armon celebrate age



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Health and hope

The possibilities of technology are endless—we just need to harness them. I recently read an article about the Intel Health Guide, a device that lets doctors monitor a patient's health remotely. It is being test-driven in the US right now. When attached to a weighing scale or blood pressure cuff, it transmits the readings to the doctor's office, where they can be analysed. The doctor then has the option to examine the patient visually—through the inbuilt videophone—and offer advice.

Such products and services that enable silvers to live independent lives are expected to mushroom in the West. They will be driven by technology companies, proactive governments and public and private insurers in a bid to augment healthcare delivery while cutting healthcare bills. In fact as far back as 2003, Intel and 400 other organisations formed the Centre for Ageing Services Technologies (CAST), an advocacy group that's fighting to grow support for 'ageing-in-place' technologies.

India has a lot to learn. We are slow to realise that an essential component of national greatness is social infrastructure. The process of building this must begin at the grassroots. Today, our primary and secondary healthcare centres are languishing for lack of manpower and medicines, forcing silvers to undertake long journeys to cities in search of treatment. However, there are replicable models—wholly indigenous—of hope and inspiration. In 2005, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) launched a telemedicine facility with the Comprehensive Rural Health Services (CRHS) Project in Ballabgarh, Haryana, to serve the district of Faridabad. And in 2007, Harmony reported an initiative by New Delhi's Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, in collaboration with the Indian Space



Research Organisation (ISRO), the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Science and Technology, to connect to community health centres in Gohana (Haryana), Kaithun (Rajasthan) and Dasmal (Himachal Pradesh) via satellite. This initiative was later extended to Sonipat (Haryana) and Almora (Uttaranchal). Now, many hospitals and research facilities, both government and private, are embarking upon telemedicine initiatives. Most heartening, state governments are taking notice—both the Gujarat and Maharashtra governments are working with ISRO to deliver healthcare services to remote areas. According to a recent report, there are 400 platforms for telemedicine currently operational in India.

This trend should be aggressively encouraged across both the public and private sectors. Further, the government must make social infrastructure a priority by investing in research on 'ageing-in-place' technologies and promulgating welfare policies of inclusion. For far too long, healthcare in India has been a mere promise—it's time to make it a firm commitment.

In Ambani

A Harmony for Silvers Foundation Initiative

Harmony-Celebrate Age-December 2009 Volume 6 Issue 7

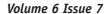
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LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL: A 65 year-old stranger taught Shivika Sharma how to enjoy life



COMMITTED CRUSADER: Empowerment helped Suchibrata Roy Choudhury initiate vital changes in the community

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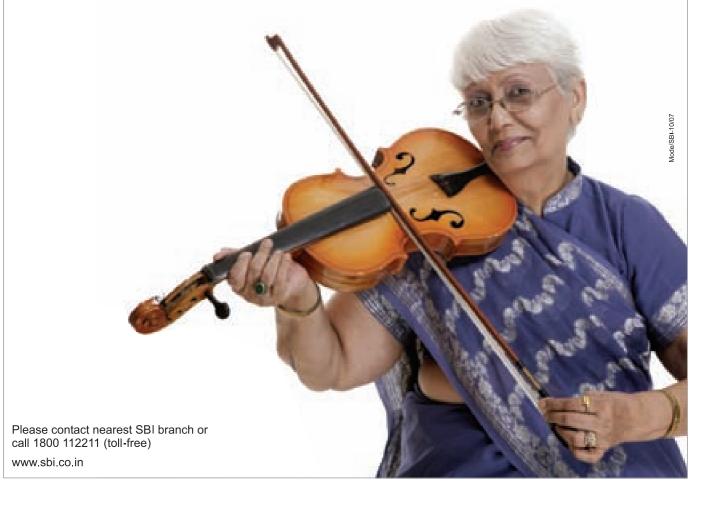


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column

Harmony has always campaigned for change, evolution and the accompanying personal growth. Amol Palekar, on the cover this month, has an exemplary career graph. An alumnus of the Sir J J School of Arts, Palekar left painting for theatre, only to make a clear progression towards acting in films and then direction. Never conforming to one single passion, he has sought adventure and revolution to carve out a niche for himself. With radical views on filmmaking, feminism, idealism, public attention and success, he chooses to be unorthodox in his approach and always questioning to the point of seeking total control. Idiosyncrasies notwithstanding, he emerges a winner.

Harmony's silvers are winners because they never quit. Their purpose wins over their achievements. Joe Menezes is a centenarian with magic in his fingers ("Play it Again, Joe"). After eight decades of private performances and music lessons, he gave up his violin a couple of years ago because his shoulders hurt. Today, his heart still beats for music as his fingers nimbly dance over the piano.

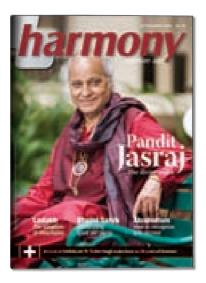
An arbiter of advice, *Harmony* is also a repository of working solutions in the fields of health and government policies. This issue, we take on cancer-the deadliest disease we know ("The Abnormal Gene"). While prevention is the best cure, there was a limit to controlling it until a few years ago. Today, advancements in medicine and technology have increased the rate of survival. Where we lag behind, though, is proper policy for silvers. Read Jane Barratt's column on government-backed intergenerational projects across the world and send us your views.

—Meeta Bhatti



his year, I was honoured with the Albert Ekka Award for lifetime achievement in sports and my contribution to the development of sports in Jharkhand. The award was presented by the Governor of Jharkhand on National Sports Day on 29 August 2009 in Ranchi. Though I am 81 years old now, I have not lost my energy and spirit. In fact, I still participate in the 100-m run at veterans' sports competitions. Further, I continue to organise athletic events like the Run for Peace, Olympic Day Run and the SAIL Day Run in Bokaro Steel City, which was dominated by senior citizens. How wonderful it would be if Harmony for Silvers Foundation initiated a Run for World Peace in Bokaro exclusively for senior citizens!

Nirmal Kumar Dey, Bokaro



t was wonderful to read the latest It was wondered to lissue of Harmony. Celebrating age is indeed a real joy and the magazine, with its message and photographs, is extremely exciting for silver citizens. Even the advertisements you carry evoke awareness about the problems and responsibilities of old age. We sincerely appreciate your pioneering efforts in an area that has been neglected by society. We only wish that a Hindi version of the magazine is published to take the message to the masses.

Triloki Das Khandelwal. Social Security Foundation Jaipur

am a regular subscriber to Tam a regular support.

Harmony. I would like to point out the unreasonable and unjust increase in premiums charged by nationalised insurance companies, especially to silvers. I am 76 years old and my wife is 73. Up to 2006, for a Mediguard insurance of Rs 150,000 (each), I used to pay a consolidated premium of Rs 7,485 for both of us. Now, despite any insurance claims in the interim period, I need to pay a consolidated premium of Rs 18,750. It is ludicrous to keep milking silvers who have no income of their own. There is an urgent need to reduce premium rates for silvers substantially and spare us from service tax. I would be grateful if your magazine takes up this important cause with the concerned authorities.

K D Mijagiri, Pune

other Teresa has always reminded us that though we may not be able to do great things, doing small things with great love will yield great results. This epitomises the life of Vinubhai Valia. who established the NGO Pushpa Maa Foundation in the memory of his wife. In order to mitigate the loneliness of elders, he decided to set up an enrichment centre/club for them. They only need to pay a token contribution of Rs 102 for

life membership. Mr Valia started with a centre in Borivali and then set up another branch in Borivali, where he also set up a Dada Dadi Park. Members are provided with tea and coffee and can choose from an array of recreational activities: chess, carom, television, music, a reading room and library. For the silvers, the centre is truly a second home where they can relax, bond and celebrate all the special occasions in their lives, like birthdays. The centres also host health camps for members. Mr Valia's initiative and selfless service have brought cheer, hope and companionship to countless elders. I am indeed fortunate that as a member, my life too has been touched by his goodness.

L K Baweja, Via email

Tam writing to tell you about Lyestha Nagarik Sangh, a centre for senior citizens established in 1995 in Deonar, Mumbai. The Sangh was formed under the stewardship of M H Gursahani with a donation of Rs 100 per annum from each member; this amount was later increased to Rs 150. Today, the Sangh has 134 members. They meet twice a month in the neighbourhood's Kumud Vidyalaya to discuss welfare activities for the needy in the area. This includes sponsoring the education of students by providing them with tuition fees and books, medical assistance, and organising talks on health and education. The Sangh also organises annual picnics with individual contributions; bhajan sessions and blood pressure checks for members. Today, the Sangh dearly remembers M H Gursahani for his service and dedication to society; his legacy will continue.

A S Bhatt, Mumbai

y friend Ignatious Mascarenhas is 76 years old and an artist. He lives in Thane with his wife Flory.

Earlier, he used to live in Shivaji Park in Mumbai and would take a daily morning walk, where he would keenly observe other walkers. When he returned home, he would draw caricatures of them. Sometimes, he showed these drawings to the subjects or their friends. In fact, I became acquainted with him after he drew a caricature of me and my wife! To date, he has drawn more than 700 caricatures. His drawings have been exhibited on several occasions at Portuguese Church in Dadar; he was even featured in the 2003 edition of the Limca Book of Records in the 'Human Stories' section. Besides his art, Mr Mascarenhas is a good violinist and has a wonderful sense of humour. The morning walkers at Shivaji Park miss him and eagerly look forward to the rare occasions that he returns to meet all of them. I believe such a man exemplifies the spirit of your magazine.

Ravindra Raje, Mumbai

was very happy to see the article on Was very nappy to see ...
See India Foundation, a Kathakali institution established by me in Kochi, in the November 2009 issue of Harmony. The article was very engaging and nicely crafted. The picture that went with it was also beautifully shot. I appreciate and laud Harmony's



attempt to help revive dying art forms through its pages on Indian culture. From my personal experience, I know how difficult it is for people who pursue such art forms to keep them alive against all odds. For instance, the museum that I have set up in

Kodungallur in Kerala is a treasure trove of accessories and attire associated with Kathakali. It worries me that all the items I have so painstakingly collected will disintegrate owing to neglect after my demise. I hope some corporate house offers to oversee the museum. It's time we learned to cherish our heritage.

P K Devan, Kochi



AN INVITATION FROM **HARMONY**

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

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

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







O»NEWSWORTHY

Your Act in **ACTION**

n November, a former Delhi University professor became a symbol for the relevance of ₹ the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007. The tribunal set up in the capital under the Act ruled that Lotika Sarkar, 87 (see pic, extreme left), should get her house back from a couple who had defrauded her.

Following her husband's death in 2005, family friend Nirmal Dhoundial, an IPS officer, and his wife Preeti moved in with Sarkar at her home in the posh Hauz Khas locality in South Delhi, ostensibly to provide her fiduciary help. Gradually, they began to restrict her movements and access to friends and relatives. Fearing a threat to Sarkar's life, friends and relatives urged her to leave the house. In January 2009, Sarkar left to stay with a cousin in Sujan Singh Park in Delhi and, soon after, moved in with another cousin in Mumbai. On 20 February, Nirmal Dhoundial filed a habeas corpus petition in Delhi High Court, stating that Sarkar was taken away without her consent. After Sarkar responded that she had left on her own free will, the Court dismissed the petition on 2 March 2009. Then, Dhoundial announced that Sarkar had transferred the house via a gift deed to his wife Preeti on 10 July 2007. Following this, around 150 friends and wellwishers of Sarkar drafted a petition demanding the return of the house, and presented it to the Home Ministry. And on 23 April, Sarkar lodged an FIR against the Dhoundials claiming she has no recollection of signing such a document. "The deed transfer appears to be authentic but she insists she never signed it," says Vijender Jain, inspector at the Hauz Khas police station. "Why would I gift away a house worth at least Rs 10 crore if it is my only



security?" she exclaims, in conversation with Harmony.

The case was referred to the tribunal, following an application from All India Centre for Development of Education and Environment. The tribunal cancelled the gift deed transfer on 30 October, with the judgement, "Where any senior citizen who, after the commencement of this Act, has transferred by way of gift or otherwise, his property subject to the condition that the transferee shall provide the basic amenities and basic physical needs to the transferor and such transferee refuses or fails to provide such amenities and physical needs, the said transfer of property shall be deemed to have been made by fraud or coercion and shall at the option of the transferor be declared void by the Tribunal." It then ordered the Dhoundials to return the house to Sarkar.

The matter has not been resolved vet. On 6 November, the Dhoundials challenged the order in the Delhi High Court by filing a petition that argued that the transfer was legally valid. The Court refused to reverse the tribunal's ruling and held that the house would remain sealed until further orders. It then granted Sarkar time till 26 November to respond to their petition. To ensure there is no foul play, the Delhi Commission of Women has been tasked with ensuring Sarkar's safety. Sarkar is confident, saying, "My house will be mine again." Harmony will keep you updated on the outcome.

KNOW YOUR ACT

According to the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act 2007.

- A senior citizen unable to maintain himself from his own earning or property shall have the right to apply to a maintenance tribunal seeking monthly allowance from children, heirs or inheritors of his assets.
- State governments shall set up tribunals and appellate tribunals in every subdivision and district to decide the level of maintenance.
- The maximum monthly maintenance allowance is Rs 10,000. Punishment for non-payment shall be Rs 5,000, and/or up to three months' imprisonment.
- An application seeking maintenance can be submitted by a senior citizen or any registered voluntary organisation working on his behalf.
 - A tribunal can declare a transfer of property to be void if it was made 'by way of gift or otherwise' with the condition that the beneficiary would maintain the

senior citizen and subsequently fails to do so.

- However, if the property is legally transferred under the Gift Tax Act (1958), such a transfer is unconditional. If it is considered a bonafide agreement, it cannot be voided.
- States shall establish old age homes and prescribe standards for services provided. Each home should accommodate at least 150 seniors. **HOW TO PROCEED:**
- The application can be filed at the district court where the senior resides or where the heirs reside.
- Notices shall be sent and proceedings should conclude within 90 days from the date of service of the maintenance application.
- A conciliation process may take place before the hearing. The conciliation report shall be submitted to the tribunal within a month by the conciliation officer—assigned by the court or an NGO, or anyone speaking on behalf of the senior citizen.



O>FIRST RESORT

Evergreen life

etire in style at Evergreen Villas, a luxury resort in Mysore for people over the age of 55, developed by a group of Indian and NRI promoters. The silver-friendly and picturesque project, which comprises two-bedroom villas, single-bedroom villas and super deluxe suites, features amenities like a central kitchen, housekeeping and laundry, and shuttle service to the city. Other value-adds include physical and recreational activities; regular health checkups with primary and emergency care when needed; assisted living facilities; and comprehensive security. The units, which are expected to be available in early 2010, cannot be purchased—instead, silvers take a lifetime membership. This gives them a variety of options: to live at Evergreen Villas for a lifetime, leave whenever they wish or even transfer their membership to a nominee.





For more details on membership, pricing and payment options, visit www.evergreenvillas.in, email ContactUs@evergreenvillas.in or call (0)9980767536 and 9980977662

HELP IN CHANDIGARH: CITY-BASED NGO DADADADI HAS ESTABLISHED A 24-HOUR HELPLINE—(0) 9888988847—FOR SILVERS TO PROVIDE INFORMATION AND REFERRAL ON LEGAL AND MEDICAL CONCERNS. THE NGO ALSO PLANS TO TIE UP WITH LOCAL AMBULANCE PROVIDERS TO GIVE FREE AND PROMPT SERVICE TO ELDERS IN CHANDIGARH.

O>TRENDS

Hand on the wheel

When should silvers stop driving? As the idea of imposing a restrictive age cap that doesn't take into account individual capacities is—justifiably—controversial, an increasing number of Americans are turning to 'driving rehabilitation specialists' to make the decision for them. These are essentially occupational therapists who are specifically trained to work with elderly drivers, reports ABC News. They test silvers on their depth perception, peripheral vision, colour vision, sign recognition and reaction time. "I help them see their own strengths and weaknesses,"



says Mary Beth Meyer, a driving rehab specialist in Poughkeepsie, New York. "My goal is to keep them on the road—but only if they're capable." According to Meyer, warning signs include driving too slowly; failure to observe signs and signals; failure to

yield; becoming easily frustrated or confused; and difficulty interpreting traffic situations. While sometimes the problem can be easily solved by adding wide-angle mirrors for better visibility or cushions to position the driver more upright, at other times the silver is advised to stop driving. This trend is welcomed by the American Automobile Association (AAA)—there are more than 20 million drivers in the US who are over 70 years of age and according to the AAA, for every mile driven, collision rates for this demographic is second only to teenagers.



O» ANALYSE THIS

COOL HANDS

ere's another reason silver workers are invaluable— Lthey shrug off stress better. According to Ageing, Work-Related Stress and Health, a report released by the Institute of Work, Health and Organisations in the UK, stress levels peak at about 50 to 55 years of age and decrease as one heads towards retirement. This could be because of two reasons, as research leader Amanda Griffiths from the University of Nottingham explains in a media release. "There could be lower levels of stress among older workers because they have left more demanding jobs to do something easier," she says. "On the other hand, it could be because increasing



seniority has given them more control over their working lives, which can reduce stress. Therefore, protecting tomorrow's older workers, as well as today's, will pay dividends, as older workers will form a major part of tomorrow's workforce."

R&R IN MALAYSIA: MALAYSIA'S FIRST REST AND RECREATION CENTRE FOR SILVERS WILL OPEN IN AMPANG IN EARLY 2010. THE CENTRE, BUILT AT A COST OF RS 96 MILLION, WILL SERVE AS AN EDUCATION, MEDITATION AND ACTIVITY CENTRE.

O>OFFBEAT

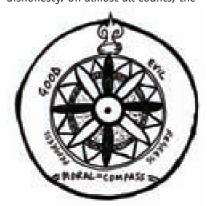


Pillow fight

Think anti-ageing pillowcases sound ridiculous? So did Britain's Advertising Standards Agency (ASA). Last month, it banned an advertisement by Direct Beauty Products Ltd, which claimed its pillowcases helped the skin retain moisture and minimise wrinkling, reports Reuters. "We have not seen any studies that sufficiently tested the effect of the silk pillows and connected it to the causes of ageing," goes the ASA's statement. "The claims that sleeping on a pure silk pillowcase could also prevent frizz and split ends; repel house mites that live in bedding; and ease eczema and asthma were also not proven."

The moral COMPASS

No surprise here; **silvers have a much stronger sense of morality than the young.** The world's biggest study of dishonesty conducted by Brunel University in the UK studied over 15,000 people and found that people over the age of 50 are much more judgemental when it comes to petty theft and fraud, and more likely to convict the perpetrator in a court of law. According to London newspaper *The Telegraph*, researchers asked people to judge 50 acts of dishonesty. On almost all counts, the



older the people, the more likely they were to judge the act as dishonest. For instance, when the respondents were asked whether buying a dress for a single occasion and returning it for a refund was dishonest, more than 93 per cent of silvers considered it wrong, compared to just 70 per cent of people under 35. And nearly 90 per cent of silvers felt picking grapes from a bunch at the supermarket and giving them to your child was dishonest again only 70 per cent of the younger generation thought so. "These results could suggest that society is becoming more dishonest," says Dr Stefan Fafinski, criminal lawyer and co-author of the study. "But perhaps the truth is that your views change as you get older. You have more to lose and thus value honesty more."











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O>FACE OFF

MAMMA MIA

ou will become your mother-at least as far as wrinkles go. Plastic surgeons at Loma Linda University Medical Centre in southern California used facial imaging and 3D computer modelling to study the ageing process and found that daughters' faces tend to follow their mothers in terms of sagging and volume loss, particularly around the corners of their eyes and lower eyelids. The team examined 29 pairs of mothers and daughters, aged from 18 to 90, and found the ageing process can start in women in their 20s. The report was published by the American Society of Plastic Surgeons.



CARE IN KASHMIR:

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JAMMU AND KASHMIR
GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED
THE PROVISION OF FREE
MEDICARE FACILITIES—
INCLUDING LABORATORY
TESTS AND AMBULANCE
FACILITIES—IN ALL
GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS.



