouse's plunge, like Zola, into hell.

Penguin; Rs 250; 430 pages



Capture the moment

Don't let memories of relationships and events turn to dust, cautions Amita Malik

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR, THE

Centre for Women's Development Studies in New Delhi brought out an enthralling calendar, which, I feel, is not just for the year but for posterity, to be treasured by all Indians. Called 'Framing Conjugality', it has images from 1880 to the 1940s—family photos of couples from all over India. Bengalis, Parsis, Gujaratis, Goans, Rajasthanis, Muslims from the famous Tyabji family, a Lucknowi couple, Sikhs, you name it. The captions describe the period dresses and traditional accessories such as Parsi borders. I keep on looking at these family pictures and have presented copies of the calendar to people I know. Some have kept them on their coffee tables for visitors to mull over. They have delighted all those who saw it.

So have my own family pictures of my grandparents, parents, brothers and sisters, nephews and nieces and, in one instance, the grandchildren of a niece—displayed on the antique Chinese cabinet my mother left me. These pictures make me realise how old I am. They also bring back happy memories, before ugly family disputes arose, as they do in every modern family. Without the present stress of modern living, joint families provided a built-in protection, where each member had a place, where elders were respected for their wisdom, where rowdy youngsters were tolerated but later explained the responsibility of so many generations living together.

I particularly cherish a photo of my two younger brothers, perched on the gate of our house in Shillong, mischievous youngsters enjoying life in that lovely hill station. That photo brings back

memories of six happy siblings and their friends, playing football on the lawn—I was the only girl and was tolerated as the goalkeeper. Two of the team went on to become ambassadors, one of them an ambassador to Germany—he even mystified the son of General Rommel, who came to his diplomatic party, by introducing me as, "Frau Malik, she was a member of our football team." "Yeah?" asked Rommel's son, "Unbelievable! Indian ladies play football, and with men?" The ambassador gave me a wink as I tried to look modest and stop myself from bursting into laughter.



Family photos bring
back happy
memories, before
family disputes
arose, as in every
modern family

Family photos bring back mostly happy memories of relationships and events in our lives, especially when we are old and looking back on our childhood, our married and professional lives and everything that mattered. I would like to remind everybody that no matter how many photos one has, do not leave them around carelessly, or in forgotten boxes or drawers. Some of them even have historical value, as in the case of the lovely calendar of couples from all over India. In fact, I am looking for a volunteer to put my photos in order. I seem to have hundreds of them, as I discovered when I searched through the lot to illustrate my autobiography.

Sadness only came in when I realised that some of my most loved friends and relations were no longer in this world, which is

why I would urge all silvers to look after their photos well, if they have both the time and energy. Or persuade youngsters to help mount them in albums or frame them. It ought to be fascinating for them and a real learning experience, which they will treasure when they are old too. ■

Amita Malik, often referred to as 'the first lady of Indian media', is a columnist and film critic

STRENGTHEN YOUR BODY. FEED YOUR MIND.



FREE ZANDU CHYAVANPRASH SPECIAL AVAILABLE
WITH EVERY SUBSCRIPTION TO HARMONY.

Now there's even more reason to subscribe to Harmony, the magazine specially for people above 55. Where you'll find relevant articles on issues like health, cooking, fitness or even fashion. And meet people like yourself. Fill in the enclosed form today.

And enjoy this magazine for a long time to come.

A Dhirubhai Ambani Memorial Trust Initiative


h
celebrate age **harmony**
the magazine

Visit us at : www.harmonyindia.org



(Please tick below for your choice of subscription)

- And the subscriber will also get Zandu Chyavanprash Special free with this offer.

Subscription	You Pay	You Get
 2 years (24 issues)	Rs. 384	Zandu Chyavanprash Special 2 bottles of 450 gms. worth Rs. 210
 1 year (12 issues)	Rs. 220	Zandu Chyavanprash Special 1 bottle of 450 gms. worth Rs. 105



NOTE: The Harmony collects and processes personal information for the purposes of customer analysis, market research and to provide you with any further details from our organisation. Steps have been taken to ensure that consistently high standards of data protection are in place.

Why fear ageing?

Arresting biology can only lead to a sense of retardation, writes **Namita Gokhale**

I DON'T UNDERSTAND THE FUSS ABOUT AGE.

It's a linear obsession, while our actual mental, emotional and physical ages are in constant conflict. Somewhere within I'm always a 17-year-old girl with a wild streak in her. My grandmother, at 90, is the same, while there are people I know who have been middle-aged all their lives.

The real wisdom of age comes from that rare confluence of experience and flexibility that few of us manage to achieve. Our passage through time is marked by individual responses to the crises we encounter along the way. Our courage and generosity, or lack of it, mark the quality we give to our life. The inability to invest in faith and hope, the receding ability to commit, are among my personal definitions of the ageing process.

Until not so long ago, before the age of gymnasiums, women tended to age faster than men. Their shelf life in the desirability bracket and their resultant self-esteem was often lower than that of powerful and wealthy men. The gender bias is being eroded. One encounters more and more people of both sexes bending barriers of age with ease and grace. Think old women, and magnificent creatures from history like Catherine the Great come to mind, as well as Katherine Hepburn from the more recent past. All stiff competition for Dev Anand's eternal youth.

There are societies, not necessarily gerontocracies, which venerate age. Such cultures usually have definitions of wisdom in their racial memory and vocabulary. India and most eastern countries were traditionally in this mould, but the Cultural Revolution, and one-child families, may have

altered perceptions in China. Increasingly, post-industrial consumer societies devalue age. This leads to a loss in the emotional links between different age groups, and a pervading immaturity in all of them. The dread of ageing and the denial of death lead to icons gone wrong, like the case of Michael Jackson.

The quest for eternal youth has long been a favourite of literature, folklore and films. The myth of Yayati, from the Mahabharata, explicates on the dangers and attendant tragedies of perpetual youth.

Life is never static, and each rite of passage has its attendant realities. The four ashrams of Hinduism are an example, where the Vanasth Ashram means a mental attitude of detachment. And Shashtipurti, celebrating the 60th birthday, sends positive reinforcement to the family to respect elders.

Even as science and technology extend well being, arresting biology can lead to retardation. In the face-lifted societies of the West, and increasingly India, the salmon pout of artificially tautened skin is a subject of scorn to everybody except the victims of the scalpel. The figure of the crone was not a decrepit image but a radical one. But the anxieties of a Botoxed youth, sandwiched by a shortened adolescence at one end and a clinging on to cosmetic immortality on the other, are a recipe for flat disaster.

You do not have to succumb to your age, merely celebrate it. To quote my favourite poet, Yeats: '*An aged man is but a paltry thing, A tattered coat upon a hat, unless, Soul claps its hands and sing, and louder sing, For every tatter in its mortal dress.*' ■

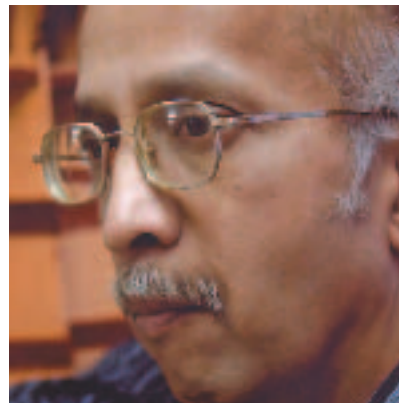


The ability to invest in faith and hope, the receding ability to commit, are among my personal definitions of ageing

H PEOPLE

KNOCK ON WOOD

When he's not presiding over a session at the Bombay High Court, **Justice D G Deshpande** gets busy with his hands – he makes models with wood. And at a friend's suggestion, the 60-year-old held a four-day exhibition of his work, *Art in Wood*, at Mumbai's Jehangir Art Gallery in July. On display were miniature reproductions of the Eiffel Tower, Qutub Minar, Hawa Mahal and Lonavala's Karla Caves, among others. Deshpande began carving miniature models in 1996; his first one was a railway station. He spends about Rs 2,000 per model but doesn't mind the expense. And the best kind of wood to use? Marine ply is his verdict.