The £ 3 answer

want beauty on a budget? Here's some good news. British newspaper The Daily Mail reports that a cheap wrinkle-busting moisturiser is just as effective as products that cost 60 times

as much. After a six-week study of 12 creams on a panel aged between 35 and 65, consumer group 'Which?' declared that Simple's Kind to Skin replenishing moisturiser, which costs £ 3.21 (about Rs 255), held its own against an array of expensive creams that offer 'visibly younger' skin. The moisturiser sells for just 26 p (about Rs 20) per 10 ml. By contrast, the least effective product in the tests was RoC Retin-Ox Intensive Anti-Wrinkle



which costs cream. 13.30 (Rs 1.065) per 10 ml, 51 times more. The Simple product also beat Clinique Repairwear Intensive Eve Cream, which is more than 64 times the price at £ 16.67 (Rs 1,335) per

10 ml. Many other leading brands—Clarins, Avon, Garnier, StriVectin-SD and Logona—also failed to perform as well as Simple. "The cost of an anti-wrinkle eye cream is no indicator of effectiveness," says Jess Ross, editor of *Which.co.uk*, the group's website. "We found that none of the creams worked on all of our testers, but the Simple moisturiser worked just as well as more expensive creams."



O>WILD SILVER

Long in the tooth

Wolves lose their bite with age, say scientists from the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, US. When they examined the ability of wild wolves—aged between one and eight-in the grasslands of Yellowstone National Park in northwest America to find, attack and kill elk, they discovered that their predatory performance declined significantly with age. In fact, while wolves in the wild typically live up to eight years, the ageing process set in once they turned three. Further, a greater number of old wolves reduced the number of elk killed in the park. "Although the effects of ageing on physical performance in humans are well-known, the effects of ageing in wild animal populations have been controversial," lead author Dr Dan MacNulty writes in journal Ecology Letters. "Many eminent biologists have argued that ageing rarely occurs in nature, because animals do not live long enough to exhibit its effects. Our study refutes this notion and demonstrates that ageing may have important ecological consequences in terms of how a wild population uses its environment."





SILVER SHELTERS:
THE BANGLADESHI
GOVERNMENT HAS
ANNOUNCED THAT IT
WILL BUILD SHELTERS
FOR ELDERS IN ALL SIX
DIVISIONS OF THE COUNTRY.
THE SHELTERS WILL
INCLUDE HEALTH, SPORTS
AND ENTERTAINMENT
FACILITIES.

O>>LOVE THAT

A life of **PURPOSE**

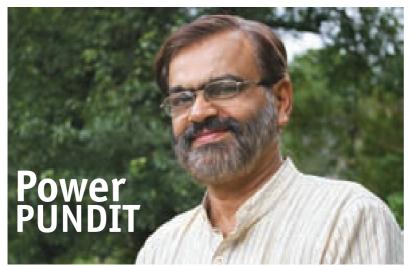
An award that honours 10 innovators in their 'encore careers'. Sounds familiar? Similar in spirit and intent to Harmony Silver Awards, **The Purpose Prize**, launched in 2006 by American



non-profit think tank Civic Ventures, annually gives out five \$ 100,000 and five \$ 50,000 awards to men and women over the age of 60 who have found new purpose in life by tackling social problems. "It's reassuring to note that as America ages, we have creativity in greater abundance. Our winners show that experience and innovation can go hand in hand, that inventiveness is not the sole province of the young," says Marc Freedman, co-founder of The Purpose Prize programme and author of *Encore: Finding Work That Matters in the Second Half of Life*, in a media release. Some of the winners for 2009: a 74 year-old who started a legal services group for children with disabilities; a 61 year-old who brought broadband connectivity to his rural community; and a 63 year-old who created a support group for caregivers of elderly relatives. To learn more, visit www.purposeprize.org



O»H PEOPLE



Many villagers in Uttaranchal, Kashmir and Orissa now have power—literally—in their own hands, thanks to Delhi-based engineer **Yogeshwar Kumar**. The 57 year-old alumnus of IIT has set up more than a dozen small hydroelectric power stations in villages in North India, utilising village streams and irrigation channels. The equipment needed for the stations is manufactured at Kumar's own fabrication unit in Delhi, and the power stations are operated by

villagers themselves. Kumar trains villagers to erect power lines, using steel poles and electric meters, and collect bills. The output ranges from 10 to 30 kilowatt—sufficient for 60 to 100 households. Many of his projects are funded by the government and the United Nations Development Programme. Kumar now trains villagers to link power with livelihood and is helping them set up wool processing, wheat grinding, oil expelling and computer training units.

ACTION PLAN FOR DECEMBER

Get online: Silver surfers can boost their brain power, according to new research at University of California -Los Angeles. New Internet users were able to trigger key centres in the brain that control decision-making and complex reasoning after just one week of surfing the Internet—this could potentially slow down or even reverse age-related decline that can end in dementia. "We found that for older people with minimal experience, performing Internet searches for even a relatively short period of time can change brain activity patterns and enhance function," writes study author Gary Small in journal Neuroscience. "Our most striking finding was that Internet searching appears to engage a greater extent of neural circuitry that is not activated during reading."

BIRTHDAYS

- Former US secretary of state Condoleeza Rice turned 55 on 14 November
- American filmmaker Martin Scorcese turned 66 on 17 November
- Actor Dara Singh turned 81 on 19 November
- Actress Zeenat Aman turned
 58 on November 19
- American vice president
 Joe Biden turned 67 on
 20 November

VISITOR

Who: Former US president George W Bush

When: October 30-31

Why: Bush was in New Delhi to deliver a lecture at the Hindustan Times Leadership Summit. He spoke on the fruitful implications of the nuclear deal signed by India and the US and the shared fight against terrorism. Bush also spent two days in Mumbai, where he stayed at the Taj Mahal Hotel.

IN PASSING

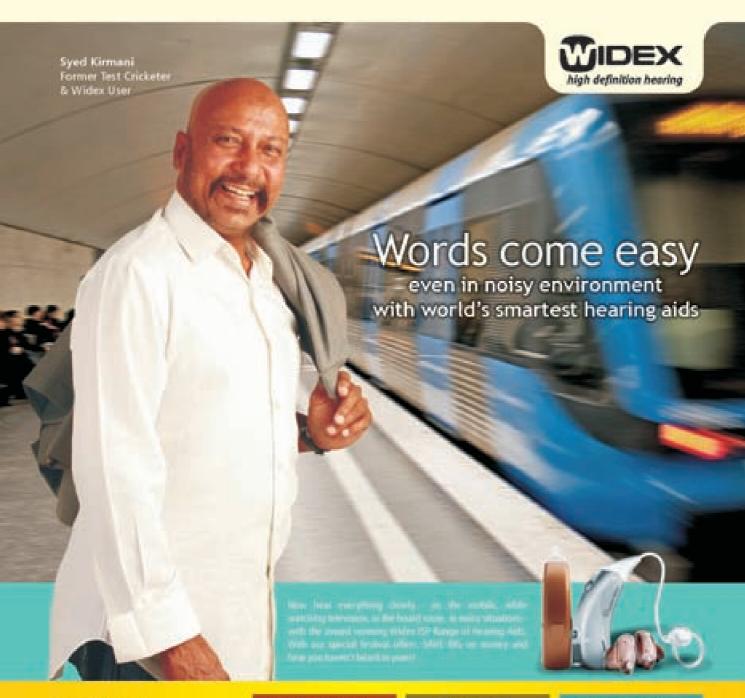
K Balagopal, mathematician and human rights activist, died of lung aspiration on 8 October. He was 57.

Writer **Abrar Alvi**, who wrote many scripts for director Guru Dutt's films, died of stomach complications on 18 November. He was 82.

Founder editor of *Jansatta* **Prabhash Joshi** died on 5 November from a heart attack. He was 72.

MILESTONE

AWARDED. The Dadasaheb Phalke Award to playback singer **Manna Dey**. The 90 year-old has sung over 3,500 songs in a career spanning over six decades.



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VOICE OF WISDOM

After retiring from the Air Force in 1992, I worked with Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd and then a private airline. In 2004, while working at a software firm, I met Vishnu Murthy, a visually impaired (VI) young man who, despite his handicap, was a graduate. Murthy told me that coping with studies hadn't been easy as there weren't audio texts for the VI.

My conversation with Murthy set me thinking. Along with a group of like-minded friends, Radha, Sunita Uma, Lalita and K Sukumar—all silvers—I got in touch with the National Association for the Blind (NAB). Our interactions with NAB revealed the gross neglect towards the academic needs of the VI. Though there were a few textbooks that were recorded on cassettes, there was not much to go around. We decided to record textbooks, make copies and hand them out to those who needed them. We targeted the VI students at the SV Government Degree College in Vidyanagar. After several trials, the college inaugurated its first audio book library in December 2004. We

donated four recorded books (on CDs) and a CD player to the college.

In 2006, we launched the Samrita Trust to educate the VI. I converted two of my bedrooms into 'recording studios'. In the past three years, we have also started recording guidebooks and books for competitive exams. Next on our agenda are audio books for IAS and MBA exams. We have also provided screen reader software to 30 colleges. Till now, we have donated 200 MP3 CD players and audio books to 30 colleges in Andhra Pradesh. We have also ap-

proached the government to sanction CD players to VI students—200 CD players have already been dispatched and another 300 are on the way. We now plan to upload audio books on our website www.samritatrust.org that can be accessed freely by college students. We also aim to provide VI students with free MP3 players and audio books. To me, the whole experience has been extremely overwhelming. In a way, these visually impaired students have shown me my true purpose in life.

—Air Vice-Marshal (Retd) N S Sastry, Hyderabad



Visionaries all: Sastry (second from left) with his team

FIGHTING FIT

I think as we age, most of us tend to accept ailments as part and parcel of life. Though one can't wish the aches and pains away, such resignation to fate sometimes also fosters a defeatist spirit. The trick lies in motivating and challenging ourselves every day. I am nearly 84 years old. Though age has slowed me down, I have decided not to let it rob me of my zest for life.

I play tennis for an hour every day. I admit my responses are a bit slow, especially when I am pitted against younger players. But I look forward to the excitement and invigoration the game brings. For the past few years, I have also participated in the annual tennis championship held at the Deccan Gymkhana in Pune. Though I have never made it beyond the second round, I enjoy the whole experience. Very often, the participants are much younger than me but the spirit of sportsmanship breaks down all



Pinto delivering a perfect volley

barriers of age and stamina. I have often been encouraged by the younger players, with whom I also team up for doubles.

In fact, the tennis court in the colony where I live was rarely used till I started playing tennis regularly and urged others to join me. Though I have been a keen tennis player in my youth, I am happy to have rediscovered the joys of the game all

over again. Now, I try to stay as active as possible. I also practice yoga every day—an instructor comes home every morning to guide me through various *asana*. Besides fitness, I also devote a lot of time to the 4,500 sq ft garden outside my house where my wife and I have nurtured a profusion of foliage and flowers. We both spend long hours snipping and trimming the greens, assisted by a gardener. Our son lives nearby, so we mostly have the house to ourselves.

I have no health complaints, though my reflexes have slowed down a bit. I urge all my silver friends to pursue a sport they enjoy and practice it every day, at a pace that suits them. We need to guard our health. And the first step towards that is staying fit.

—Peter Pinto, Pune

MOTHER'S TOUCH

My mother Raj Mohini passed away recently at the age of 83 at the end of a happy life surrounded by her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was a courageous woman who refused to be a burden on anyone right till the end.

She had knee replacement surgery in 2005. In 2009, she insisted on getting her knee joint replaced for a second time as she did not want to be confined to a wheelchair for the rest of her life. She was admitted to Army Hospital on 19 March 2009 and operated upon a day later. Before she was wheeled into the operation theatre, she assured everyone that she would be hale and hearty after the operation. Destiny, though, had something else in store. Though the knee operation was successful, she died of a massive heart attack on 21 March. She died in her sleep, her smile intact on her lips.

Her life had not been easy. She had lost her parents just after her marriage. Her siblings shifted to our house after their death. Back then, we were refugees from Pakistan with hardly any money. But mother took care of all her siblings without complaining. Today, all of them are well settled and look back on those years with much warmth and affection. She was the grand old lady of our family who urged us to celebrate all festivals in ceremonial fanfare and reminded all of us about each other's birthdays. I had always moved through life with the conviction that nothing untoward could ever happen to me as long as I had her blessings. I had never heard her talking poorly of any one. She was very particular about her appearance. Even at the age of 83, she did not have a single grey strand on her head.

Her prayers were always answered by the Almighty. If any member in the family went through tough times, she would pray for them. Every morning, she used to be up by 4 am for prayer and meditation in which she was joined by her three year-old great grandson Krish. I often used to get her books from the Dehradun club library. After her death, we found 20 diaries that belonged to her, all profuse with notes on politics, cooking, religion, and tips on health. The last entry in her diary is dated 19 March—the day she was admitted to Army Hospital. In the entry, she asks God to take her in His arms as she wanted to be one with Him.



Mahajan's mother with her great-grandson Krish

She was not only a very devoted mother, but an extremely caring wife. My father, who is 87 years old, misses her deeply. They were married for 64 years. It's still hard to believe that she is no more. I often tell my grandson Krish that big *daadi* now lives in the heavens and has turned into a star. I find my mother all around me—smiling and showering her blessings. I salute her and promise her we will continue to live up to her expectations and ideals.

-Colonel Nirmal Mahajan, Dehradun



Social exchange: Reaching out across generations

s we move towards the end of another year and the dawn of a new decade, I find myself thinking more and more of the importance of connections—with family, friends, colleagues—and the importance of reaching across generations to seek new understandings, and to ensure that the rituals and practices that join us together are carried forward.

In some parts of the world this is referred to as Intergenerational Relations. Solidarity between generations—in families, communities and nations—is believed to be fundamental to the achievement of a society and was embedded in the United Nations Madrid International Plan of Action of Ageing in 2002.

The intergenerational contracts are in transition. In my travels—whether it is to less developed countries such as China or India, or sophisticated economies like Japan—the common resounding pattern I witness is of changing family structure and associate social supports. In policy language, we talk about an implicit intergenerational contract, which is governed by rules, norms, conventions, practices and biology. It is a contract that we are usually born into; it is not arrived at through individual negotiation.

Earlier, it was standard for some cultures in the past to take steps to

ensure that power over resources and assets lay with older persons (and usually with older men, not older women). In many western countries, the welfare of older persons has become largely a community rather than a family concern; in some countries the conventional role of the family has become minimal. These examples demonstrate that all societies have different starting points in their perceptions of what constitutes the intergenerational contract, solidarity and relationships, of how formalised those relationships are, and of whether they exist at the macro or micro level of society (or both).

The giving and receiving of resources over time are crucial to promoting intergenerational trust and social stability

The shift in the nature of intergenerational relationships is generally focused on two possibilities: first, it is the result of changing beliefs and values that have affected the role of the family and the relationships between its members; second, socioeconomic change has led to changes in the organisation of family life and a change in family relationships.

Some influential factors in changing family structures include education and its value as a stepping stone to wealth, power and wisdom. The migration of younger family members and the consequent independence (and disruption in intergenerational dialogue and interaction) are also contributing factors. In some countries, there is a call for more age-integrated approaches in constructing policies and programmes. Yes, when we turn the conversation to developing countries, it is about devoting less time on the costs of ageing populations and putting more energy in creating opportunities for social and economic participation for multigenerational households, strengthening patterns of exchange and reciprocity, and maintaining mutual support structures.

Professor Alan Walker from the University of Sheffield argues that what is called for is not a collection of policies that become mired in short-term economic solutions, but a new intergenerational contract that reflects an adjustment to the realities of an ageing society in terms of resource distribution and thinking—a contract that reaffirms its own value and ensures future reciprocation for future recipients.

Policies and programmes based on an intergenerational approach should promote an essential interdependence among generations and recognise that all members of society have contributions to make and needs to fulfil. While the nature of these contributions and needs may change during the progression from infancy to old age, the giving and receiving of resources over time are crucial to promoting intergenerational trust, economic and social stability, and progress. The means by which resources are transferred are also important; whether they are formal mechanisms provided by the



state or informal kinship and community networks. The continued ability of these mechanisms and networks to collect and allocate resources effectively and equitably builds confidence, and social capital that are fundamental to social integration

In Europe, the European Older People's Platform (AGE), the European Youth Forum (YFJ), the European Women's Lobby (EWL), Association Internationale de la Mutualité (AIM). the European Association of Paritarian Institutions of Social Protection (AEIP) and the European Liaison Committee for Social Housing (CE-CODHAS) warmly welcomed the importance attached by the European Union to addressing the aspect of solidarity between generations in all spheres of life, including such areas as social protection systems, social inclusion, employment, health, transport, urban development, housing, education and volunteering.

These organisations jointly prepared an awareness-raising campaign to encourage members (older people's associations, youth groups, women networks, paritarian institutions, mutual benefit societies and other groups of civil society) to cooperate in planning activities to mark the first European Day of Intergenerational Solidarity in 2009.

In Brazil, armed with the conviction that investing in the older population will bring positive social change to a community, social worker and visionary Maria de Lourdes Braz is working in the Cidade de Deus (City of God), the famous Rio de Janeiro slum, since 1991. Lourdes and partners are transforming this community through an innovative intergenerational project: Casa de Santa Ana. Rather than an old age home, one participant has called Casa de Santa Ana a "new age" home reflecting the new life it brings to seniors. Casa de Santa Ana provides people over the age of 60 access to health services, social and educational activities. In a country where social security and health services for the poor are practically nonexistent, Casa de Santa Ana is a welcome solution for families that are unable to provide for their own older family members.

In its mission to integrate senior citizens with the community, particularly with the younger generation, the centre offers a variety of intergenera-

tional activities—singing, percussion, dance, chess and literacy classes. Casa de Santa Ana creates a climate of mutual respect and engagement between seniors and younger generations where seniors can serve as mentors and resources to the under-18 population in the neighbourhood. There are two new projects-the 'Telling and Retelling Stories Project' will involve intergenerational meetings to exchange stories and memories; the 'Health has No Age Project' will bring together teens, senior citizens and health professionals such as doctors, nurse technicians, psychologists and social workers to discuss the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, teenage pregnancy, and encourage exchange of experiences. (www.casadesantaana.org.br/)

In Canada, the i2i Intergenerational Society has been created by educators, healthcare workers, elders, community, youth and parent to promote intergenerational programmes and learning opportunities, and to assist in developing sustainable connections between generations. One of the goals of the Society is to assist in sustaining rich bonds in this world of change. The logo, a spinning, fast-paced representation of the field of commerce and work, is circled by elders, children and youth of different cultures, holding hands. The simplicity of the graphics reminds us that the act of bringing generations together is indeed simple, and the i2i Intergenerational Society invites you to take advantage of this genuine opportunity.

Each project varies in its scope of time spent and degree of involvement of participants. Although only one goal may be set initially, findings over the past eight years have shown that by connecting elders, children and youth in meaningful social exchange, there are many hidden benefits. (www. intergenerational.ca/home.html)

Dr Jane Barratt is Secretary General, International Federation on Ageing



Sen

Viswa's summer:

'Long live death' is artist Velu Viswanadhan's watchword

elu Viswanadhan, 69, is a fiery and temperamental artist deeply anchored in a certain cultural life of Paris. 'Viva La Muerte!' is his mot d'ordre. When diabetes wrecked his feet a couple of years ago, he took to cycling.

Mid-1980s, Paban and I were invited to lunch with the painter at his atelier in Rue Ricaut. On the way, our driver Ahmad's Volkswagen crashed into the car in front of him, jolting us out of our seats. No one was hurt but, horror of horrors, Paban's ektara-a one -string drone (gifted to his father by an old sadhu), made of a large dried gourd-cracked like an eggshell. Paban looked woebegone as we took the lift up to the painter's atelier. Viswa welcomed us in. All was bare and sparse, not a sign of domesticity. His great chequered canvases surrounded us like so many magnetic fields, austere, simple and solemn, like the man himself. In one corner was a little deck organised for film editing, spilling over with celluloid.

Paban handed him his ektara, beseeching silent help. Viswa accepted it standing over us like a great shade tree. "Don't worry," he said to Paban, "We will try to do something." That word 'try' is what makes the painter all about aspiration. Unlike most of the Indian artists of his generation who made hay as the sun of the art market boom shone, he went along his way in a solitary manner to develop a parallel career as a documentary film maker. *Earth, Fire, Water* and *Air* are among those for which he is well known—all produced independently by him. His affinity with Adoor Gopalakrishnan led to several collaborations in India.

Viswa had another guest that day, a visiting Indian scientist. After a frugal lunch of rice and dal, sprouts and salad, which he had cooked for us himself, Viswa cleared his working table and set it up to repair the multiply fractured ektara, listening silently as I chattered with them. He first made organic glue with garlic. Then he pasted pieces of gauze into the interior of the gourd painstakingly using a large paintbrush. His movements were slow, steady and nimble. The whole process must have taken an hour but for Paban and me, this had consequences that would glue us to this instrument for an eternity.

These were consequences in the sonic and not the visual realm. That invisible field of *shabda*, of Bramha!

Another hour went by. Paban doodled with pen and ink. I babbled. Paban warbled. The ektara finally dried out. The instrument was ready to be tuned. Viswa handed it over to Paban who began to tighten the key to the unique and fragile chord that held our little world together. Wonder of wonders! The ektara droned with a deep resonance, a consequence none of us had foreseen. Viswa, scientist and Father Nature, had not only restored it, he had reinforced its walls to become an invincible tower of resonance, the envy of many a *baul*.

I would like to recount another little anecdote, a story about death and dying, which has the prospects of becoming a wonderful fiction; that is if Viswa agrees for it to be filmed.



Another day, at the end of the summer of 1997, my closest friend Christiane, devoured by a terminal cancer, collapsed into a coma after her nth chemotherapy. Her French family, her feminist friends, all stayed at a distance, possibly to allow her those last precious moments of privacy she so cherished. I was devastated as if I had lost my own sister. There would be no more visits to the hamam. No more going to the cinema in the Quartier Latin. No more eating couscous with Zubieda and Riad in a restaurant at La Fourche. No more window-shopping in the boutiques of St Germain des Pres. Chris had lived alone and she had died alone... or almost.

Being Indian, I found it an aberration to abandon a dear friend and, as a result, I found myself alone with her, holding her hand, as she heaved her last sigh. Then that very evening, Paban left for India as his French visa had expired. My children were away studying in London. I felt horribly lonely and sat like a cat on the balcony of my apartment remembering how Christiane's body was taken away by her family. She had spent all her life with her friends but in her death, she belonged to the family. It was a brutal experience, my first encounter with death and the lack of ritual around it.

It's at this point, in the street below my flat, ambling to the Chinese market near Place d'Italie, that I spotted a tall man with a mop of curly hair. It was Viswanadhan. Viswa, I knew from the past, was a neighbour of the best kind, aloof, discreet yet hospitable, generous. I invited him to share a cup of tea with me and unburdened myself to him about the death of my friend. I confided that, now when my friend was gone, I was wondering what I was doing in this grey and dismal country where mortuary administrations, and indeed tenderness, are the department of salaried employees only.

Don't hold on; let your friend go, he said cursorily. Then perhaps realising that he had been too abrupt, he told

me, in his turn, the story of the death of a friend that summer.

Viswa himself had just returned from India to France after having spent July and August in the Cholamandalam Artists' Village in Chennai where he has built two beautiful houses that are feats of local craftsmanship and water conservation. During the summer, an artist friend had just died. No funeral was held for him as everyone was too busy. A common painter friend, George, who was Christian, decided that this would not do. It was unthinkable that they should not pay tribute to their friend with whom they had shared so many marvellous moments.

I invited Viswa to share a cup of tea with me and unburdened myself to him about the death of my friend. Don't hold on; let your friend go, he said cursorily

With Viswa's help, George set about organising a funeral party for their late friend, hired a shamiana, sent off invitations to almost 200 people, and organised a caterer. As he headed to the place in an auto-rickshaw that afternoon with a generator on his lap, it blew up causing his instant death. The guests who had begun to arrive were utterly distraught, mourning now for two people instead of one. What would happen now and who would carry the body of the deceased back to his family in Kerala? After some debate, it was decided that Viswanadhan, who was an NRI, and had nothing special to do in the summer, was to accompany the dead body back to his native village in Kerala. Viswa had no option but to accept.

By the time the hearse was ready, it was midnight. Viswa, tall and thin, sat on the edge of his seat inside the

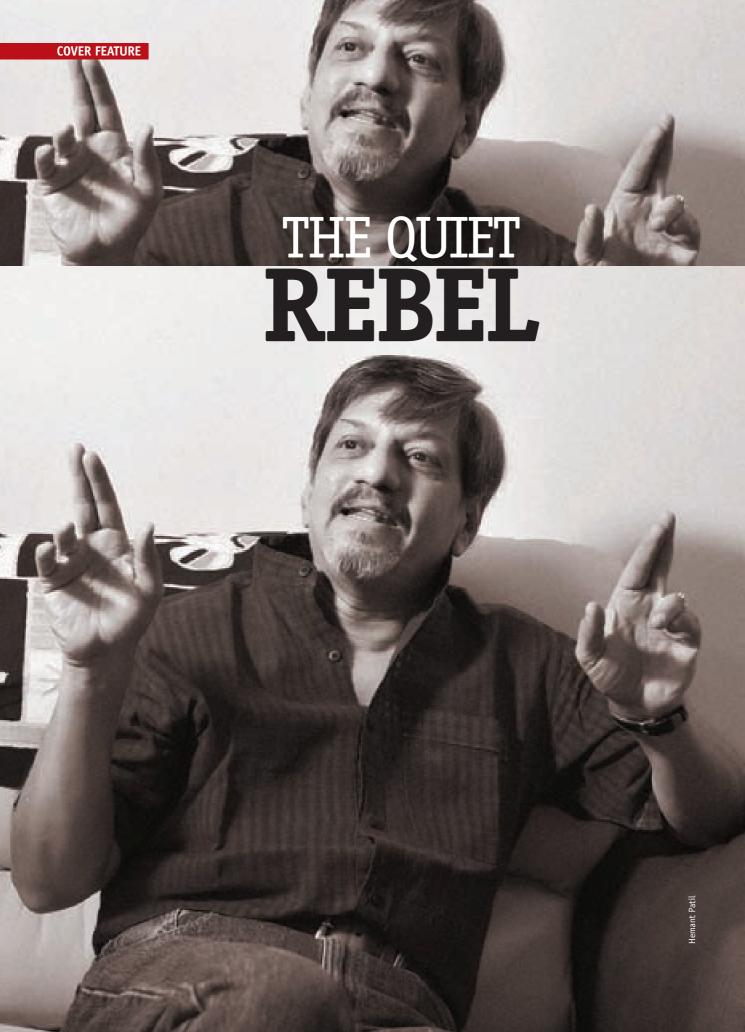
black funeral van next to the corpse of his friend, which was laid out on a block of ice. As the night progressed and the van started winding its way up to the Nilgiris, Viswa, overcome by sleep, began nodding off on the chest of his dead friend. After a while, he no longer knew whether it was his friend who was dead or whether it was Viswa himself who had gone to hell. The jolt of the wagon would wake him up from time to time and he would return to a disturbed sleep.

At dawn, the van descended from the blue hills to the green, misty valleys of Kerala. On the hillside were Christian villages and people descended from them towards the hearse through the morning mist, possibly to identify if this hearse carried one of their own. Viswa saw them peering in through the windows of the van every time it came to a halt. Those mysterious apparitions seemed like visitors from another world.

Viswa, in a state of immense fatigue, no longer knew where he was. Was this heaven? Or was this hell? Was he dead or alive? He felt as if he belonged elsewhere. Then, at long last, the van came to a halt in front of a beautiful, red-tiled wooden house. The deceased artist's mother, a great Kerala matriarch, came forward. She identified her son, burst into loud weeping. Viswa, bereft of words, staggered out of the hearse. He was mortified. How could one console a woman for the death of her child? The woman, still sobbing, caught him in her ample arms and shouted to those behind her: "Kafe! Kafe! Kafe!" And so Viswa sat on the steps with her and the two of them sipped hot brown coffee brewed in her kitchen, feeling reviving life coursing through them.

This had been Viswa's summer, not so different from mine. I decided to let go of Christiane.

Mimlu Sen is an author, musician, and translator. She lives in Paris



Actor. Director. Painter. Theatre practitioner. Social activist. Feminist. Despite being so multi-faceted, Amol Palekar feels constricted by labels. The only tag he accepts wholeheartedly is that of a non-conformist. On the threshold of unveiling his next movie, the man who best portrayed the common man on screen shares his uncommon worldview with RAJASHREE BALARAM

mol Palekar is just back from the weeklong Mumbai International Film Festival when we meet him in his office in Pune's Bhandarkar Road—a tastefully furnished ground-floor flat that opens into a sun-kissed courtyard adorned with bamboo, muted stone flooring, and a stone sculpture of a goddess bought from Hampi. His wife Sandhya Gokhale, a qualified lawyer and Yale University graduate, who also collaborates with him on his theatre and film productions, is supervising the household help as the latter mops the floor. "It was all dusty here when we reached this morning," says Sandhya with a warm smile. Amol gazes at her lovingly as she speaks to us. "Stop staring at me," she scolds him goodnaturedly. It's a charming domestic scene shorn of all trappings of glamour that one usually (and often unfairly) associates with the tinsel clan.

Palekar's celebrity is subtle yet inescapable-sundry award statuettes stand like sentinels on the stairs leading to the floor above. The walls are adorned with a Navjot sculpture and a painting gifted by artist Jatin Das, a close friend from his days at Sir J J School of Arts from where he completed his Masters in Fine Arts. A large statue of Lord Ganapati sits in a corner of the room. The 64 year-old, though, is a self-confessed agnostic-not surprising for a man whose unique individuality and conviction in his radical beliefs mark everything that he does. Dressed in a deep blue cotton shirt and jeans, there is an aura of unflappable calm to him. He speaks softly but brooks no interruption when he is putting across his thoughts. Words don't just roll off his tongue in an ungainly gush but slip out with full awareness of their weight and gait. Though he speaks openly about his divorce from first wife, actor and director Chitra, his voice is full of admiration for her talent and intelligence. His view on the indomitable emotional strength of women is evident in all his films. Typically, none of them are launched with a gaudy splash of publicity or flamboyant hype, yet almost all have made their way to film festivals across the globe. Daayra, a clutter-breaking film directed by him on the bond established between a sexually assaulted woman and a transvestite was selected by TIME magazine as one of the Top 10 films of the world in 1996. And Akriet (1981) was awarded a special iury award at the Three Continents Festival in Nantes, France.

For Palekar, though, the loud applause is a distant echo in his private space. He has lived in Pune for the past 10 years, far from the tungsten light of Mumbai. 'Why?' we ask him. "I like it that way." The pithy reply best describes the man who follows no one but his own heart.

PLEASE TELL US ABOUT YOUR FORTHCOMING MOVIE.

My next movie, And Once Again, explores the dynamics of the manwoman relationship and subtly deals with the repercussions of violence on human life. It stars Rajat Kapoor, Rituparna Sengupta and Antara Mali.

YOU STRADDLED BOTH DIRECTION AND ACTING IN YOUR LAST FILM SAMANTAR. THAT MUST HAVE BEEN VERY CHALLENGING.

I first felt the burden of being an actor and director at the same time while doing *Ankahee*. I was constantly observing trolley movement, light, shadows, and my co-actor's [Deepti Naval] performance and stance. When I did *Samantar*, I was fairly relaxed. It was also because my wife Sandhya was my co-writer and co-director on the film. When I read the script, I knew instinctively that this was something I had to do. It's a love story between two people in the autumn of their lives. That excited me—the poise and uniqueness of the role.

MOST OF YOUR FILMS ARE STRONGLY SKEWED TOWARDS WOMEN. ARE YOU A FEMINIST?

I don't call myself a feminist but, yes, I dislike male chauvinism. I believe totally in gender equality. Many times I have an all-woman production team. It's not that I consciously choose or demand scripts that have women at the centre, but I find many layers in a woman's personality very fascinating. The industry can be a very chauvinistic space. For instance, I seriously felt that director Zoya Akhtar's debut film *Luck by Chance* needed more widespread praise but the industry did not find it so easy to do that because she is a woman.

IT MUST HAVE BEEN A TRULY WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE TO WORK WITH YOUR WIFE SANDHYA ON SAMANTAR.

Sandhya is a radical thinker, a strong activist and an avid reader. Having her as my spouse and partner in my creative process is highly enriching. She has this unique combination of being extremely rational and objective while being extremely creative. She is also

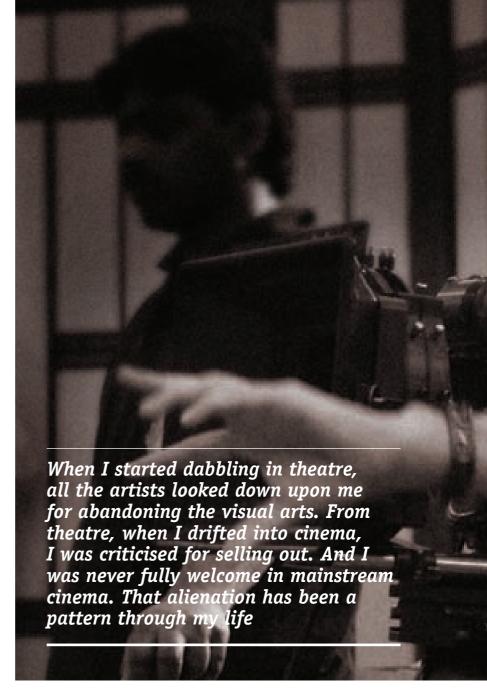
passionate about the tiniest detail and has a keen understanding of the medium. All that put together with her non-compromising approach makes working with her a beautiful, creative experience. Even a glint of approval or admiration in her eyes makes my day.

YOU DEVIATED TOWARDS THE COMMERCIAL AND WHIMSICAL WITH *PAHELI*. WHY WAS THAT?

I have not heard anyone saying Paheli was whimsical. And I disagree with that viewpoint. It was a film that had all the mainstream idiom of filmmaking. And as it was a folktale, we could not apply the regular yardstick of realism. If you look closely, you will find it has the same honesty of all my other films. In the original story, on which the film is based, the woman accepts her husband when he returns. In my interpretation, she makes it clear that she was aware that she was making love to a stranger—despite that she does not disown the choice she made. I am as proud of *Paheli* as I am of Dhyaas Parva.

NOT MANY KNOW THAT YOU WERE A WELL-KNOWN PAINTER BEFORE YOU JOINED THEATRE. DO YOU STILL PAINT?

Yes, I do, though not as regularly as I used to. Many of my paintings are part of private collections. I was fortunate to have grown up during the renaissance period in contemporary India. The 1970s and '80s were indeed the renaissance period in India in every field—painting, theatre, literature or cinema. As a student at J J School of Arts, I was lucky to be trained by great masters like Shankar Palsikar, Baburao Sadwelkar, Sambaji Kadam and P A Dhond. For that matter, when I meet M F Husain even now, he always ask me if I still paint. Even my seniors, Jatin Das and Laxman Shrestha, were so inspiring. In fact, my first solo exhibition in 1967 would not have been possible without K H Ara. He gave up his booking at the Taj Art Gallery so I could host my show. Can you imagine such generosity today?



DO YOU STILL VISIT J J?

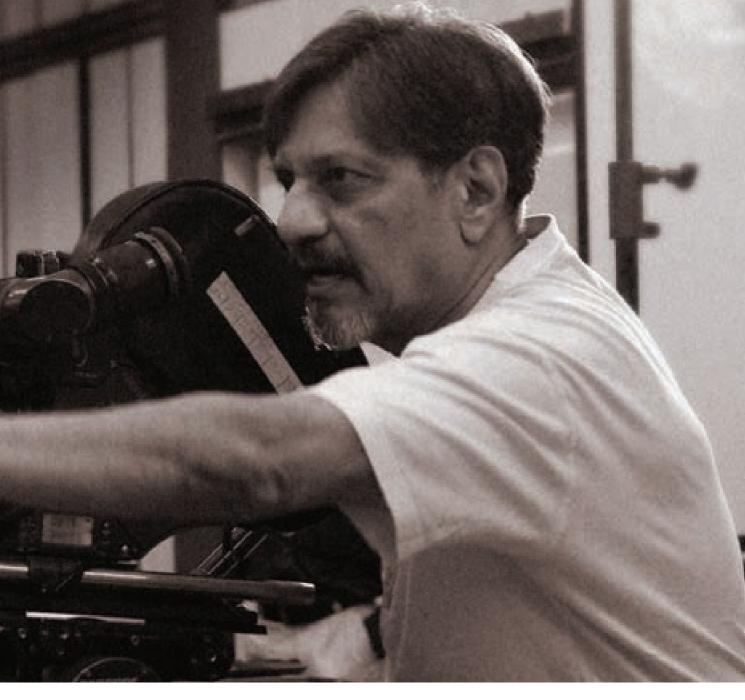
I go there sometimes, but it's painful now. The electrifying atmosphere I grew up in is no longer there. Commercial concerns override idealism. Of course, time changes everything, so I cannot criticise people's motivations. But I do feel that the kind of inspiration, time and attention that seniors back then offered to their juniors is something I don't see happening today. Each person is an island. There is no fraternity anymore.

SO WHY DID YOU MAKE THE SHIFT TO THEATRE?

To be frank, I was not very active in theatre during my college days. My first tryst with theatre was in a one-act play staged at J J written by one of the greatest Marathi poet-playwrights C T Khanolkar. I met Satyadev Dubey only after I passed out from J J and I drifted from visual to performing arts. Even in theatre, I found the best mentors: Girish Karnad, Vijay Tendulkar, Shombu Mitra and Badal Sirkar.

WAS THE TRANSITION EASY?

When I started dabbling in theatre, all the artists looked down upon me for abandoning visual arts and moving



into something 'inferior', according to them. That alienation has been something of a pattern through my life. From theatre, when I drifted into cinema, the theatre fraternity criticised me for selling out. In cinema, again, I was never fully welcome in mainstream cinema—for obvious reasons [laughs]. I guess they had to tolerate me as I was a successful actor in my own right. I never belonged to the 'system,' so people from the industry were always slightly uneasy around me at times. None of it, however, makes me bitter. I have never felt I was denied what I deserved. If you are

not part of the mainstream in whichever field you belong to, you will be marginalised.

DO YOU LIKE BEING THE REBEL?

I have always been a non-conformist. I like exploring my own path and seek new answers to perpetual questions. When I look back I feel happy that I had the courage and strength to be what I am, to be different, to have explored new themes. I had once given a statement that was not liked by people from the industry: "Success bores me." Once you know that people like a certain style, you stop the exploration and

abandon the uncertainty that gives a lovely edge to the creative process. You don't know whether the answers you have found are the right ones. It's like swimming against the stream, not knowing whether you will reach the shore. I am happy that today people love me because they know I have not succumbed; I still try and explore new avenues. And that gives me more courage.

WHY HAVE YOU DISTANCED YOURSELF FROM ACTING?

I do get four to five offers a month, but nothing that excites me enough to take up acting all over again. I am comfortable with who I am. I don't get apprehensive about being a nonconformist. Nor do I get disturbed or overwhelmed with every film I make. Age has not deterred my approach towards life or my ability to take risks. When I look back I am happy that I did everything I wanted to do on my terms. And I am proud I did not fall into the trap of monotony.

ONCE IN A WHILE, DON'T YOU COME ACROSS A ROLE THAT TEMPTS YOU?

At the age and experience I have arrived at, I don't think there's much that can tempt me. Even at the peak of my career, I was known to reject nine out of 10 offers. I have never been scared of saying no. At the beginning of my career, when I took up Bhoomika after Rajnigandha, Choti Si Baat and Chitchor, people were horrified. Everyone wondered why I wanted to play a villain after doing a string of successful films as the hero. I chose to do Gharonda and Khamosh as I was attracted towards the grey roles. Today, there is a lot of hue and cry when an actor experiments with a new look for a film. But I never felt the need to have a public relations team to glorify my image.

HAVE YOU CONSCIOUSLY TRIED TO BE SO LOW-PROFILE?

I am not comfortable being in the news for the sake of being in the news. In the times we are living in, where everything is blown out of proportion, I feel totally out of place. Even at the peak of my acting career, I always managed to keep my space intact. I used to roam down the streets and hang out with friends at our favourite *adda*. One of the most cherished *adda* was a coffee house in South Mumbai.

IN OTHER WORDS, YOU DON'T FEEL THE NEED TO BE CONSTANTLY IN THE PUBLIC EYE, LIKE A LOT OF ACTORS DO. I think the world of films has encroached upon the common man's life more than what's necessary. Why

do we need an actor to inaugurate a college gathering or a school sports meet? Why can't we have a sports star to inaugurate a sports meet or a doyen of literature to do the same for a literary event? I get many such offers, but I never entertain them.

YOU MUST RECEIVE MANY OFFERS FROM TELEVISION.

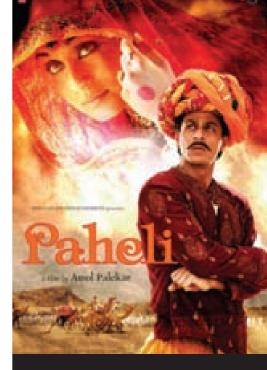
I have nothing against being on television but I am not excited by what I see on TV. Television is a powerful medium and I wish we realise its full potential. Even Doordarshan is not yet aware of its own strengths. It can be utilised to reach out to people more meaningfully instead of just bombarding them with a barrage of shallow promotions and regressive soaps. Last year, DD requested me to capture the literary classic in Hindi, titled *Krishna Kali*. I did the 18-episode serial because of the reach that DD offers.