RETURN OF THE SAINT

More than 35 years after he bowed out of his role as *The Saint*, the hit TV series based on Leslie Charteris' books on the one-man vigilante, **Sir Roger Moore**, 77, is tantalising his fans with a new made-for-television movie, featuring "an ageing Simon Templar". The film, he added, will be set in the 1930s, but with a contemporary twist bringing in an ageing Templar. Moore recently spilled the beans on his official website, asking in the end, "Who will play him, I wonder?"

RAP STAR

Dev Anand has never let age slow him down – he continues to make movies that he stars in. And now, the 81-year-old will sing a rap song in his latest film, *Mr Prime Minister*, which will release in late August. Bappi Lahiri has composed the music. "There are two versions of the rap song, Hindi and English, both penned and sung by me," says Anand, with enthusiasm. "It's a fun song. Wait till you hear it."



SILVER QUEEN

From helping Doordarshan actors with their makeover to the director of the 7th Osian Cinefan Film Festival (July 15-24) this year, **Aruna Vasudev**, 60, has travelled long. The founder and chief editor of *Cinemaya*—a quarterly magazine on Asian cinema—Vasudev attended film schools in Paris and New York before making a short documentary after her return to India. The magazine was the next logical step, as was *Cinemaya's* First Asian Film Festival, held in 1999. Twenty-five movies were screened over six days at the fest. This year, the Cinefan festival, with Vasudev as the director, had 120 screenings from 35 countries. This is the second time that the festival has collaborated with art historian Neville Tuli's auction house Osian. Vasudev has always been a vocal advocate for Asia's arthouse cinema and strongly believes in providing the audience with new options. The future, she says, lies here—in the rich culture and artistry of Asian cinema.

MILESTONES

A first. London was recently treated to artist **Sayed Haider Raza's** first solo exhibition in the city. Held at Berkeley Square Gallery from June 16 to 29, it showcased 20 years of Raza's work, including well-known paintings such as *Parbhat*, *Kundalini* and *Bindu Nag*. The show then moved to New York's Saffronart Gallery, where the 82-year-old's works were well appreciated. The show, organised by Mumbai-based online auction house Saffronart, exhibited 14 paintings, out of which nine were for sale – and all were sold. Director Woody Allen and colleagues M F Husain and Sujata Bajaj came along to admire Raza's work.



IN PASSING

Renowned Islamic scholar **Rafiq Zakaria** passed away on July 9 following a cardiac arrest at his home in Mumbai. He was 86. The veteran Congressman was a cabinet minister in the Maharashtra state government for 19 years – he held the health and urban development portfolios – and also played a part in the freedom movement.



A FULL LIFE

Their 80th wedding anniversary saw the couple enter the Guinness Book of World Records. Two weeks later, the husband, 105-year-old **Percy Arrowsmith** from Britain's Hereford County, passed away – with his 100-year-old wife Florence by his bedside.

On July 3, Japan's oldest man **Kohachi Shigetaka** died of pneumonia at a hospital near his hometown in Hiroshima – he was 110. Nirijo Tokuda of Kagoshima, a month younger than Shigetaka, is now the country's oldest man. The nation's oldest person, though, is a 112-year-old woman, Yone Minagawa, of Fukuoka.

Academy award winner **Anne Bancroft**, known for her role as the seductive Mrs Robinson in *The Graduate*, died of cancer on June 8 in New York City. She was 73. Bancroft won the 1962 best actress Oscar as the teacher of a young Helen Keller in *The Miracle Worker*, but achieved greater fame as Mrs Robinson.

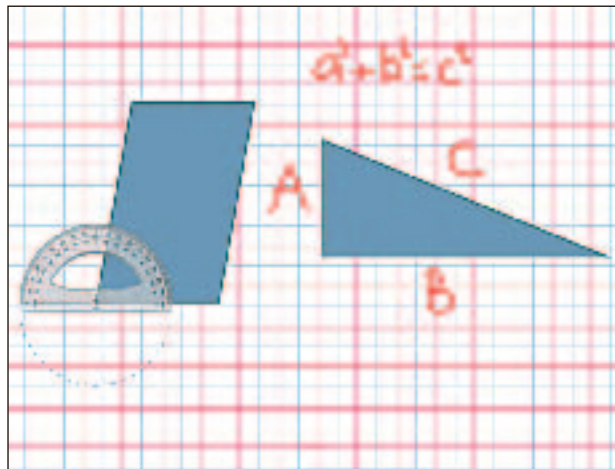


Former Test all-rounder **Eknath Solkar**, known for his match-winning catching and fielding at the short-leg position, died following a heart attack on June 26. He was 57. From humble origins, he made it big in international cricket with tenacity and skill.