WHAT DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE CURRENT AGGRESSIVE REVIVAL OF MARATHI CINEMA?

Marathi cinema will continue to suffer owing to its proximity to Bollywood. But I am proud that it's regaining its momentum. When I made Bangarwadi there were only seven Marathi films made in 1995. For the past two years, over 100 Marathi films have been made each year. The experimentation in presentation and style as well as the variance in content explored by the young Marathi directors is commendable. I see Marathi cinema occupying the same space that Bengali and Malayalam films once did as the torchbearers of quality Indian cinema. And I am happy I am around to see that happen.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE PRESENT SCENARIO IN THE FILM INDUSTRY?

Today, the foremost requirement is to be successful. And once that happens you don't take any risks with it. There is no space for an Amol Palekar today, probably because the kind of films I worked in are not made anymore. Actors and filmmakers today are



Akriet (1981)

An internationally acclaimed film, *Akriet* is as much about superstition as the human capacity for brutality. The story probes the psyche of an unscrupulous man and his mistress who commit ritual sacrifice of young girls to appease evil spirits.

Ankahee (1984)

Do we create our own destiny? Can we predict our own fate? Or does the future unfold regardless of our actions to control it? *Ankahee* provokes many questions through the story of an astrologer who predicts the life of his son and hopes his predictions don't turn into reality.

Banagarwadi (1995)

A schoolteacher overcomes the hostility of a small village and sets out to change the destiny of its inhabitants—only to learn a few lessons on simplicity, independence, and nature.

Daayraa (1996)

While it essentially focuses on rape, female oppression and transvestitism, *Daayra* struck a chord all over the world because of its unusual depiction of the resilience and strength of human spirit.

savvy and well equipped. But most of the time, the glitter, glamour and item numbers are thrown in to conceal the paucity of originality. When you don't have content, you resort to gimmicks. In mainstream Hindi cinema, I admire Vishal Bharadwaj and Ashutosh Gowarikar as they try to explore new subjects. As an actor, I enjoyed working with non-mainstream filmmakers such as Tapan Sinha, Balu Mahendra, Kumar Shahani, Biplab Rai Choudhury, Shyam Benegal or debutant directors like Bhimsain, Ismail Shroff, Rajat Rakshit, etc. At the same time, I was privileged to have worked with all the top filmmakers like Basu Chatterji, Hrishikesh Mukherjee, Vidhu Vinod Chopra and Satyajit Ray.

DO YOU STILL MEET WITH CO-ACTORS FROM YOUR PAST?

I do keep in touch with my contemporaries and most of my leading ladies. Dinesh Thakur, Zarina Wahab, Vidya Sinha, Sharmila Tagore, Deepti Naval, Rekha...I enjoyed working with all of them. All my leading ladies were immensely sensitive actors. So 'on-screen chemistry'—which is the buzzword today—was easier. I had a

YOU HAVE BEEN ORGANISING A THEATRE FESTIVAL IN PUNE FOR SOME TIME NOW. WHAT'S THE FESTIVAL ALL ABOUT?

Yes, I did the festival for five years. As theatre is not archived in India, I feel the younger generation is oblivious to the stupendous contribution of yesteryear legends like Badal Sirkar, Mohan Rakesh and Vijay Tendulkar. People don't get to enjoy those inspiring works anymore. The festival was my attempt to recreate the nostalgic ethos of Indian theatre.

LOOKING BACK, HOW DO YOU VIEW YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR EX-WIFE CHITRA?

Chitra and I parted with dignity. We both were honest enough to accept that we had reached a stage in which we were bound in a relationship that was not what we expected it to be. I think it takes courage to accept the flaws instead of dragging yourself through an inert equation. She wrote the script for two of my films—Dhyaas Parva and Thoda Sa Roomani Ho Jaye. She has made a significant contribution to my career and I respect that deeply.

Uncertainty gives a lovely edge to the creative process. It's like swimming against the stream, not knowing whether you will reach the shore

great time working with Smita Patil in *Bhoomika*. Smita was a phenomenal actress and an even lovelier soul. Similarly, Shabana and I have been friends even before we joined films. And how can I forget Tina [Ambani]? Her warmth remains unchanged.

DON'T YOU, SOMETIMES, MISS BEING AWAY FROM MUMBAI? I was lucky to get alarmed by the insanity of urban life—especially in Mumbai—that makes me restless and drains my creative energy. On the other hand, Pune has still maintained its tranquillity and cultural richness.

YOU HAVE TWO DAUGHTERS. WHAT IS THE EQUATION YOU SHARE WITH THEM?

I am blessed to have two gems as my daughters. Shalmalee will turn 30 next year. She teaches post-colonial literature at the University of Perth. She is also a brilliant poet. My younger daughter Samiha is in Fergusson College in Pune. She is a free spirit who refuses to be bogged down by anyone. She loves playing rugby and football. And she has also assisted me in my last two films. She has this creative, independent mind. I see a lot of me in her.

Kairee (2000)

Female bonding and selfsufficiency form the core of this simple story that won Palekar a National Award. In her effort to offer her orphaned niece a better life, a woman discovers the power to overturn her own plight.

Dhyaas Parva (2001)

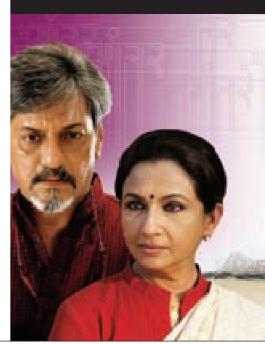
Based on the life of Raghunath Karve, the man who pioneered the birth control movement in India, *Dhyaas Parva* won the National Award for best film on family welfare.

Paheli (2005)

On the same lines as Anahat, but without the minimalism that so characterises much of Palekar's oeuvre, Paheli is a dramatic tale of a woman in rural India who refuses to be subjugated by social norms and confronts her sexuality without apologies.

Samantar (2009)

Palekar returned to acting with this mature love story that tenderly lays out the loneliness of the autumn years and the eternal human need for companionship.



Off SCREEN

The film industry is a rarefied space; a whirl of talent, greasepaint and lights; a dream factory that is often more surreal than the magic it creates on celluloid. For actors, the most visible denizens of this world, retirement just doesn't mean the same thing as it does for the rest of us—it's not just the end of a chapter but closure on an entire way of life. As is their wont, people handle this in different ways, do different things. For every Dharmendra or Waheeda Rehman who continue to occupy screen space, there is a Leela Naidu who bid adieu to the camera with nary a second glance. And while Asha Parekh assumed a new avatar as philanthropist with the opening of her charity hospital in Mumbai this year, Shyama chose to disappear from the public eye after her last film almost 20 years ago. What drives these decisions—circumstances, time, or simply the heart? NITIKA BAJPAYEE set out to discover what six silver stars of the golden era of Hindi films are doing today.

BISWAJIT CHATTERJEE 74

DEBUT: Natun Fasal (1960; Bengali), Bees Saal Baad (1962; Hindi)

SCREEN HIGHS: Bees Saal Baad (1962), April Fool (1964), Ye Raat Phir Na Aayegi (1966)

LAST TURN: Inth Ka Jawab Patthar (2002)

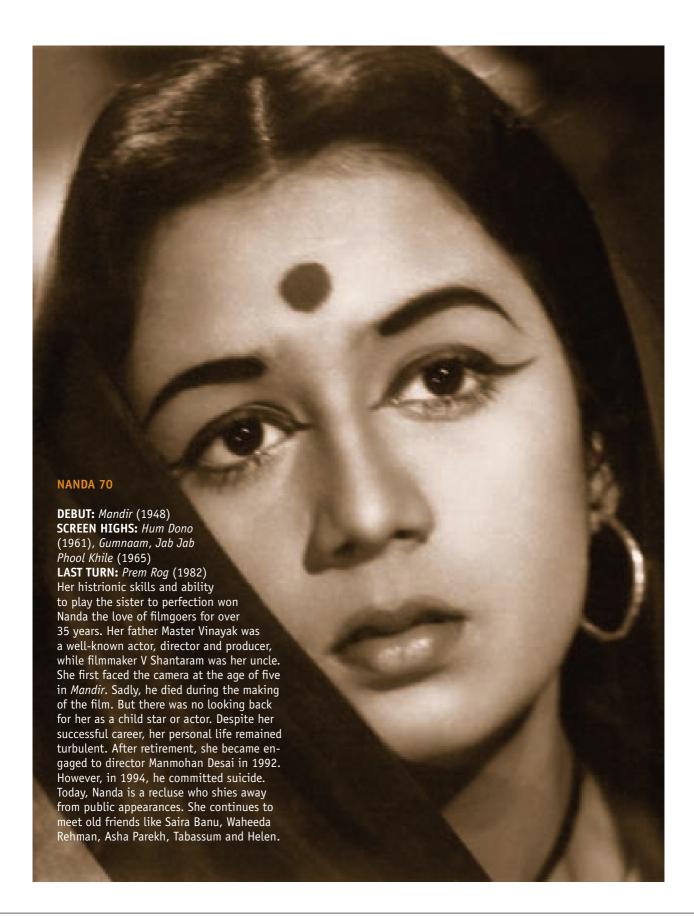
Battling stiff opposition from his family, he pursued his dream of stardom with grit, and chocolate-faced charm. Following his debut in a Bengali film, he made a grand entry in Hindi cinema opposite reigning queen

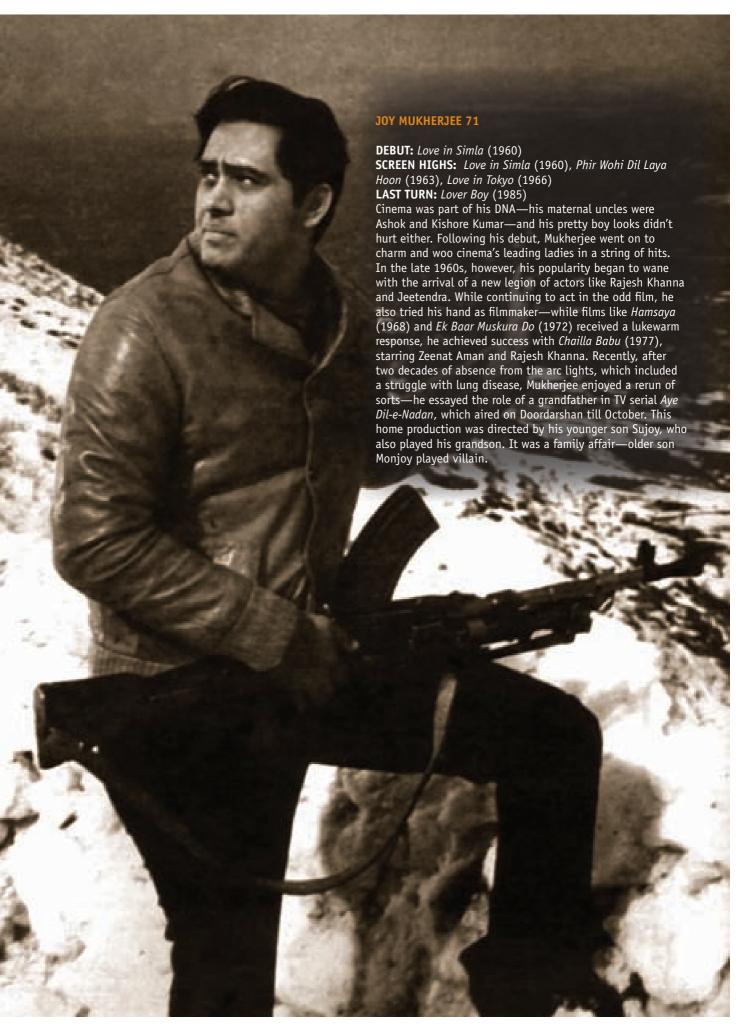
Waheeda Rehman—a star was instantly born. After a four-decade-long career in both Hindi and Bengali films, he wiped off the greasepaint but his life—and that of his family—remains enmeshed with the world of entertainment.

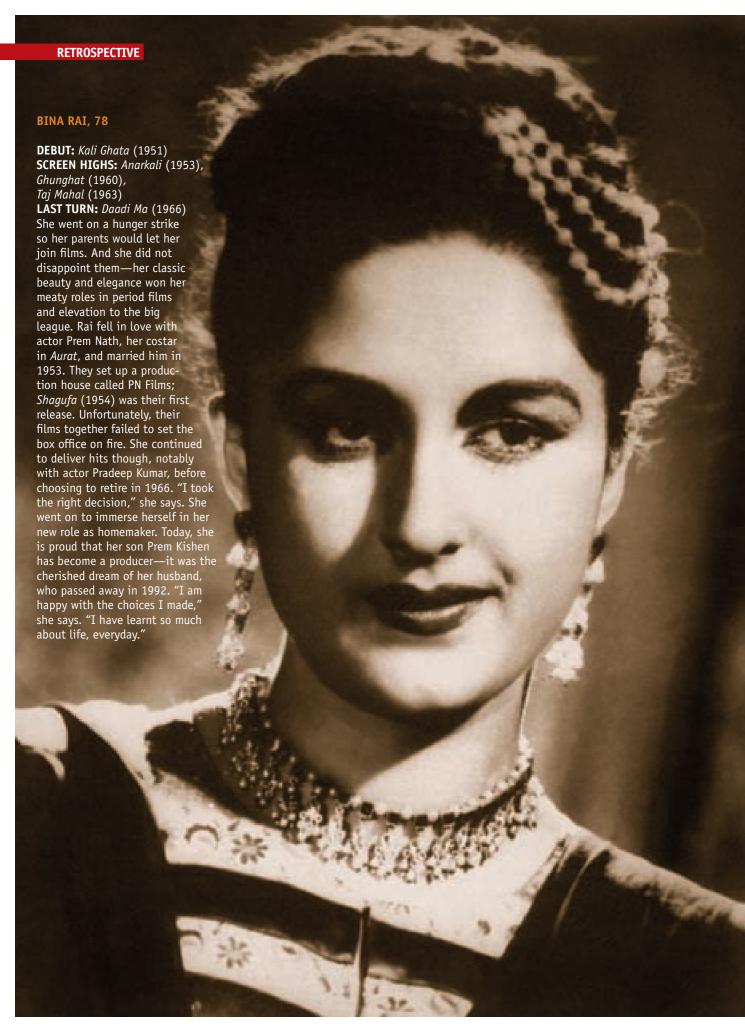
In 2006, he produced a Bengali film, Adurini, to launch his daughter Shambhavi. Her Hindi debut is expected in December 2009 in Sorry Madam Maaf Karo, a comedy; again produced by the doting father. His son Prosenjit is a huge star in Bengali cinema while elder daughter Pallabi is a successful Bangla TV actor. Further, Chatterjee, who has made documentaries on diverse subjects such as the teachings of Subhash Chandra Bose, river Padma in Bangladesh and healthcare for poor children, is planning a Bengali remake of his friend Hrishikesh Mukherjee's comedy classic Gol Maal (1979). "Films are still my love and I keep myself updated on the new techniques used in Indian cinema," he says. "There are no regrets about the past; I have accepted age gracefully."















He's proof that age need not rob you of your deepest passions. A professional musician for the past 84 years, Mumbai-based centenarian Joe Menezes still offers music lessons, reports **Anjali Rego**

orn in Goa on 4 October 1909, Jose Matias Francisco Menezes-Joe, to friendsgreets visitors with a firm handshake. Not surprising for a man who started using the walking stick only after his 100th birthday two months ago. "I give credit to my bicycle that I rode daily all over Delhi and Mumbai," says Menezes. Though cycling helped him stay physically fit, much of his emotional well-being can be attributed to his passion for music. A professional musician, Menezes still offers piano lessons at his house in Bandra, Mumbai.

Menezes's lifelong affair with music started when he was studying at Island School in Malar, Goa, where a

Catholic missionary first noticed his sharp ear for deciphering musical sounds. Menezes learnt to play the violin at school, apart from the basics of reading and writing music. At 16, he received an offer to join a musical troupe that played in cinema halls in Malaysia and set sail on a 10-day voyage to Kuala Lumpur, from where he later travelled to Malacca and Seramban in the next five years. "While the movie was

going on, our group of five violinists would sit below the screen and play the background music," he recalls.

In 1931, he returned to Goa. Just days after coming back, he received an offer to play violin and saxophone at Bristol Hotel, run by a Goan, in Kanpur. "In those days, musicians needed to have expertise in more than one musical instrument to make a decent living," says Menezes. "I used to play the violin during the lunch session and saxophone at dinner." As British orchestra groups hired musicians on a contractual basis, his job profile kept changing every few months. From Kanpur, he travelled to Indore, Peshawar and Nainital on various musical assignments. "The British changed places according to the seasons," he remembers. "During the summer, they lived at hill stations and in winter they shifted to the plains." Unlike a lot of people, Menezes's memories of pre-Independence years are not tinged with pain. "Those days were tough but I was not involved in the freedom struggle," he says with candour. "Life during the British Raj was better. At least we did not have corruption and terrorism the way we do now."

During one of his visits to Goa, while playing the harmonium in the local church choir, he met a young lady, Retinha. The two fell in love. As Menezes lived in Peshawar, Retinha travelled alone from Goa to Peshawar in 1941 where the two got married without the support of their families. Their son Albert was born a year later and daughter Sophia, in 1948.

Just before World War II, the family moved to Delhi where Menezes got a job as a music teacher at St. Columba's High School, a stint that was anything but easy. "The boys were rowdy and the principal had offered me a year to train them to form an orchestra," he reminisces. "That's when I decided I would never teach boys again in the future if I had a choice." Today he gives piano lessons to three students—all girls.

Disobedient students apart, Menezes recalls the breathless pace of his initial years in Delhi. "I used to go to the school at 6 am, then play at a restaurant during the lunch session, go over to my students' houses to give music lessons and then go back again to the restaurant to play at dinner." His hectic schedule hardly left him with time to think, let alone rest. "I had no weekly holidays and commuted all over Delhi on my bicycle." Life switched to a more sedate pace when he got a job at the government-run Ashoka Hotel in Delhi where he worked for 10 vears. It was the most secure job he had ever known. He even received accommodation at the staff quarters at Diplomatic Enclave in the Teen Murti neighbourhood-where then prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru lived and Mahatma Gandhi often visited.

In 1968, Menezes decided to move to Mumbai. "My wife was keen to settle in North India but the climate didn't suit me," he says. The couple bought a house in Bandra. A few days after moving into the city, he got an offer to play music for films. Menezes joined the Cine Musicians Association and worked with music composers such as Shankar Jaikishan, Laxmikant Pyarelal and R D Burman. On the side, he also gave private tuitions in violin and piano.

He continued to play music for films till he turned 90, by when the hassles of commuting and the changing norms of the music industry began to get to him. "In my heyday, a large orchestra of 80-100 musicians was quite the rage," says Menezes. "Eighty per cent of the musicians, though, were dummies who only pretended to play the instrument. After the recording session, musicians used to unwind with a drink, but I was always too busy to hang around." He is glad he remained a teetotaller and feels his disciplined lifestyle has been an important contributor to his good health.

After retiring, he decided to offer tuitions at home rather than going to





his students' houses. Though, over the years, he had mastered the harmonium, piano, saxophone and clarinetall on his own-he gave up playing wind instruments a decade ago on the insistence of his family who felt he was too old to exert himself. "It was with a heavy heart that I gave away my prized saxophone and two violins to music enthusiasts." Today, he can still play the violin flawlessly, but the fingers that once played Mozart don't comply so easily now. "My fingers and shoulders hurt a little now," he remarks. After giving up his violin, Menezes focused on the piano.

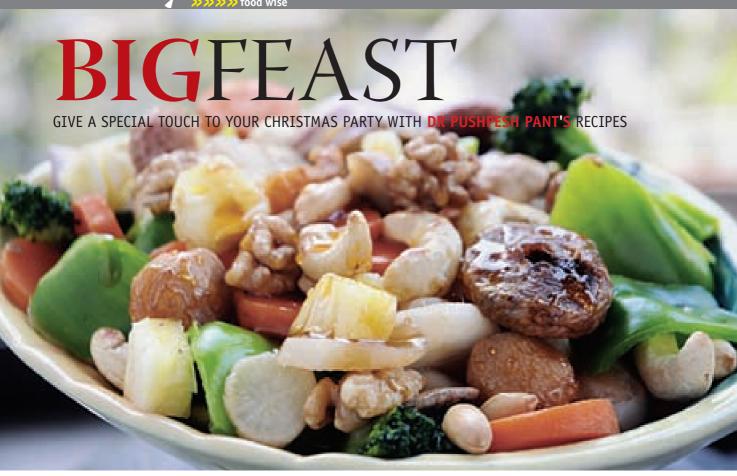
Though he is adjusting to the aches and pains of life, adapting to the changes around him is not always easy. "Now there is noise and traffic everywhere and I rarely move out as there is hardly any space to walk," he says with a touch of resignation. He spends his day playing music; meeting friends; going for a walk; reading; watching TV and teaching music. "Though it feels wonderful to spread the joy of music, I don't encourage my students to pursue a career in music because the profession is riddled with a lot of uncertainty and you don't earn much."

Menezes with the students' orchestra he formed at St Columba's School in Delhi

His beloved wife passed away 10 years ago but his life is still filled with the laughter and conversations of four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. His daughter lives nearby, in Khar, while his son, who has a house in Andheri, now lives with Menezes. "I wanted to dedicate my time to him, so I moved over to live with him," says Albert, 67, who enjoys the long conversations they share about the good old days. For Menezes's 100th birthday, Albert and his sister threw a party that was attended by 150 family members from all over the world.

Though Albert keeps him company, Menezes is fully independent. "I don't visit doctors and I don't even remember the last time I had fever," he says. The glaucoma in his eyes is all that bothers him. Both his eyes have been operated upon for cataracts. "I did my second cataract at the age of 95 and the doctor was surprised to see such a good pathology report," he says with justified pride. When asked if he has any dreams left to fulfil, Menezes has one small wish: "All I ask from the Almighty is to give me good health and happiness right till the end."

Body & Soul



Double Seven

Nutty veggies

Preparation time: 30-40 minutes

Cooking time: 15 minutes **Serves:** 4

INGREDIENTS

- Walnut kernels: 50 gm
- Almonds: 50 gm
- Cashews: 50 gm
- Peanuts: 50 gm
- Dried figs: 50 gm
- Dried apricots: 50 gm
- Oyster mushrooms: 50 gm
- Broccoli: 50 gm
- Bell peppers: 50 gm
- Carrots: 50 gm
- Radish: 50 gm

- Pineapple slices: 50 gm
- Bamboo shoots: 50 gm
- Water chestnuts: 50 gm
- Vinegar: 1 tbsp
- Oil: 1 tbsp
- Honey: 1 tsp
- Low sodium salt

METHOD

Wash the vegetables and wipe clean the mushrooms. Wash water chestnuts, bamboo shoots and pineapple slices well to remove brine and syrup. Scrape the carrots and radish, cut into quarter-inch discs and rectangular bite-sized slices.

Blanch broccoli in boiling water for two minutes. Core the bell peppers and quarter them; then halve to obtain eight pieces. Remove skin from almonds. Soak mushrooms in hot water for five minutes and dryroast walnuts and cashews. Heat oil in a non-stick pan; add carrots, radish, bamboo shoots, water chestnuts and broccoli. Stir-fry on a high flame for two minutes. Then add dried fruits and nuts along with pineapple. Stir to mix well. Finally add bell peppers.



FRESH FACT

Ever wondered why squirrels are so full of energy? You guessed right—it's the nuts they eat. A handful of nuts offers you a healthy dose of Vitamin E, folates and riboflavin.



Zaafraani Murgh

Creamy tangy chicken bites

Preparation time: 20 minutes and 3-4 hours to marinate **Cooking time:** 15-20 minutes Serves: 2

INGREDIENTS

- Boneless chicken: 300 gm
- Hung yogurt: 100 ml
- Honey: 1 tbsp
- Lemon juice: 1 tbsp
- Malt vinegar: 1 tsp
- Ginger paste: 1 tsp
- A pinch of low sodium salt
- A pinch of green cardamom powder
- A pinch of cinnamon powder
- A pinch of saffron soaked in 1 tbsp lukewarm milk

METHOD

Clean and soak the rice in water for half an hour. Drain and keep aside. Trim, wash and pat dry the chicken. Blend the yogurt with other ingredients except chicken and oil. Whisk well. Place the chicken in this marinade for three to four hours. Remove from the marinade and pan-grill on a non-stick pan for about five minutes. Heat the remainder of the marinade on a low flame. Stirring constantly, pour on the chicken and garnish with saffron strands crushed slightly in a mortar with a pestle or the back of a spoon.

FRESH FACT

The world has been spooning in yoghurt for 4,500 years now. This superfood is not just rich in history but nutrients too. It's packed with protein, calcium, and Vitamin B6 and B12. Even people suffering from lactose intolerance can have yogurt as the lactose is converted to lactic acid owing to the bacterial culture.

Honey-Tinged Tash Kebab Sweet and spicy mutton fillets

Preparation time: 30 minutes and 3-4 hours to marinate **Cooking time:** 15-20 minutes

Serves: 2

INGREDIENTS

- Boneless fillets of mutton: 300 gm
- Hung yogurt: 100 ml
- Ginger paste: 1 tsp
- Garlic paste: ½ tsp
- One onion, medium sized
- Coriander powder: 1 tsp
- Cumin powder: ½ tsp
- Kashmiri red chilly powder: ½ tsp
- Clove powder: ¼ tsp
- Cardamom powder: ¼ tsp
- Cinnamon powder: ¼ tsp
- A pinch of mace powder
- A sprig of fresh mint leaves
- Honey: 1 tbsp
- Lemon juice: 1 tbsp
- Low sodium salt
- Oil: 1 tbsp

METHOD

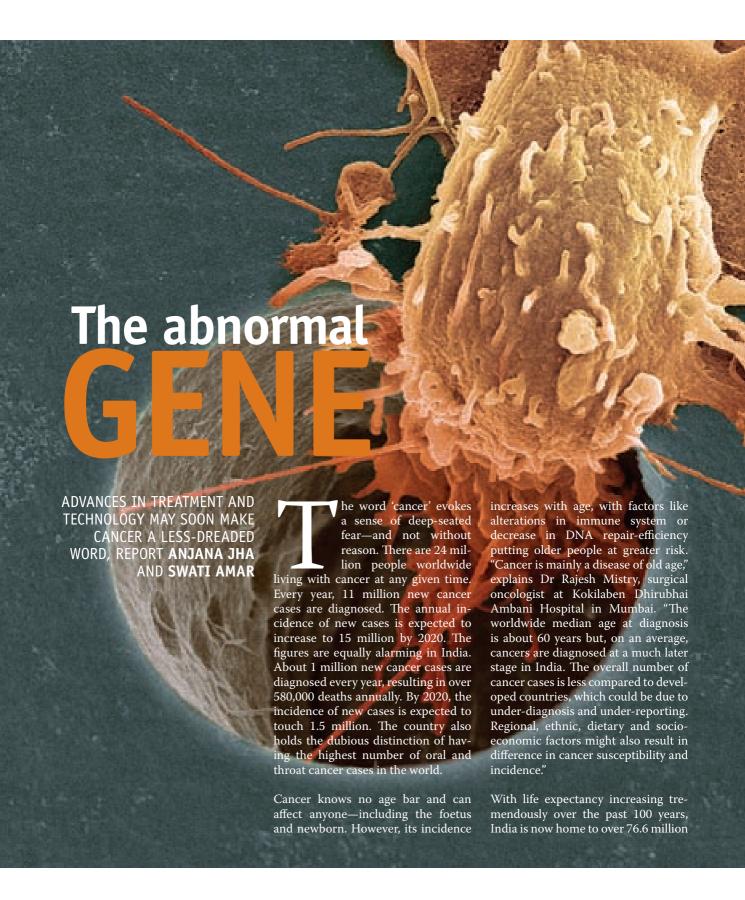
Trim, wash and pat dry the fillets. Score with a sharp knife taking care not to cut through them. Flatten with the broad side of a knife or a wooden mallet. Peel and slice the onions very fine. Prepare a marinade, blending the yoghurt with all the other ingredients except onions. Place the fillets in the marinade for three to four hours. Glaze the bottom of a non-stick pan and put onions in it. Stir-fry on medium flame till golden brown; lower the mutton pieces along with the marinade. Arrange one layer; then place a layer of sliced tomatoes on top, and another layer of mutton fillets on top of that. Cover with a tight lid and cook on low-medium heat for about 15 minutes. Uncover and check if done. Mix honey and lemon juice and sprinkle over the tash kebab.

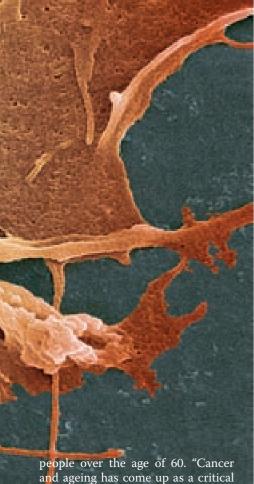
FRESH FACT

Mutton has its benefits if you don't over-indulge. It's rich in zinc, which is essential to build a healthy immune system; iron, which helps promote red cells; and Vitamin B12, which keeps your metabolic functions in top gear.









people over the age of 60. "Cancer and ageing has come up as a critical issue in cancer care," says Dr Bhawna Sirohi, chief consultant and director of medical oncology at Max Cancer Centre, Max Healthcare, Delhi. "Approximately half of all cancers occur in the population aged 65 years and older, making it the second most common cause of death among senior citizens."

UNDERSTANDING CANCER

According to Dr Mistry, cancer is a disease where cells display uncontrolled growth and invasion of adjacent structures by spreading to distant organs. It is caused by abnormality of genetic material resulting from carcinogenic agents like tobacco, alcohol, chemicals, radiation and viruses, to name a few. Less than 5 per cent of cancers are inherited.

There are several types of cancer. The more common ones include breast, prostate, lung, colon, rectum, cervical, ovary, bladder, stomach, liver, kidney, oral and skin cancer. "Cancers commonly reported among male senior citizens are prostate and colon cancer, while breast cancer is most common in older women," says Dr Sirohi. "The other cancers reported frequently are skin, lung, pancreas, bladder, rectum and stomach."

"Oral, lung and stomach cancers are also common in men," adds Dr Mistry. "And though cervical, breast and oral cancer are the three main causes of cancer-related illnesses and death in women, breast cancer is the most common in cities. Overall, cervical cancer is the number one cause of cancer deaths in India. This is really unfortunate as it is relatively preventable, easy to diagnose and treatable."

Unfortunately, cancer symptoms tend to be ambiguous, particularly in the elderly. Besides the fact that medical manifestation of the disease may occur at a slower rate, the typical signs could be masked by other age-related physical changes.

For instance, clinical presentation and rate of development for breast and cervical cancer can be very different in post-menopausal and younger women. The tendency of older people to dismiss symptoms as just signs of old age also leads to delay in detection, resulting in significantly higher mortality for some types of cancer.

WARNING SIGNS

Different types of cancer have different characteristics—each can produce diverse symptoms, many of them subtle changes. Though warning signs like nausea, loss of appetite or fatigue may be caused by any condition and not just cancer, their presence necessitates medical investigation and tests to help exclude or confirm a diagnosis. Early detection makes treatment more effective and increases the likelihood of cure.

Common warning signs include:

Weight loss: Losing weight for no apparent reason, with or without loss of appetite. There may be recurrent episodes of nausea or vomiting. Some people may experience difficulty in swallowing.

Fatigue: One of the most common symptoms, fatigue occurs in the initial stages of some types of cancer. It aggravates as the cancer progresses. It's also related to anaemia, tiredness and breathlessness.

Pain: The disease is typically painless in the early stage. Though the pain usually occurs when the cancer begins to affect the nerves and other organs, its absence is not an indication that the cancer is not spreading.

Bleeding: In the early stage, there may be slight bleeding that is undetectable or detectable only though tests. It may increase as the disease progresses. While cancer in the gastrointestinal tract can result in the presence of blood in the stool, blood in the urine may be owing to cancer in the urinary tract.

Change in bowel habits: Constipation, diarrhoea or thinner stool, blood in stool, gas or general change in bowel habits are commonly associated with colon cancer, but may also be a symptom of other cancers.

Recurrent fever: Fever is a nonspecific symptom of many conditions, including cancer; persistent or recurrent fever indicates stress on the immune system.

Cough: Though chronic cough with blood or mucus may be caused by many conditions, it can be a symptom of lung cancer.

Enlarged lymph nodes: Lymph nodes become swollen when cancer begins to spread. Hard or rubbery to touch, lymph nodes may or may not be painful.

Sudden depression: Though depression may be the result of many factors, cancer could also be the cause.

PREVENTION

"Cancer is largely a lifestyle disease and hence preventable," explains Dr Mistry. "It is believed that adopting a healthy lifestyle can reduce its incidence by one-third. Avoiding all forms of tobacco, adopting dietary modifications, exercising to reduce weight, and abstinence from alcohol are a few measures that are effective." To this, Dr Janos Stumpf, director of research in oncology, Apollo Hospitals, Chennai, adds, "Besides avoiding tobacco and excessive alcohol, the daily diet should include a good amount of vegetables, proteins and fibre-rich foods. Staying away from polluted areas and taking a multivitamin with trace elements every alternate day are good for prevention. Awareness, being alert to unusual differences in the body and screening for preventable cancer such as prostate and cervical go a long way in keeping the disease at bay."

In complete agreement, Dr Sirohi adds, "Ensuring moderation in diet, exercising regularly, maintaining healthy body weight, using sunscreen and wearing protective clothing in the sun all have a protective effect."

CANCER IN WOMEN

"In India, the most common types of cancer in older women are carcinoma of the breast, cervix, endometrium and ovary," says Dr R Rathnadevi, consultant radiation oncologist at Apollo Hospitals, Chennai. "Head and neck cancers are frequently seen among women, especially the lower socioeconomic strata because of tobacco and paan chewing habits.

Incidence of breast cancer is increasing, especially in high socioeconomic groups of the urban population. Years of exposure to menstruation and the resultant impact of hormones owing to early menarche and late menopause are also causative factors. Women with family history of breast cancer, nulliparous women (who have not given birth to a child) and women under hormone replacement therapy fall in the high risk category. A late first child and obesity also expose women to the threat of breast cancer. Regular self-examination of breasts and underarms and mammograms along with a clinical breast exam are advisable every other year for women after the age of 40.

Cervical cancer refers to cancer of the uterine cervix (neck of the uterus). More common in the lower socioeconomic strata, the human papiloma virus causes infections that may later lead to cancer. Bearing several children and an early marriage are also factors. Women with multiple sexual partners fall in the high-risk group. The PAP smear test (where cells are scraped from the cervical area) can detect early stages of the cancer.

Carcinoma of the endometrium (inner lining of the uterus) is commonly seen among older women. Hypertension, diabetes and obesity are factors associated with this cancer."

CANCER IN MEN

"Prostate cancer is one of the most common types of cancer among older men," says Dr Mahadev, senior consultant (radiation) oncologist, Apollo Speciality Hospital, Chennai. "What complicates the matter is that symptoms are vague and similar to that of urinary infection or benign enlargement of prostate glands. As a result, 80 per cent of cases of prostate cancer in India are diagnosed at a later stage, when the prognosis becomes poor. After the age of 45, men should get a PSA—a simple blood test—done regularly. If the cancer is detected early, 90 per cent of patients can be cured thanks to advances in treatment. Urinary bladder cancer is also on the rise among silvers. But the success rate of treatment is good and a new bladder can be constructed if necessary.

Smoking and tobacco chewing are major risk factors for oral, lung, About 11 million new cases of cancer are across the world. In India alone, about 1 million new cancer cases are diagnosed. By 2020, the incidence of new cases will touch 1.5 million. India also holds the dubious distinction of having the maximum cases of oral and throat cancer.

Self-examination of breasts & underarms. along with a clinical breast exam are advisable every other year for women after

of prostate cancer in 45, men should get a PSA—a simple blood test—done regularly. If the cancer is detected

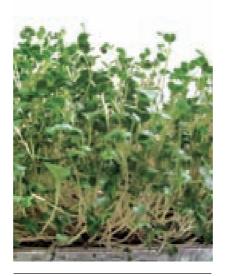
oesophagus and stomach cancer. While the number of smokers is coming down in the West, it is going up in India. There is an increase in both lung cancer and cancer of the oesophagus (food pipe). Unless detected at an early stage, lung cancer has poor prognosis. Cancer of the food pipe is frequently seen among older people. Though the success rate of treatment has gone up from 5 per cent to 20 per cent survival for five years, the cancer does not have good prognosis unless detected early.

Besides the oesophagus, oral cancer includes cancer of the tongue, cheeks, larynx and hypopharynx. As there are no screening tests for these, it is important to seek medical attention if any pain in the oral cavity persists. These types of cancer are curable with early detection; and even at a locally advanced stage. Tobacco chewing, addiction to *paan masala* and poor oral hygiene also cause cancer of the head and neck that are common among senior citizens, irrespective of gender."

TREATMENT OPTIONS

"Chemotherapy, radiation therapy and surgery are the three main kinds of treatment," says Dr Mistry. "With advancement in medical knowledge and availability of new drugs and technology, the outcome of treatment has improved over the years. Cancer is potentially curable in early stages; even in advanced stages, it is possible to give the patient a good quality of life." Various factors, including the condition of the patient, determine the choice of treatment. Research has proved chemotherapy to be effective. When used in combination with surgery and/or radiation therapy, it achieves greater therapeutic result.

Chemotherapy: Chemotherapy is the use of anti-cancer drugs that target and rapidly destroy cancer cells. Travelling through the bloodstream, the drugs kill even healthy cells; these, however, recover over time. Besides being used as primary treatment, chemotherapy may be combined with



Stomach cancer is the second most common and the second deadliest cancer worldwide.

Now research at the John Hopkins School of Medicine in the US has shown that eating fresh broccoli sprouts daily could prevent stomach cancer by suppressing Helicobacter pylori—one of the most common bacterial infections

radiation therapy to reduce the growth before surgery or to treat cancer that has spread to other organs following surgery. Chemotherapy may not be limited to a single drug-more than 50 different drugs are available-and in most treatments, a combination of several drugs is given. Combining drugs that act differently at the cellular level help destroy cancer cells. The risk of developing resistance to a particular drug also reduces. The choice of drugs is not only based on the type, stage and grade of the cancer, but also the patient's age and health. The main advantage of chemotherapy is that it treats the entire body whereas radiation therapy only treats the area exposed to radiation.

Radiation therapy: Radiation therapy—also called radiotherapy—is the use of high energy rays to destroy cancer cells. It may be given as the sole treatment modality or in combination with surgery or chemotherapy. Effective in curing cancer at an early stage, radiation is also used as primary treatment when surgery is not viable owing to the size or location of the tumour. This form of therapy aims to give maximum radiation to the tumour and minimum dose to surrounding healthy tissues. Normal cells have the ability to repair the effects of radiation better than malignant cells, and hence recover better from the exposure. If the disease is localised, correct dose and delivery of radiation destroy the cancer cells even as normal tissues survive and the patient recovers. Radiation is used as palliative treatment to relieve symptoms and prolong life for patients with advanced cancer. It has been reported that patients in their 70s and 80s can tolerate a full dose of radiotherapy.

Surgery: Surgery is the most suitable treatment for localised 'solid cancer'. It is used to remove all, or part, of the tumour and cancerous cells. Biopsies—surgery involving the removal of a small amount of tissue—help diagnose the presence, kind and stage of cancer. Usually chemotherapy or radiation therapy is used after surgery to treat any remaining cancerous cells. Surgery is also used to help reconstruct cancer-affected parts of the body such as the breast, bladder or colon.

Multi-modality approach: "The multi-modality approach in cancer care has been one of the important concepts that has changed overall survival rate," says Dr V Shanta, chairperson of Cancer Institute (WIA) Adyar, Chennai. "Introduced for the first time at the Cancer Institute in 1958, the treatment involves careful integrated multidisciplinary management based on the biology of the patient and disease, and includes radiation oncology, surgical oncology

and medical oncology. It has brought many types of 'incurable and fatal' cancers within the scope of curability. This includes acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, Hodgkin's disease, testicular tumour, and soft tissue sarcoma. Multi-modality treatment has also increased the cure rate from less than 20 per cent to almost 65 per cent in oral cancer, and long-term survival of 10-15 years in locally advanced breast cancer. The cure rate in the early stage of both oral and breast cancer is almost 85-90 per cent."

ADVANCES IN TREATMENT

"Advances in diagnosis and treatment have made rapid strides in the past decade and enabled better prognosis, remission and cure," says Dr Rathnadevi. "More precise, faster and safer, cancer treatment now offers patients better quality of life. Chemotherapy has undergone a major revolution with the advent of targeted therapy. Particularly useful in blood cancer, lymphoma, head and neck cancer, and liver cancer, the drugs target tumour cells without causing any harm to normal cells. There has also been technological advancement in radiotherapy. This includes intensity modulated radiation therapy (IMRT), image-guided radiation therapy (IGRT), stereotactic radiotherapy and radiosurgery done with a hybrid linear accelerator. The multi-modality approach, being custom-made for patients, cuts down side-effects and improves quality of life."