BRAIN GYM

DO THE MATH



1. If you take a marker and start from a corner on a cube, what is the maximum number of edges you can trace across if you never trace across the same edge twice, never remove the marker from the cube, and never trace anywhere on the cube, except for the corners and edges?

2. A cube is made of a white material, but the exterior is painted black. If the cube is cut into 125 smaller cubes of exactly the same size, how many of the cubes will have two of their sides painted black?

3. If you started a business in which you earned Re 1 on the first day, Rs 3 on the second day, Rs 5 on the third day, Rs 7 on the fourth day, and so on, how much would you have earned with this business after 50 years (assuming there are exactly 365 days in every year)?

4. Two trains, each two miles long, enter two one-mile-long tunnels that are two miles apart from one another on the same track. The trains enter the tunnels at exactly the same time. The first train is going at 5 miles per hour, and the second at 10 miles per hour. What is the sum of the lengths of the two trains that will protrude from the tunnels at the exact moment that they collide, assuming that neither train changes its speed prior to collision? The trains are on the same track headed in opposite directions (i.e. directly toward one another).

5. In a perfectly circular arena, you walk from the edge directly to the centre. You then turn directly to my left and walk in a straight line to the edge of the arena. You then turn to the right and follow along the edge for a total of 500 m until you arrive at the point you started from. What is the circumference of the inner edge of the arena?

Courtesy: www.puzz.com

SAY IT OUT LOUD



The more faithfully you listen to the voices within you, the better you will hear what is sounding outside.

—Former UN secretary general Dag Hammarskjöld (1905-1961)

A man has to live with himself, and he should see to it that he always has good company.

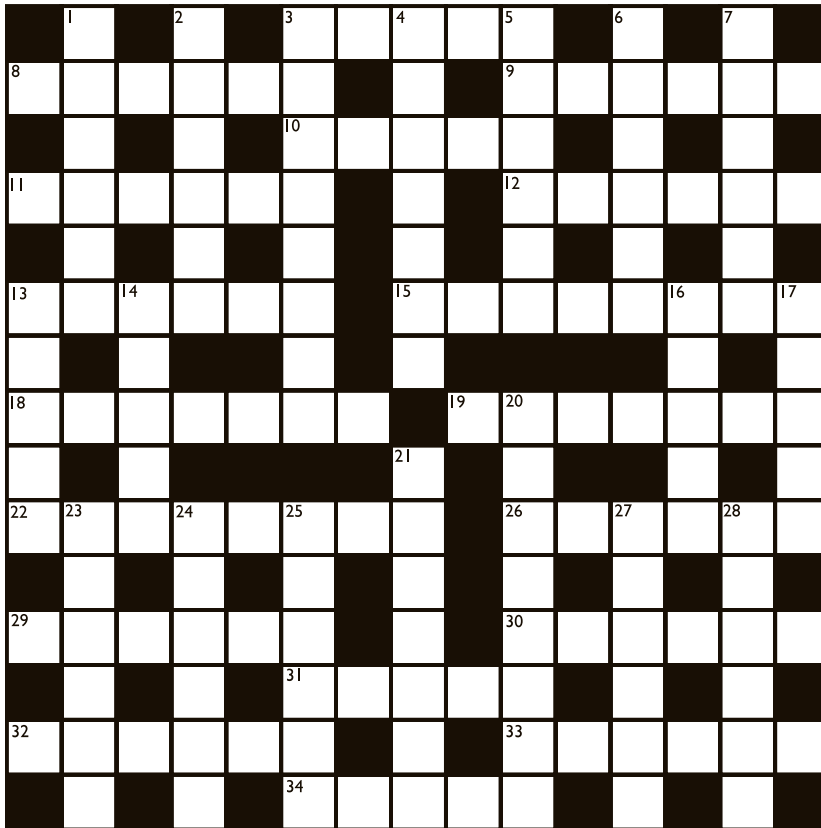
—American statesman and jurist Charles Evans Hughes (1862-1948)

The one thing that doesn't abide by majority rule is a person's conscience.