"Recent global cancer research has adopted a patient-centred approach in combination with genetics to find treatment procedures most suited to individual patients depending on genetic makeup and response to different therapy," says Dr Mahadev.

A versatile machine. Novalis Tx has a precise beam shaper ideal for small tumours in the brain. It can target the tumour accurately with minimal effect on normal tissues, thus enabling even the elderly to tolerate the treatment

"Predisposition towards certain types of cancer that have a genetic basis is being looked at seriously and aggressive procedures are being developed." Apollo Hospitals also use high dose brachytherapy—an advanced form of radiotherapy—for treatment of prostate cancer.

NEW TECHNOLOGY

Technology has made a huge impact in improving cure rates and reducing side-effects owing to collateral damage to healthy organs during radiation therapy. "One of the major breakthroughs is the invention of the CyberKnife Robotic Radiosurgery System," says Dr Mahadev. "This is a versatile system designed to treat both static and moving lesions anywhere in the body with precision and accuracy. A non-invasive alternative to surgery, it is used in the treatment of highly sensitive cancerous and non-cancerous organs and tissues, earlier considered inoperable because of difficult access and damage to surrounding tissues by radiation or surgery. The treatment usually lasts between one and five days, whereas radiation continues for five to six weeks. However, treatment using CyberKnife is very expensive. The system is available only at Apollo in Chennai and Health Care Global (HCG) Enterprises Ltd in Bengaluru."

"Most tumours grow close to critical organs like eyes, brain, lung, liver and spinal cord," explains Somorat Bhattacharjee, head of medical services, Bangalore Institute of Oncology, Bengaluru. "In conventional treatment, doctors are constrained to give lowdensity radiation to prevent toxicity to normal cells. As it is not enough to kill hypoxic or anoxic cells, there is a risk of the tumour returning. CyberKnife, also known as robotic radiosurgery, is a pinpoint radiation technique that can identify and treat all latent tumours without any radiation to neighbouring organs. Its dynamic motion tracking capability allows the robotic arm to move with the patient's breathing so that tumours



can be treated with an accuracy of less than a millimetre. CyberKnife has revolutionised diagnosis and treatment with many benefits like reduced pain and no residual effects."

"The advent of high-end technology equipment like the Novalis Tx can deliver treatments such as IMRT, IGRT and stereotactic radiosurgery," says Dr A K Anand, chief of radiation oncology, Max Healthcare, Delhi. "It is now possible to target the tumour accurately with minimal effect on normal tissues, thus enabling even the elderly to tolerate the treatment. IMRT involves the use of multiple beams of radiation with the help of sophisticated computer-based planning software to shape the radiation beam according to the tumour. This helps avoid adjacent normal structures and significantly reduces side-effects. IMRT has resulted in making radiation therapy of cancer involving tongue, cheek and throat much more tolerable as most long-term side-effects like dryness of mouth and difficulty in swallowing have been minimised. IGRT involves the use of imaging such as CT scan and x-ray taken during treatment on the treatment machine itself to verify the position of the patient daily for enhanced accuracy.

Cancer of the prostate is very common in the elderly and radiosurgery can pinpoint the dose of radiation to the diseased prostate while sparing the bladder and the rectum. Therefore, it avoids side-effects like a burning sensation in the urine and stools. This also enables the radiation oncologist to deliver a higher dose, thus achieving a higher cure rate (80-90 per cent). Lung cancer is another disease where stereotactic body radiotherapy (focused radiation therapy) is used to deliver a high dose of radiation within a few sittings, with good tumour control and minimal inconvenience to the patient."

"Our radiation oncology department was the first in the country to install the latest Trilogy and Novalis Tx

CANCER TYPE	RISK FACTORS	SYMPTOMS
Breast	Women in the 50-69 age group; family history; menarche and menopause age	 nipple discharge pain in nipples retracted or scaly nipples swelling in armpits lump/s in breasts breast tenderness breast pain or discomfort
Prostate	Men over 40 years; family history; diet; obesity	 weight loss pelvic, back or hip pain inability to urinate weak urine stream burning or pain during urination frequent nocturnal urination blood in urine
Lung	Smoking tobacco; recurrent inflammation of lung; exposure to carcinogens	 recurrent pneumonia or bronchitis • breathlessness wheezing • persistent cough blood in cough • hoarse voice weight loss • loss of appetite
Stomach	Helicobacter pylori bacterium infection; diet; smoking; alcohol abuse	 blood in stool ● abdominal pain and discomfort ● persistent nausea and vomiting ● loss of appetite ● unintentional weight loss ● abdominal bloating bowel changes ● weakness and fatigue
Cervical	Human papiloma virus (HPV) infection, a sexually transmitted disease	 abnormal vaginal bleeding unusual or heavy vaginal discharge • pelvic pain pain during urination
Oral	Men and women over 40; tobacco use; alcohol consumption; persistent viral infection	 sores or blisters in mouth or lips that do not heal lesions on tongue or tonsil white and red patches in mouth or lips that do not heal bleeding from mouth swelling or pain of jaw persistent ear ache difficulty swallowing, chewing, speaking, or moving tongue
Liver	Hepatitis B and C infection; alcohol abuse	 fever • fatigue • jaundice loss of appetite • nausea or vomiting • abdominal pain or discomfort on the right side unintentional weight loss
Colorectal (colon and rectum)	Men and women over 50; smoking tobacco; consuming alcohol; obesity	 blood in stools opersistent constipation, diarrhoea, or other bowel changes thinner stools unexplained weight loss abdominal pain and discomfort fatigue

equipment," says Dr Kaustav Talapatra, radiation oncologist at Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital in Mumbai. "It is capable of performing all high-end treatments like IMRT, IGRT, intracranial stereotactic radiosurgery and radiotherapy, extracranial stereotaxy, total body irradiation and total skin electron treatment. A versatile machine, Novalis Tx has a precise beam shaper, ideal for small tumours in the brain and other parts of the body like lung, liver, pancreas and spine. Stereotactic radiosurgery and radiotherapy are non-invasive, bloodless procedures that can be performed without any hospitalisation.

The Trilogy image-guided radiotherapy system can take the exact shape of the tumour in three dimensions, and deliver precise and focused radiotherapy, minimally affecting normal tissues," adds Talapatra.

MAJOR CANCER HOSPITALS

Tata Memorial Hospital (TMH), Mumbai: The country's premier cancer-care hospital, TMH is the national comprehensive cancer centre. There are almost 43,000 new patients every year. Nearly 60 per cent of these cancer patients receive primary care, and over 70 per cent of them are treated almost free of charge. More than 1,000 patients attend its OPD daily. TMH was the first in the country to initiate bone marrow transplant in 1983. The PET-CT scanner was another 'first in India' that made new-age radiological imaging technology available for cancer management. TMH launched its first mobile outreach programme in November 2009 for screening the three most common types of cancer: breast, cervical and oral.

All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi: Dr B R Ambedkar Institute Rotary Cancer Hospital (IRCH) is the cancer centre at AIIMS. A regional cancer centre under the National Cancer Control Programme of the government, it attends to about 8,000 new and 75,000 follow-up cancer patients every year.



Rs 24 billion

The Maharashtra government will allocate Rs 24 billion for the National Cancer Control Programme in the 11th Five Year Plan about 10 times more than the previous plan

According to Dr Bidhu K Mohanti, professor of radiation oncology, "Comparable to the best anywhere, our treatment costs only one-fifth to one-tenth of the charges in other centres in Delhi."

HealthCare Global (HGC) Enterprises Ltd, Bengaluru: Bangalore Institute of Oncology (BIO), the flagship of HCG, was set up almost two decades ago. It is the first dedicated comprehensive cancer centre to be established in the private sector in India. The centre has state-of-the-art equipment that includes PET-CT scan, DOTA-NOC scan, IGRT with CT-on-Rails (ARTISTE), stereotactic robotic radiosurgery (CyberKnife), HDR (high dose rate) brachytherapy, linear accelerators and digital mammography for comprehensive care.

P D Hinduja National Hospital, Mumbai: "At Hinduja, we have very advanced facilities for diagnosis and treatment comparable to other premier cancer hospitals," says Dr Vinay

Deshmane, consultant in surgical oncology and breast diseases. Besides international radiation therapy equipment such as PET and CT scanners, linear accelerator, IMRT and brachytherapy, Hinduja was the first in India to acquire the Gamma Knife, a non-invasive neurosurgical tool.

Chittaranjan National Cancer Institute, Kolkata: "A regional cancer centre initiated for the East by the government, Chittaranjan National Cancer Institute conducts a wide range of cancer research and provides facilities for diagnosis, treatment, palliation and rehabilitation," says Dr Jahar Majumdar, medical superintendent and head of department of surgical oncology. Equipped with modern therapeutic equipment like ultrasonography, CT scan, linear accelerator, cobalt machines, brachytherapy units, computerised simulator and endoscopes, charges are highly subsidised for about 80 per cent of patients.

Max Healthcare, Delhi: With a patient base that exceeds 800,000, the objective of Max Healthcare is to bring latest technologies to India. It has set up its new cancer centre to offer the most advanced treatment in all disciplines. High-end technology like the Novalis Tx will give patients the benefit of a complete neurosurgical and radiation oncology solution in one place. "The impact of these tools is maximally seen in the treatment of the elderly (aged above 70 years)," says Dr Harit Chaturvedi, chief consultant and director (surgical oncology).

Detecting unsuspected cancer through screening can help reduce cancerrelated deaths. Spreading awareness of the signs can help substantially in early diagnosis and increase chances of a complete cure. As age is a strong risk factor for many types of cancer, it is essential for silvers to be alert and understand their own body, and consult a medical professional as soon as they detect any changes or unexplained symptoms.



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Dr Anjali

Mukerjee

Probiotic food: The benefits of 'friendly' bacteria

An increasing range of probiotic products by foreign and Indian manufacturers is available in the market. Are probiotics beneficial for senior citizens?

The human gut is home to millions of bacteria—harmful and useful. To maintain the integrity of the body, you need to balance gut-friendly and disease-causing bacteria. Maintaining an optimum level of intestinal flora variety of bacteria and micro organisms—is important for improved digestive health. Beneficial bacteria like bifidobacteria or lactobacilli help maintain the pH [level of acidification] of the gut and sustain a healthy system by preventing indigestion, diarrhoea, bloating, flatulence and acidity.

A newborn baby has no bacteria in the gut but bifidobacteria in breast milk assist digestion and help build immunity. As we age, the number of beneficial bacteria in the digestive system declines sharply, making it this deficiency. Probiotic foods help boost immunity by preventing overgrowth of yeast and synthesising Vitamins K and B. It is believed that milk intolerance in the elderly is

important for men and women over 50 to supplement

mainly owing to the reduction in the number of beneficial bacteria. Eating good bacteria-rich food—curd, buttermilk, idli, dhokla, pickled vegetables like khimchi or sauerkraut—or supplements will help reduce symptoms like milk intolerance, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), bloating, flatulence, diarrhoea, constipation, and low immunity. The intake of antibiotics over prolonged periods, exposure to pollution or situations like emotional trauma also result in increased toxic overload. This affects the number of good bacteria and tilts the balance towards harmful bacteria. Therefore, having one source of probiotic-rich food or probiotic supplement at least once a day is recommended.









Having one source of probiotic-rich food or probiotic supplement at least once a day is recommended

Is it possible to get the same kind of benefits through food that we consume in our daily diet?

A host of encouraging studies have linked the consumption of probiotics with reduction in eczema, inflammation, mental illness, improved immunity to germs, and controlling the resurface of childhood allergies and asthma. Both young and old can benefit from probiotics. It's wise to incorporate 'prebiotic' foods like oatmeal, soybean, unrefined wheat and barley in the diet. They travel down the gut into the large intestine, creating an environment suitable for the growth of beneficial bacteria.

Natural probiotics include curd and yoghurt. The bacteria in these foods are effective only if they survive through the entire process of digestion and reach the large intestine. Fermented foods like *dhokla*, miso (fermented soybean), rice, barley products and soy beverages are high on good bacteria. For those who enjoy South Indian food, fermented foods like *idli*, *dosa* and *uttapam* are probiotics. Certain cheeses and sauerkraut are also storehouses of beneficial bacteria. A host of manufacturers have recently lined up a range of products including curd, yoghurt, ice-creams and beverages that contain a few strains of beneficial bacteria.

There has been recent controversy about the efficacy of probiotic foods. What is your advice?

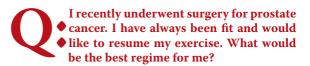
Of late, there has been a lot of confusion about the benefits of probiotics. I have tried some of these food products and supplements and feel they are a great add-on to our diet. From aiding digestion to bolstering immunity, the 'friendly' bacteria provide countless other health benefits by maintaining a healthy balance of good bacterial flora. I advise people to go in for supplements that contain a high spore count, preferably greater than 4 billion spores per capsule.

Beneficial bacteria are already a part of our digestive system. Probiotics are not a miraculous remedy to prevent or cure diseases but a safe alternative that offers a quick and easy first line of defence along with a healthy diet.

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



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



First, recuperate completely according to your physician's aftercare instructions before commencing any physical activity. Post-treatment fatigue is normal and can often discourage you from physical activity. Ensure your diet includes a lot of fluids. Plan your exercise programme in consultation with your physician or physiotherapist and do not overdo things in the initial stages.

Take up exercises to strengthen pelvic floor muscles. The sooner you engage in the exercises, the quicker the improvement.

The first step is to find out what your pelvic floor muscles are so that you exercise the right muscles. Try stopping and starting the urine stream flow consciously and you will identify the muscles. Move on to exercising them even when not urinating. Another exercise is to tighten the muscles like when you want to control bowel movements. Gradually, progress to doing these exercises three to four times daily.

The second step is to strengthen core muscles. Do simple routines like lying down face up with one knee bent and the other raised upright. Repeat and alternate.

Slowly move into light exercises like a daily walk, stair climbing, swimming or other light workouts. Avoid lifting heavy weights till you have your doctor's approval. Alternate aerobic exercises with strength training. If you have a Kaya Life centre near your house, we could provide you with an exercise programme. Build a low-cost exercise facility at home that includes a stepper, resistance bands, medicine ball, etc.



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



 ${\it If you have a question for Dr Mukerjee or Dr Lewis, write to contact.mag@harmonyindia.org}$



Total impact: Yoga can balance the thyroid gland

When we face physical problems we can't really account for, our thyroid gland usually gets the rap; rightly so, as its secretions control the function of all organs. The thyroid gland controls our metabolism, which involves breakdown and repair of tissues, storage of energy, and utilisation of energy for all our cells. Intriguingly, the most powerful yogic asana—a shoulder stand-that works on the thyroid is called sarvangasana, or the all-organ pose. It is named after its impact on the thyroid and, thereby, on the rest of the major organ systems.

When thyroid hormones T3 and T4 are not running their proper course, we can suffer from a host of physical symptoms: unwarranted weight gain or weight loss, anxiety, palpitations, chronic fatigue, brittle nails, hair fall, middle-age onset of acne, water retention, low immunity, heat intolerance, oedema of feet, extreme mood fluctuations, irritability, chronic depression, aggravation of premenstrual symptoms, and digestive discomforts like constipation or diarrhoea.

As always we tend to focus on the problem rather than the cause, and embark upon medical treatment that tinkers with our hormones, leading to a decrease or increase in thyroid secretions. Other aggravations include radiation treatment, x-rays, lack of protein and essential nutrients like Vitamin A, iodine, zinc and copper. However, as thyroid problems are often treated as personality disorders, physical symptoms are overlooked, as is the role of stress as provocateur. Generally, all problems related to the thyroid are clubbed under the label 'hormonal imbalance' or 'hormonal problem' with nobody quite knowing how to address them holistically.

Yoga is the ideal way to do this. Most asana that apply pressure on the throat-including sarvangasana and the psychic union pose (viparita karani), where the chin locks onto the chest to massage the thyroid-are therapeutic. Poses where the neck is thrown back, like the cobra (bhujangasana) and half-moon pose (ardha chandrasana), are also beneficial. However, in aggravated hyperthyroidism or enlarged thyroid, such poses must be avoided.

Instead, rejuvenating energy-releasing poses (pawanmuktasana) must be used to un-knot the stiffness in the body, relax the mind. The victory breath (ujjayi) is said to work on the entire body-it touches the button of the thyroid gland on which the rest of the body's functions are dependent. Stimulating yogic practices balance the sluggishness induced by hypothyroidism, while calming practices make the perfect foil for restive hyperactivity owing to hyperthyroidism.

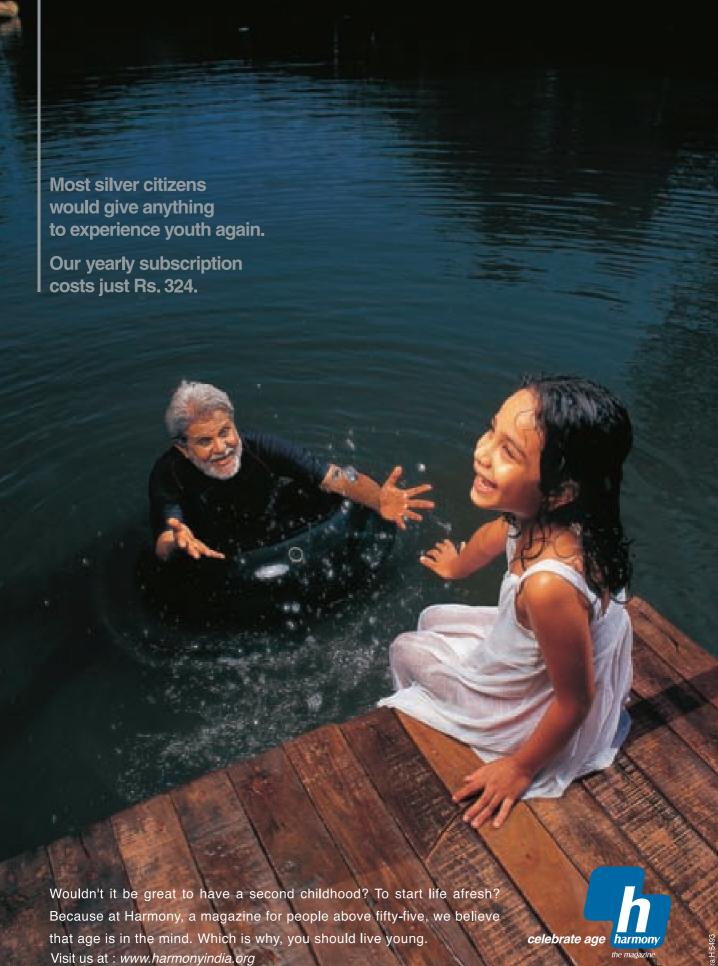
YOGIC MOVES Victory breath (ujjayi pranayama)

Sit in any meditative practice. Close your eyes with your hands in any mudra or hand gesture of your choice—ideally, tips of the index fingers and the thumb in each hand should be touching. Inhale gently from the throat. The sound must be gentle, like the light snoring of a baby, without any strain. Exhale in a similar fashion. This is one round. Do nine rounds. After regular practice, you may inhale deep and long and exhale to double the length of your inhalation. This comes only with guidance and regular practice. **Benefits:** This *pranayama* touches the button of the thyroid gland; the soft pressure at the throat works the vagus nerve, the powerful parasympathetic nerve that wanders over most of the body. This has a positive impact on the entire body, ushering it into a rejuvenating and repair mode and bringing back physical and emotional equilibrium.

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)





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A study conducted by Seoul-based International Vaccine Institute (IVI) and Kolkata's National Institute of Cholera and Enteric Diseases has resulted in a low-priced vaccine providing immunity against typhoid fever for three years. Effective across all age groups, the Vi vaccine has been recommended by World Health Organisation for developing countries.

EAT RIGHT

Make fruits and nuts an essential part of your diet. Researchers from Maine Medical Centre and Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston in the US claim that fruits, vegetables, nuts, low-fat dairy items and whole grains can help prevent kidney stones. Over a period of 18 years, about 240,000 people of all ages participated in this study, which also reveals that limited intake of salt, red and processed meat, and sugary beverages could help achieve better results. Data was compiled from three corresponding researches—Health Professionals Follow-up Study, Nurses' Health Study I and Nurses Health Study II. For each participant, eight different parameters on the lines of Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) were also analysed. These comprise high intake of fruits, vegetables, nuts, low-fat dairy products, whole grains, low intake of salt, sweetened beverages, red and processed meat. Participants with high scores—those who consumed foods rich in calcium, potassium, magnesium, oxalate, Vitamin C, and low in sodium—were declared 40-45 per cent less likely to develop kidney stones compared to low scorers. At the end of the study, experts found that 5,645 persons had developed stones. "Kidney stones can occur owing to many reasons including improper diet," Dr Ashok Rao, diabetologist at Vinayaka Hospital, Bengaluru, tells Harmony. "I would recommend a balanced diet, avoiding foods like peas, coconut and chickpea. Spicy foods and excessive alcohol could increase the possibility of developing kidney stones."



Geriatric Dentistry



Prof. Dr. Sandesh M. Mayekar MDS, MS (USA) Aesthetic & Cosmetic Surgeon, Implantologist

Q1. What are the dental problems usually faced by the elderly?

There are two kinds of dental problems faced by the elderly: physiologic and pathologic. Physiologic dental problems involve wear and tear of the tooth structure, while gum disease and bite imbalance due to non-replacement of teeth are pathologic problems.

Q2. Can gum diseases in the elderly be treated?

Gum disease can be effectively treated through scaling, gingivectomy and flap surgery. For moderate decay, the decay is first removed, and the cavity filled with a fluoride releasing material like glass ionomer. If the erosion is severe, then a tooth-coloured filling is advised. If the erosion has caused the nerve to be exposed, then root canal treatment and capping of the tooth with NobelProcera Metal-Free restoration, made in Sweden, is ideal.

Q3. What is an ideal treatment for missing teeth?

Removable dentures, fixed bridges and implants are the three options that can help replace missing teeth. Removable dentures are the least expensive, though they may put pressure on the underlying bone resulting in recession of the bone. The denture needs to be removed every night and cleaned regularly. Fixed bridges offer a natural look to the teeth—specially Nobel Procera Fixed Bridges. For fixed bridges, the neighbouring teeth have to be shaped and prepared. Implants are the latest advances in dentistry. These are root-like titanium rods that are placed in the bone, over which a tooth-like restoration is made. Implants are highly in demand as they are safe and come with enhanced aesthetics. Nobel Biocare's Implants are backed by advanced technology and research.

Q4. Is it necessary to replace the missing teeth or reconstruct worn-out teeth?

Missing teeth or worn-out teeth changes the relation of the jaws and brings about a change in the chewing habits. These changes result in neuromuscular pain in the face, the head, the neck and the lower neck. To prevent this, it is necessary to replace missing teeth.

Q5. Can the elderly have a perfect healthy smile?

Oral hygiene, good dietary habits and a visit to the dentist once every six months can assure healthy teeth. With advanced dental technology, the elderly need no longer live with discoloured teeth, agonising pain and toothless smile. Modern dentistry offers them the choice to have a perfect, confident smile.

Warning **BELL**

Persistent pain in the legs while walking can indicate possible heart disease or stroke, suggest researchers from University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada. This is particularly relevant to people above 50 years of age—experts advise tests for peripheral artery disease (PAD) for this age group. During tests, blood pressure in both the leg and arm is measured; if it's 90 per cent less in the leg compared to the arm, PAD is diagnosed. Essentially, the disease occurs when arteries supplying blood to the legs contract, hindering blood flow in the arteries in the heart and brain. The main symptoms of PAD include cramps in the leg while walking or exercising, numbness owing to cold, or leg sores that refuse to heal. Smokers, diabetics and people with high blood pressure and cholesterol levels are at greater risk. "Nagging leg pain should not be ignored," advises Dr Arun Dua, orthopaedist at Shri Ram Clinic in Chandigarh. Pointing out that the pain may result from blood clots that are hindering blood circulation, he says, "Older people in India often complain about severe pain while walking and during winter. Checkups should be done to avoid any possible complications."





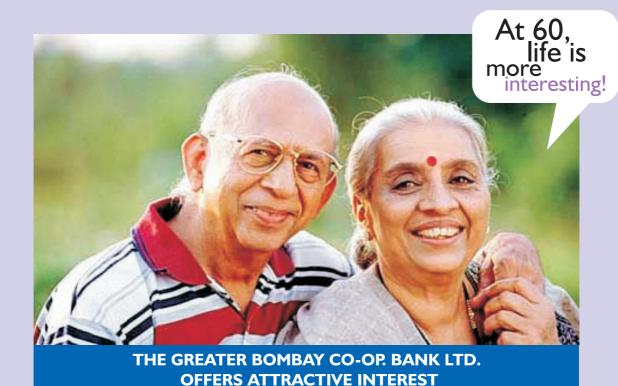
Awaiting its launch in the US next year, a new FDA-approved anti-cholesterol drug will compete with key players like Lipitor and Crestor. Manufacturer Kowa Pharmaceuticals believes that **Livalo**, which contains pitavastatin, will particularly benefit older patients, diabetics and those with cardiovascular problems beyond cloqqed arteries.

Ovarian ageing

NOW you can predict a woman's biological clock! According to scientists from the Centre for Human Reproduction in New York, a new genetic test—to be made available in 2010-can establish a woman's reproductive age by detecting the presence of Fragile X or FMR1, the gene that calculates egg supply. Ovarian reserve of eggs drops after the age of 35, and about 10 per cent women are at risk of early ovarian ageing. The number of CGG repeats (cytosine-guanine-guanine: two of the four molecules that make up DNA) could indicate premature ovarian ageing. The risk of early



menopause increases in some women if the FMR1 gene contains 55 to 200 repeats of the DNA sequence. During research conducted on 316 women, experts analysed ovarian reserve by calculating the anti-Mullerian hormone (AMH) level that indicates the number of maturing eggs in the ovaries. While normal AMH levels were noted in women with 28 to 33 repeats, early ovarian ageing was indicated when the repeats were more or less than this range. Information about early menopause risk and calculation of ovarian ageing would help even a young woman in her 20s to plan her pregnancy.



CURRENT RATE OF INTEREST ON DEPOSITS

ON DEPOSITS FOR SENIOR CITIZENS.

MATURITY PERIOD	Interest Rates in Percentage (Per Annum)		
WATORITY FERIOD	General Public	Senior Citizens	
15 days to 45 days	4.00	4.00	
46 days to 90 days	5.00	5.00	
91 days to 180 days	6.00	6.00	
181 days to less than 1 year	6.50	6.50	
1 year to less than 2 years	7.25	7.75	
2 years to less than 3 years	7.25	7.75	
3 years upto 7 years	7.00	7.50	
GB Tax Gain Scheme	7.00	7.50	



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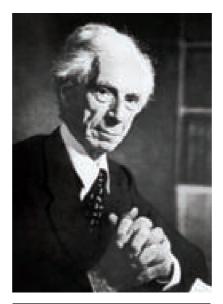
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A world without dogma

Religion can only throw up questions, not answers, says Bertrand Russell

ne is often told that it is a very wrong thing to attack religion, because religion makes men virtuous. You know, of course, the parody of that argument in Samuel Butler's book, Erewhon Revisited. You will remember that in Erewhon there is a certain Higgs who arrives in a remote country, and after spending some time there he escapes from that country in a balloon. Twenty years later he comes back to that country and finds a new religion in which he is worshipped under the name of the "Sun Child"; and it is said that he ascended into heaven. He finds that the feast of the Ascension is about to be celebrated, and he hears Professors Hanky and Panky say to each other that they never set eyes on the man Higgs, and they hope they never will; but they are the High Priests of the religion of the Sun Child. He is very indignant, and he comes up to them, and he says: "I am going to expose all this humbug and tell the people of Erewhon that it was only I, the man Higgs, and I went up in a balloon." He was told, "You must not do that, because all the morals of this country are bound round this myth, and if they once know that you did not ascend into heaven they will all become wicked", and so he is persuaded of that and he goes quietly away.

The more intense has been the religion of any period and the more profound has been the dogmatic belief, the greater has been the cruelty and the worse has been the state of affairs. Religion is based, I think, primarily and mainly upon fear. It is partly the terror of the unknown and partly, as I have said, the wish to feel that you have a kind of elder brother who will stand by you in all your troubles and disputes. Fear is the basis of the whole thing-fear of the mysterious, fear of defeat, fear of death. Fear is the parent of cruelty, and therefore it is no wonder if cruelty and religion have gone hand-in-hand. It is because fear is at



A good world needs knowledge, kindliness, and courage; it does not need a regretful hankering after the past or a fettering of the free intelligence by the words uttered by ignorant men

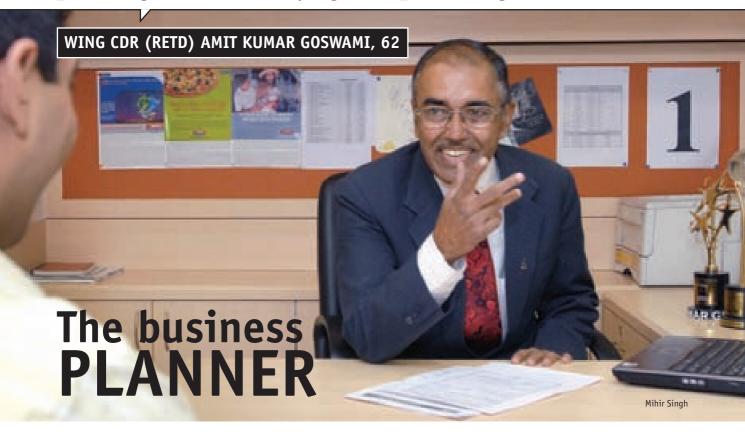
the basis of those two things. In this world, we can now begin a little to understand things, and a little to master them by help of science.... Science can help us to get over this craven fear in which mankind has lived for so many generations. Science can teach us, and I think our own hearts can teach us, no longer to look around for imaginary supports, no longer to invent

allies in the sky, but rather to look to our own efforts here below to make this world a fit place to live in, instead of the sort of place that the churches in all these centuries have made it.

We want to stand upon our own feet and look fair and square at the world—its good facts, its bad facts, its beauties, and its ugliness; see the world as it is and be not afraid of it. Conquer the world by intelligence and not merely by being slavishly subdued by the terror that comes from it. The whole conception of a God is a conception derived from the ancient oriental despotisms. It is a conception quite unworthy of free men. When you hear people in church debasing themselves and saying that they are miserable sinners, and all the rest of it, it seems contemptible and not worthy of self-respecting human beings. We ought to stand up and look the world frankly in the face. We ought to make the best we can of the world, and if it is not so good as we wish, after all it will still be better than what these others have made of it in all these ages. A good world needs knowledge, kindliness, and courage; it does not need a regretful hankering after the past or a fettering of the free intelligence by the words uttered long ago by ignorant men. It needs a fearless outlook and a free intelligence. It needs hope for the future, not looking back all the time toward a past that is dead, which we trust will be far surpassed by the future that our intelligence can create.

From Bertrand Russell's speech at The Battersea Town Hall in London on 6 March 1927. Russell was a philosopher, atheist and social critic known for his often controversial views on religion and the existence of God

"I believe offering conscientious guidance about financial planning is more satisfying than personal gain"



postgraduate from Jadavpur University in Kolkata, I joined the Indian Air Force in 1969. The situations I faced during the 1971 Indo-Pak war were a lesson in survival. And my deputation to an army base in Kolkata from 1979 to 1984 earned me the Chief of Army Staff Commendation.

At 48, I took voluntary retirement from the Air Force in 1996. After running a manufacturing business for two years, I quit to join as general manager (logistics) at the Cottage Industries Exposition in Bangkok. However, I returned to Kolkata six months later when my father was diagnosed with cancer. In 2000, I began to seriously think about a second career. The economic boom convinced me

that people would be more receptive to investing money. I decided to settle down in Delhi, as I had a flat there. My experience with people prompted me to go into life insurance.

I joined ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, after undergoing a six-week training programme. Initially, convincing potential customers about insurance policies was a major task. With time, though, I learnt about the different products that suited different needs. I qualified twice for membership of the Million Dollar Round Table—a premier association of financial professionals. I then underwent a training programme in life insurance from the International Academy of Insurance and Financial Management in 2006 and became a

fellow of the Life Underwriter Training Council (LUTC). Later, I diverisfied into mutual funds. To qualify as an agent with the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI), I completed a one-month course in 2006. I consequently acquired the National Stock Exchange's Certificate in Financial Planning as well as another in general insurance from the Insurance Institute of India. I am now associated with HDFC, Reliance, ICICI, Birla Sun Life and Franklin Templeton, and my clientele includes about 700 families.

I recently entered the real-estate market and have already coordinated a deal in Noida. My second career involves interacting with people—just what I enjoy!

—As told to Nitika Bajpayee

SHOP TALK

EXPERTS ANSWER YOUR QUERIES AND CONCERNS ON JOBS AFTER RETIREMENT

I am a retired woman. I own a small shop in a flourishing Delhi market. I want to make the shop functional and start a business that is easy to handle, yet lucrative. I am willing to invest around Rs 50,000.

Considering the capital you are willing to invest, you could think of becoming a florist. First, renovate the shop to make it look inviting—a glass panel at the entrance would render a classy touch. Once the shop is ready, visit wholesale flower markets at Okhla Mandi and Shivaii Stadium. Negotiate with florists for daily supply and get to know the pricing of different flowers. Refer to books on flower arrangement and stock a range of accessories. Take a short hobby course for better experience—it will go a long way in your business. Keep a wide choice of baskets of different shapes and sizes, sponges, wires, ribbons, and cellophane sheets. Most flower shops these days also stock items like aromatic candles and dried or artificial flowers. Hire an assistant for home delivery. Though the returns may not be high to begin with, they will surely be satisfactory.

-Harish Sharma

Sharma owns a flower boutique in New Delhi



I am a designer familiar with computers. Do you think starting a business printing wedding cards is a good idea? Please advise me.

Producing wedding cards does not pay very high returns. It is a seasonlinked business that takes off only during the wedding season, which is normally for about six months a year. Of course, the initial expenditure would be minimal as you may only need to upgrade your computer with appropriate software. As you are a designer yourself, you will not have to rely on others for this. However, you will need to liaise with a printing press as investing in a printing unit is not economically viable. You will have to put in a lot of effort to obtain competitive rates to get orders. There is no dearth of such business units in India, so you must constantly endeavour to expand your portfolio.

The market is not booming right now and your business may take three to four years to function properly. Thus, instead of specialising only in wedding cards, it would be better if you accept orders for printing other

items like invitations, visiting cards, letterheads, and file covers.

—Deependra Nath

Nath is the proprietor of a card printing business in Bengaluru

I retired recently and plan to invest about Rs 700,000 of my settlement amount in a car accessories business. My son would like to assist me in this venture. Do you think it's a good idea?

Starting a car accessories business requires a lot of running around, in addition to considerable administrative skills. However, it is a good idea as you have the support of your son. While you take care of administrative responsibilities, he can concentrate on acquiring various products. To begin with, you will need to hire space in a locality that will attract good clientele. Once the formalities to lease premises and make necessary modifications are complete, get in touch with wholesale suppliers of different car accessories. This is quite a tedious task. Liaise with key market players so you can obtain original accessories produced by automobile majors like Maruti, Tata, Hyundai, etc. There is a wide range of products available in the wholesale market and you can pick and choose according to your budget. I suggest you give more importance to quality than quantity as this will help you gain regular customers and earn their trust. Do some market research to decide what the best products would be. Returns in this kind of venture are good, but will require at two or three months to gain momentum.

-Jagdeep Singh

Lucknow-based Singh runs a car accessories business





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Mumbai - DEP - 22.55	Hong Kong - ARR - 8.05 (+1)	-1	Hong Kong - DEP - 14.15	Mumbai - ARR - 18.00	Tuesday
Mumbai - DEP - 23.25	Singapore - ARR - 7.25 (+1)	-1	Singapore - DEP - 10.15	Mumbai - ARR - 13.05	Daily (except Tuesday)
Mumbai - DEP - 23.25	Singapore - ARR - 7.25 (+1)		Singapore - DEP - 8.55	Mumbai - ARR - 11.45	Tuesday

s matters of the heart go, this is quite a breakthrough. A research team at Indian Institute of Technology-Kharagpur has developed an artificial heart that could prove to be a blessing for millions of Indians suffering from congestive heart failure.

Active research over the past four years has resulted in the 'Total Artificial Heart, an aortic pumping system that comprises a biventricular multi -trigger pumping system and aortic peristaltic pump. Simply put, the device is structured like a mango with two ventricular pumps made from an array of interrelated diaphragm chambers. The mechanical valves located at the inflow and outflow conduits control blood flow through the battery-driven aortic pump that controls compression and expansion of the chambers. The really good news: the device is estimated to cost Rs 100,000, much cheaper than the artificial heart developed in the US in 1969, which costs Rs 2.4 million. In fact, the Total Artificial Heart is considered much safer than the American heart, which featured two tubes crossing the body wall, bringing with it a risk of infection.

After conducting a series of clinical trials on frogs and goats, the team, headed by Professor Sujoy K Guha of IIT-Kharagpur's School of Medical Science and Technology, now awaits permission from the Indian Council of Medical Research to conduct human trials. These are expected to be held at the Kolkata Medical College and Hospital. Meanwhile, the team is working on a network-based regulator that will control the entire device. "Our technology is ready to save lives at an affordable cost," Guha tells Harmony. "We invented this device for people who need an immediate transplant. Finding donors is timeconsuming and difficult. That's why it becomes absolutely important for the artificial heart to play its role."

A mightyHEART

A biomedical research team at IIT-Kharagpur has developed an indigenous—and affordable—battery-driven artificial heart

WORLD VIEW

On your next trip to Tokyo, look out for silvers on some rather strange

new wheels! Automotive giant Honda recently unveiled the prototype

of the U3-X, a powerful unicycle for elders. Powered by a battery, it is

capable of moving in all directions—riders control it by leaning in the

at up to 6 km per hour and is expected to be in stores by spring 2010. No word yet on the price—or how silvers will actually maintain their

direction they wish to go. Weighing in at 10 kg, the U3-X can travel

Weird wheels

balance on the contraption.

Etcetera

»»» culture





A jewel on the river



128 km from Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala's Pathanamthitta district, is Aranmula—a picturesque, tranquil village that is an emblem of tradition and heritage. Other than the snake boat race on the Pampa, which has been held here for more than seven centuries, the village is home to a revered temple, an ancient mirror-making tradition, India's only university-affiliated institute of Vastu Shastra, and a gallery that seeks to preserve age-old artistic techniques. In fact, it is one of the 36 destinations in India selected by the Government of India and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for the Endogenous Tourism Project, which focuses on sustainable livelihoods and community mobilisation through tourism that

the snake boat pageant and race, held after the harvest every September. For the colourful water carnival, an imposing effigy of Lord Krishna is taken out in procession with children dressed as nymphs and princesses. And then, hundreds of thousands line the banks of the Pampa to cheer the snake boats slicing through the wa-

the Pampa to cheer the snake boats slicing through the waters to a spectacular finish. Each snake boat or *palliyodam* represents a village along the Pampa and is named after it. It is a riot of colour and sound—the boats, used in yore for



water wars by kings, are beautifully adorned with fluttering flags. Participants hold aloft colourful parasols of glittering silks while oarsmen splash their oars in unison with the fast rhythm of the *vanchipaattu* or boat songs in praise of Lord Parthasarathy, the presiding deity of the centuries-old Parthasarathy (Krishna) Temple in Aranmula.

The race recreates a legend involving a devout Brahmin, an ardent devotee of Krishna who used to travel to Aranmula in a boat taking the provisions for the Onam *sadya* (feast) to the temple. Rivals intercepted the boat but the Brahmin's kinsfolk came to the rescue on a fleet of snake boats. After that, the offering began to be carried annually by a fleet of *palliyodam*, about 48 of them representing the nearby backwater villages. The event also celebrates the anniversary of the foundation of the Parthasarathy Temple. Despite its religious origins, though, the regatta brings together people from all communities in a timeless celebration.

The village is also home to the Aranmula *kannadi*, ornamental metal mirrors with elegantly shaped frames. These are manufactured using the classic *cire perdue* (lost wax)

its power of reflection, they decided to develop the metal as a mirror. At first, it was designed inside a vanity box containing *sindoor* (vermilion). Then, the artisans developed the *valkannadi*, an oval mirror with a rim and a tail-like handle. Today, the making of these mirrors remains a secret, practised by only seven families who are determined to keep the tradition alive. While reluctant to divulge any trade secrets, Gopan, a craftsman, will tell you that unlike glass mirrors, Aranmula *kannadi* have to be kept at room temperature away from heat and dust, and their reflective surface should not be touched. He serves up a tip: if fingerprints fall on the surface, they should be immediately wiped off with red oxide powder or talcum powder.