—Author Harper Lee

We're our own dragons as well as our own heroes, and we have to rescue ourselves from ourselves.

—Author Tom Robbins



EXCLUSIVE HARMONY CROSSWORD I I

By Raju Bharatan
ACROSS

- 1** How, as Singing Star Suraiya, did SONY identify (in end-January 2004) Sheela Dalaya, playing Suraiya in this film (opposite Ajit) while Lata-warbling *Ae ishq yeh sub duniya waale bekaar kii baaten karte hain!* (6-1-4)
8 Tame comediettas (11)
11 Hammer part (4)
12 A she seal (4)
13 South African umpire prone to turn apple-red when angry with a player? (7)
15 Favourite one not to be easily ousted? (1, 6)

- 16** Bore is a practitioner needing a dose of his own medicine! (5)
17 Fully charged Navjot Sidhu with only ten against his name? (4)
18 Some master of Othello! (4)
19 Alice Shakespearian (5)
21 'Hindustani Sangeet' Samrat (7)
22 Look how even the one sensible Hindi serial we get to see on our TV has 'the boob' for its core! (7)
23 Hill England failed to overcome as Australia (in 1901-02) won The Ashes (4)
26 Footnote before saint surreptitiously trying to attract attention? (4)
27 The first to celebrate? (3, 5, 3)

- 28** Sharmila's firm directive to Saif and Soha as far as Papa and Poaching go? (4, 3, 4)

DOWN

- 2** Umrigar century? "Dowe shalt not bowl!" ran the Windies crowd chant as Sunil Gavaskar tore into this fastie during his 124 on the opening day of the mid-April '71 Fifth Test at Port-of-Spain (4)
3 Dig deep for hoard in which he turns (3, 4)
4 With her there, could Dilip Kumar be far behind? (4)
5 Air Service Command register flourish to a signature representing a seal? (1, 6)
6 Met a Baba (1, 5)
7 How much do you trust the hangman who is so deep in debt? (2, 2, 3, 4)
8 Ruling to this day, Mumbai and Pune! (6, 5)
9 Just the coinage to sum up Tapan Sinha's 1977 presentation of *Safed Haathi* (11)
10 The last thing you hope to see in a recipe (4, 2, 5)
14 Cut and —, the form in which copra is sold (5)
15 A gail denoting pain in a certain part (5)
19 Distinguishing trait of our 'TuliPeach' (3, 4)
20 Trust V V S Laxman to 'walk' the plank just when the match is so poised! (1, 3-3)
24 It's not as if women are not on it in the case of the cannibal (4)
25 Rai, Aishwarya acting without due consideration (4)
26 Come across Gautam Ghose did, as a master, in having Naseeruddin Shah and Shabana Azmi working, here, for a piggy-bank pittance (4)

For answers, see page 79

Raju Bharatan is the originator of the Sunday Cryptic in *The Times Of India*

NEW 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. The clue, *Walls have them yet they hear not*, has *EARS* for its answer. Next, *pertinacity* could split into *Pert* in a city, *face to face* into *facet of ace*. For *ANISEED*, the clue could be: *Carminative I see inside and outside*—*AN(I SEE)D*. The possibilities are endless.

HEADSTART



To commemorate her 69th birthday on October 1, 2004, actor and singer Julie Andrews made a special appearance at Manhattan's Radio City Music Hall for the benefit of the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). One of the songs she performed

was 'My favourite things' from the classic film, *The Sound of Music*—but with new lyrics. When she finished, she got a four-minute standing ovation from the crowd. Here's what she sang:

Maalox and nose drops and needles for knitting,
Walkers and handrails and new dental fittings,
Bundles of magazines tied up in string,
These are a few of my favourite things.
Cadillacs and cataracts and hearing aids and glasses,
Polident and Fixodent and false teeth in glasses,
Pacemakers, golf carts and porches with swings,
These are a few of my favourite things.

When the pipes leak,
When the bones creak,
When the knees go bad
I simply remember my favourite things,
And then I don't feel so bad.

Hot tea and crumpets, and corn pads for bunions,
No spicy hot food or food cooked with onions,
Bathrobes and heat pads and hot meals they bring,
These are a few of my favourite things.

Back pains, confused brains, and no fear of sinnin',
Thin bones and fractures and hair that is thinnin',
And we won't mention our short shrunken frames,
When we remember our favourite things.

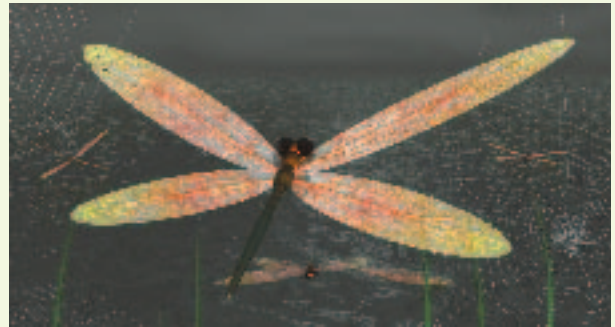
When the joints ache,
When the hips break,
When the eyes grow dim,
Then I remember the great life I've had,
And then I don't feel so bad.



LAUGH LINES

BACK TO SCHOOL

FREEDOM FACTS



Did you know?

How well do you know your freedom facts? Take our quiz and find out.

1. What was the significance of the English Royal Charter, implemented on January 14, 1758?
2. Which state was the first to be annexed under the Doctrine of Lapse, introduced by Lord Dalhousie?
3. Who started the newspaper *Vande Mataram* in the UK and when?
4. In 1912, a bomb blast injured Lord Hardinge. Who was behind the conspiracy?
5. Under whose leadership was a 'Provisional Independent Government of India' set up?
6. What is the name of the freedom fighter who designed the Indian flag?
7. Who formed the Home Rule League?
8. In 1904, a secret society of revolutionaries, Abhinav Bharat, was founded. Who was the leader?
9. When did Indian naval ratings go on strike, a mutiny that started in Bombay Port and spread to barracks in Thane, Pune and Delhi and ships anchored in Calcutta, Karachi and Visakhapatnam?
10. On August 9, 1925, a train passing through the village of Kakori was stopped and a vast sum of money belonging to the British was robbed by a band of 10 revolutionaries. Who was the leader?

THE TREK OF FAITH

Directorate of Information,
Jammu & Kashmir government,
Old Secretariat, Mubarak Mandi
Complex, Jammu-180 001.
Tel: 0191-2544076, 2540088,
2578835, Fax: 0191-2544643

Directorate of Information,
Jammu & Kashmir government,
Opposite Partap Bagh,
Abhiguzar Lal Chowk, Srinagar.
Tel: 0194-2452294, 2452437, 2481980, 2459172; Fax:
0194-2452227; email: dipjk@jk.nic.in and
jmt_info@sancharnet.in

Jammu & Kashmir Tourism, 25 North Wing, World
Trade Centre Arcade, Cuffe Parade, Colaba,
Mumbai-5.
Tel: 022-22189040

SOLUTIONS TO BRAIN GYM FOR RESOURCES PAGE

1. 9.

2. 44. Thirty-six of the cubes have exactly two of their sides painted black, but because a cube with three of its sides painted black has two of its sides painted black, you must also include the corner cubes.

3. Rs 333,062,500.

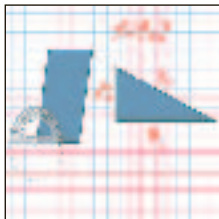
4. $2\frac{2}{3}$ miles. The trains are exactly 4 miles apart. Their combined speed is 15 miles per hour, so it will take them 16 minutes to collide. The first train will have travelled $1\frac{1}{3}$ miles, so $\frac{1}{3}$ mile of it will be out of the tunnel in front and $\frac{2}{3}$ mile of it will be out in the back on collision. The other mile of it will be in the tunnel. The second train will have travelled $2\frac{2}{3}$ miles, so only $\frac{1}{3}$ mile of it will still be in the tunnel, so $1\frac{2}{3}$ miles of it will be out of the tunnel.

5. $666\frac{2}{3}$ m. Think of it in terms of a pie chart. You walked exactly $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way around the arena, so simply multiply the 500 m you walked by $\frac{4}{3}$ to get the answer.

56



76



EXCLUSIVE HARMONY CROSSWORD II

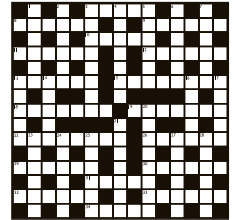
ACROSS:

1 *Mughal-e-Azam*; 8 domesticate (is the 11 letters of *comediettas* rearranged); 11 peen (means 'the end of a hammer-head opposite the hammering face'; 12 Elsa (is the 4 letters of *seal* rearranged); 13 Orchard (Dave); 15 a *limpet*; 16 drill (dr/ill), *drill* also means *bore*; 17 IONS (10/NS) — *ten* against the name of NS (Navjot Sidhu); 18 Iago; 19 Celia (is the 5 letters of *Alice* rearranged); 21 Naushad; 22 *Astitva* — *As/tit/va*; 23 Clem (Hill); 26 PSST (PS standing for *footnote*, ST for *Saint* — *psst* means 'seeking to attract person's attention surreptitiously'); 27 New Year's Day; 28 Mum's the word

DOWN:

2 Uton (U-ton — Umrigar century), Uton is Uton Dowe, the Windies pacer; 3 hoe hard — *hole/hard* (*he turns in hoard*); 4 Lata (Mangeshkar); 5 A SCROLL (ASC roll, ASC standing for 'Air Service Command'); 6 (Baba) Amte (*Met a* is the 4 letters of *Amte* rearranged); 7 up to his neck; 8 Deccan Queen; 9 elephantasy; 10 salt to taste; 14 dried (cut and dried); 15 algia (a *gail* is the 5 letters of *algia* rearranged, *algia* means 'denoting pain in a certain part'); 19 cat eyes ('TuliPeach' is Aishwarya Rai); 20 a see-saw; 24 menu — men/u; 25 RASH — *R/ASH* (R standing for Rai, *ASH* for Aishwarya) 26 Paar (the Gautam Ghose classic)

77



BACK TO SCHOOL

Answers:

1. It allowed the British to keep any booty obtained by means of war against enemies of the king or company.
2. Satara, in 1848.
3. Madame Bhikaji Cama, in 1861.
4. Ras Behari Bose.
5. Surya Sen, at Chittagong on April 18, 1930.
6. Pingali Venkayya. The flag was adopted on July 22, 1947.
7. Annie Besant.
8. Veer Savarkar.
9. February 1946.
10. Ramaprasad Bismal. He was hanged on December 18, 1927.

78





Photo: ASHWINI CHOPRA; Text: TEENA BARUAH

“An akhara teaches discipline to young men and gives them direction in life. I have deep respect for it as it creates an equal society. It is my way of building a nation of simple, strong and happy men with extraordinary will power. A pahalwan grows humble with his strength. My students walk with folded hands and bow their heads on seeing a woman.”

Guru Ram Dhan, 75, runs Guru Hanuman Akhara, in Old Delhi. After a bypass surgery 12 years ago, Ram Dhan retired from active wrestling and became a coach. At the akhara, he starts his day at 4.30 am, blowing three sharp whistles to his students, signaling it is time for a 5-km run. This is followed by a 30-minute exercise routine at Roshanara Park and 1,000 punishing push-ups. Ram Dhan closely monitors their progress. His students are forbidden to watch television and movies, or fall in love. They are all avowed brahmachari (celibates) and retire when they get married. He doesn't charge his students any fee, but feels amply rewarded as they gift him all their trophies won at various national championships. They have brought him the Arjuna Award, the Dronacharya Award and even the Padmashri—won by his students Satpal Pahalwan and Kartar Pahalwan.