Another tradition this village endeavours to keep alive is Vastu Shastra, the ancient Indian science of eco-friendly construction, architecture and interior design. In 1993, the Kerala government's Department of Culture established the Vastu Vidya Gurukulam, India's first university-affiliat-



technique—an ancient technique for casting many forms of metal into a variety of objects. An alloy of copper and white lead is poured into a mould. The mould is broken open when cool. The clarity comes from the fact that the image falls just on top of the surface of the metal unlike a glass mirror, where it falls on the mercury-coated surface inside the glass.

This mirror-making tradition can be traced back nearly four centuries, when artisans from Sankarankoil, a temple in Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, came to Aranmula at the behest of the king of Pandalam (in Pathanamthitta district) to help build the Parthasarathy Temple. Knowing that the king was annoyed with their laziness, the craftsmen decided to gift him a crown to placate him. While making it, amazed by

ed institute that offers courses in Vastu Shastra and consultancy courses to people who want to plan their homes in accordance with this science. A year later, the institute opened its Mural Art Gallery and Research Centre, which offers courses in Kerala temple mural painting and runs a gallery that showcases this tradition. This age-old technique involves intricate brushwork with the use of natural and vegetable dyes. "We have taken on the responsibility of preserving Aranmula as a cultural hub by keeping alive the traditions of art and architecture," says P Suresh, executive director of the Gurukulam, which was designated as a nodal agency for Vastu Shastra by the Human Resources Development Ministry of the Government of India in 2008. Apart from holding regular workshops for students and organisations from all over India, in the past year, the institute has started documenting traditional South Indian architecture with drawings and videography. Further, experts from the Gurukulam have now begun to renovate mural paintings in temples across Kerala.

Despite its aims to preserve past practices, though, it doesn't shy away from innovation—in 2003, the Gurukulam gifted a work modelled on Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper* to the late Pope John Paul II, while another depicting the Dandi March will soon adorn Rajghat in Delhi.



SUPER STAMPS: PHILATELISTS HAD A TOUGH TIME DRAGGING THEIR FEET AWAY FROM THE ROYAL MAIL'S EXHIBITION OF **COVETED STAMPS AT THE INDIA** INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR **HELD IN NEW DELHI'S PRAGATI MAIDAN BETWEEN 14 AND** 27 NOVEMBER. THE EXHIBITS INCLUDED THE UNUSUAL AND THE QUIRKY (CHARLES DARWIN AND JAMES BOND) AND THE HISTORICAL—KING HENRY VIII AND THE DEFINITIVE STAMP COLLECTION OF OUEEN **ELIZABETH II DRAWN BY** ANDREW MACHIN.

ROYALRHAPSODY

C COLLECTION



he Victoria & Albert Museum in London, is holding a three-month exhibition on the splendour of Indian royal courts. On from 10 October 2009 to 17 January 2010, the exhi-

bition will showcase around 250 royal objects from the erstwhile royal courts of Jodhpur, Udaipur, Gwalior, Bikaner, Baroda and Kapurthala. The showstopper of the event is the famed Patiala necklace created by Cartier for the Maharaja of Patiala in 1928. Made from 2,930 diamonds, it has at its centre, purportedly, the seventh largest diamond in the world, nearly the size of a golf ball. The exhibition also displays avant-garde furniture from the 1930s, saris, vintage European cars used by royalty, thrones, palanquins, jewelled weapons and paintings.



Kamalkamaal!

outh Indian superstar Kamal Hassan recently completed 50 years in Indian cinema—a trajectory lined with stunning performances that often made news for controversy, feat, flam-

boyance and versatility. At an event held to mark the milestone, stars from Mumbai.

Hyderabad and Kerala flew over to Chennai to congratulate the actor. Known to be an inveterate non-conformist, the actor is not done pushing the envelope yet. At 55, he still enthralls audiences with his searing screen presence. In 2008, he set a record of sorts by playing 10 roles in *Dasavataram*. More recently, he acted and produced Tamil film *Unnaipol Oruvan* (a remake of the 2007 Hindi blockbuster *A Wednesday*),

where he plays a common man who challenges the efficiency of the government flew when driven to the brink. What's more, Kamal Hassan has been an ardent anti-AIDS campaigner for a long time—the conducts talks in colleges against social discrimination with of people afflicted with AIDS.



15 minutes of wisdom



Playwright Ramu Ramanathan and his friends from the theatre have set up an online initiative—amazingambed-kar.wordpress.com—to bring in the 53rd death anniversary of Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar on 6 December (also



known as Mahanirvan Day). The idea behind the initiative is simple;

on 6 December, spare 15 minutes and read Dr Ambedkar's writings in any language of your choice. Ramanathan and his friends want us to touch base with the ideas of a man who ushered in a radical approach to justice and development.

THE OTHER BOND: AFTER LOOKING AT THE WORLD THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES ALL HIS LIFE, AUTHOR RUSKIN BOND HAS DEDICATED HIS NEXT BOOK, TENTATIVELY TITLED FIVE, TO ADULT RELATIONSHIPS. HIS YOUNG FANS NEED NOT WORRY THOUGH—BOND'S NEXT BOOK FOR CHILDREN, MR OLIVER'S DIARY, WILL SOON HIT THE STANDS.

HOMELESS AT HOME

Maina Chawla Singh, a reader of English from Delhi University, has put together a poignant account of the state of Indian Jews in Israel built in Being Indian, Being Jewish: Migration, Ethnicity and Gender in the Jewish Homeland. Singh started work on

her book in 2006, travelling through remote farming communities in Israel's Negev region, where many Indian Jews have been resettled by the Israeli government. Although the migration of Indian Jews to Israel began in the 1950s, many of them still face severe discrimination because of their background. Singh built up a rapport with her subjects

> by travelling through dozens of small towns and villages, attending scores of family weddings and speaking to

people from different generations about the pain of alienation. The book offers a series of personal narratives that underline the truth that home may not always be where the heart is.



FREEDOM OF **MOVEMENT**

Vrinda Nabar underlines the need for silver-friendly resorts

Are we as a nation indifferent to the fact that people are living longer? While we applaud the achievements of the young and their role in taking India forward on its global growth path, it is necessary to recognise that economies considered developed have for some time now grappled with the realities of ageing populations. There is much to be learned from their rather late wake-up call. As a growing economy we are still in a position to incorporate some timely, long-term strategic planning for the geriatric epidemic that the new millennium may have in store. It doesn't have to be a gloomy reckoning, just a pragmatic one that makes allowances for an almost certain demographic shift, something that would make everyone's quality of life a little better in the process.

This imperative was on my mind over the past fortnight, which we spent 'lotus-eating' in South India amid mountains and valleys covered in the different velvety greens of tea gardens, eucalyptus and pines, marvelling at the changing landscape as we moved from one destination to another and the aroma of freshly cut tea gave way to the heady mix of oranges and coffee. Morning mists swathed the peaks and cheekily trespassed into our living room, shafts of sunlight stabbed the clouds in a Cecil B de Mille-like visual, and masses of wild sunflowers lined our walks along roads where the occasional car horn was an anomaly.

It should have been heavenly and it was, for the most part. What diluted the experience was the increasing conviction that, intentionally or otherwise, only the young (or physically able) mattered in this Heaven's scheme of things—a sense that began soon after arrival at our first halt when I saw an older couple trying to painfully negotiate a gradient leading to their room. And so it went through the rest of our stay. At a National Park the authorised buses went only thus far, making it necessary to walk uphill the last couple of kilometres—legitimate enough if the purpose was to preserve the habitat. The walk in turn was uplifting, miles of unimaginable beauty rolling away beneath you, provided you had it in you to huff and puff your way up. Several older visitors didn't, making for a disappointed and wasted trip. It was sad to see them seated

Is it so difficult for resorts to conceive of easier access—a residential block with lifts and wheelchair ramps?

at the bus shelter, uncomplainingly waiting for the journey back to their hotels. If various 'official' vehicles and even trucks were allowed to enter and drive past those plodding their way up, a little sensitivity (a Tempo Traveller perhaps) to those physically challenged because of age or other causes was surely possible.

And there were those places that strove for a rustic effect and were constructed in stepped layers, allowing each individual cottage a view that

could not be faulted. We enjoy walking and climbing, had done so with enthusiasm on our many rambles this fortnight, but when it rained on our last two days there and the steps grew slippery with mud and moss we wondered what it would have been like if we had been about 15 years older. Is it so difficult for holiday resorts to conceive of easier access-a residential block with facilities like lifts and wheelchair ramps? The uncertainties of real-life situations may call for such thoughtfulness even in relation to the young, fit and able.

Sar uthaake jiyo, the catchy slogan of a television commercial, bears out the complex socio-cultural interface between generations in a family; for though the old extended family may be the exception rather than the norm, blood bonds are still important in our world view. Yet, for one reason or another, the ageing population finds itself alone either because of growing migration patterns or greater geographical mobility. The attachment of children to ageing parents is frequently in conflict today with the demands of a new world order, and self-reliance is a lesson whose layered 21st century implications the old in our society are learning at an exponential rate. A short, fulfilling break from home could mean everything in the twilight years. A meaningful investment in a present that has space for them and making holiday destinations more senior-friendly would eventually benefit the generations in waiting as well.

Vrinda Nabar, 61, is a Mumbai-based feminist writer

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PASSAGES



armada has been described as the best among the rivers, she having issued from the body of Rudra. It is said she is capable of purifying all creatures and even immovables. River Ganga is said to be holy at Kanakhala, river Saraswati is similarly holy at Kurukshetra; while Narmada, whether she is flowing from a village or a forest, is said to be holy at all places. The water of river Saraswati is said to purify a person immediately; but in the case of river Narmada a mere sight of the river even without a bath or a sip of her water is said to be purifying....

Narmada is also called the daughter of the pitris, and shraddha performed on her banks is said to yield inexhaustible results. River Narmada is specially invoked for the cure of serpent bites. The source of river Narmada on the Amarakantaka hill is also known for religious suicide. Those who voluntarily enter fire or water or fast unto death at this place are said to have liberated themselves. The tank from which the river issues at Amarakantaka is surrounded by several temples. The rivers Narmada, Sone and Mahanadi, all the three of them, have their source on the plateau of Amarakantaka, which has been a place of pilgrimage since time immemorial.

Narmada is called Namedos by Ptolemy and Narmnados by the Periplus. Between Amarakantaka and Broach, the Agni, Kurma and Skanda Purana state that there are 60 crore and 60,000 tirtha but Skanda adds that in this Kali Yuga, there are few pratyaksha tirtha as men in this age are losing their spiritual strength.

It is said that Siva was once practicing penance along with Uma on their Riksha mountain. Strenuous penance caused perspiration in the body of Siva from the moisture of which arose this river overflowing from this hill. The stream assumed the form of a lady and propitiated Siva. Siva blessed her by stating that she would be holy and inexhaustible. It is for this reason that river Narmada is known by the name of Rudrakanya and Ayonija. Another

reason is that this river born of the moisture of the perspiration of Siva assumed the form of a virgin and she deluded and ensnared by her excessively good looks gods and demons alike. Siva stated that only the strong and the lustrous among them would be able to have her. The gods and the demons were moving after this virgin and the moment they came near her she used to disappear. Her movements gave delight to Siva and it is said that she was called Narmada for this reason. Finally she came near Siva and those who were after her had to retire.

GLOSSARY

Ptolemy: Greek astronomer

Pitris: Fathers; the actual progenitors of our lower principles

Periplus: Greek text describing navigation and trade opportunities

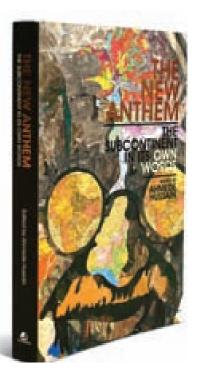
Pratyaksha tirtha: A tirtha of perception

After years of stopping in junctions on his innumerable train travels, journalist **Bishwanath Ghosh** decided to get off—and discover what lay beyond the railway station. The



result is CHAI, CHAI (Tranquebar; Rs 250; 214 pages). From Mughal Sarai, Itarsi and Ihansi in North and Central India to Arakkonam, Jolarpettai, Shoranur and Guntakal in the South, Ghosh wanders into sleepy towns that are defined by the trains that chug through them, speaks to the people who inhabit them and comes away with a slice of India that lies hidden to most of us. He tells his tales pleasantly, laced with a shot or two of his favourite whiskey, plenty of small talk, and a surprise or two, like the search for Lal Bahadur Shastri's alma mater in Mughal Sarai or an encounter with a housewife-turnedprostitute in Itarsi. And although his travelogue lacks the sublime quality of Pico Iyer's work or even the pithiness of Pankaj Mishra, it is engaging in its own meandering way, much like his favourite Railways-and enough to make you reach for the timetable.

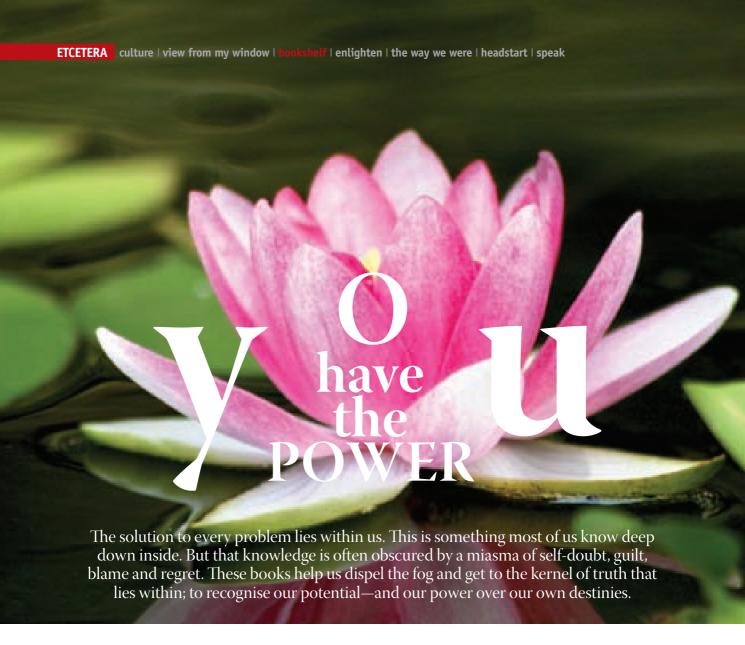
It may be a bit of a paradox that English the language of the coloniser—has acted as a literary unifier across the subcontinent. For lovers of the written word, though, this rich proliferation of authors is cause for celebration. THE NEW ANTHEM: THE SUBCON-TINENT IN ITS OWN WORDS (Tranquebar; Rs 250; 338 pages) showcases the work of 22 of them; from acclaimed names like Mohsin Hamid, Rai Kamal Iha and Tabish Khair to unheralded talents that are sure to blaze their own trail in years to come. Weaving strands of history and social mores with the political and personal, each author interprets the English language and its possibilities in their distinct narrative style. You may find a mystery here, a tragedy there, erotica perhaps; amid all this variety, though, the one thing you won't find is mediocrity. Edited by Dhaka-based Ahmede Hussain, who will release his debut novel in 2010, this collection is a metaphor for the subcontinent's incredible capacity for adaptation. It's time to retire the phrase, 'The Queen's English'.



Though the title suggests it's an autobiography, this book can easily pass as a travelogue. THE JOURNEY HOME: AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN AMERICAN



SWAMI (Mandala Publishers; Rs 900; 350 pages) by Radhanath Swami is the fascinating tale of Richard Slavin, a shy Jewish teenager from Illinois, USA, who embarks on a hitchhiking trip to India with a couple of friends towards the fag end of the 1960s. Shrugging off marijuanaglazed hippie languor, Slavin travels across Paris, Florence, Turkey, Teheran and Afghanistan on a guest to find the true purpose of his existence. In India, haunted by a picture of a "blue-skinned boy with a flute" that he finds on the sidewalks of Delhi, Slavin follows the ashram trail across the Himalayas and then back to Vrindavan where he is rechristened Krishna Ratheen Das. Returning to the US after two years, Das spends six years in a cave. After stints as a professor of philosophy and religion at various colleges, in 1976, he is initiated into the ISKCON commune as Radhanath Swami. The author spares no details, laying bare his fears and predicaments with honesty and, very often, touching humour. Worth reading if you need that nudge in the right direction—as we all do sometimes.

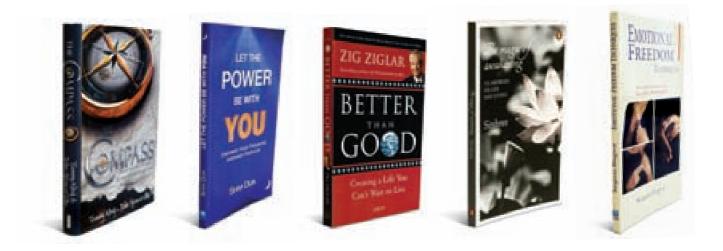


"Questioning the mind... will result in the magic of awakening..." Questions that don't merely endeavour to get information but lead to the end of ignorance and give birth to the spirit of inquiry. In THE MAGIC OF AWAKENING-111 ANSWERS ON LIFE AND LIVING (Penguin; 165 pages; Rs 199), Sirshree, who has written over 40 books on spirituality and self-help, offers readers the key to awakening. The 111 questions have been divided into seven sections essential spirituality, existential dilemmas, demystifying divinity, the ultimate goal, professional and personal, paths to truth, and self inquiry with understanding. "The purpose of the book is not to impart intellectual

knowledge" but to help reconnect with our real self, understand our hidden potential, prepare ourselves to deal with emerging situations, and more. Explaining how spirituality helps by attaching a context to the various occurrences in our everyday life, the author tells us how to awaken and feel the magic within.

Introducing the technique to first-time users and those recently acquainted with the subject, EMOTIONAL FREEDOM
TECHNIQUES (Wisdom Tree; 134 pages; Rs 145) is based on Sangeeta Bhagwat's personal experience. "A constant exposure to the consequences of negative emotions

can be expected to lead to physical issues." And EFT—tried on a variety of physical ailments—is frequently found to work. Based on the belief that a set of energy meridians govern the wellbeing of mind and body, the technique involves tapping certain energy points in the body with the fingertips. The stimulation accompanied with awareness and positive affirmations unblocked the inner creative force, encouraging acceptance of a particular situation or problem and a move towards its resolution. The author explains that though EFT helps to enhance positive traits and arrive at a state of perfect health, it is not intended as a substitute for any medical treatment. Written in



an easy conversational style, the book attempts to facilitate personal improvement in performance, health and overall well-being.

The secret to happiness, according to Tammy Kling and John Spencer Ellis in THE COMPASS (HarperCollins; Rs 475; 256 pages), is that there is no secret. Too simplistic? Well, perhaps we're all trying too hard to do too many complicated things rather than listening to our hearts, argue Kling and Ellis-Kling is an author and literary coach; and Ellis, a personal development coach. Their message is illustrated through the tale of Jonathan, an American man frozen by grief after his family experiences a serious car accident. His escape from pain is transformed into a voyage of self-discovery as he chances upon a terminally ill woman who offers him spiritual nourishment. The sliver of hope she imbues him with urges him on to navigate variegated terrain, new experiences and people. His inner compass is his guide: it takes him through his travels, helps him shake off all grudges and, finally, offers him (and his heart) safe passage home. A powerful lesson for those who find it hard to let go of the past and brave the future.

Are you your own worst enemy?

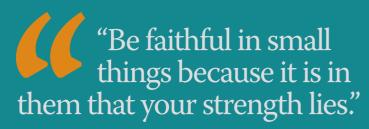
Shivi Dua helps you befriend yourself in LET THE POWER BE WITH

Shivi Dua helps you befriend yourself in his book *Let the Power Be With You.* According to Dua, unconditional love for ourselves is the key to happiness. You don't need to experience an ounce of guilt if your goals are money and fame rather than inner harmony and world peace! It's your dream; you just have to go out and live it

YOU (Wisdom Tree; Rs 145; 107 pages). A software professional turned healer, Dua believes unconditional love—for ourselves—is the key to happiness. To grasp that elusive key, you have to fulfil five tasks: know that you are responsible for everything you experience; use that power to overcome inner conflicts; shed the negative emotions that mar your relationships; restore your physical health; and having done all this, use the power thus gained to achieve what gives you most satisfaction. This could be whatever you want—you

don't need to experience an ounce of guilt if your goals are money and fame rather than inner harmony or world peace! It's your dream; you just have to go out and live it.

Motivational speaker and author of much inspirational text Zig Ziglar speaks simply in **BETTER THAN GOOD: CREATING A LIFE YOU** CAN'T WAIT TO LIVE (Jaico Books; Rs 250; 250 pages). Ziglar proves you don't need to absorb complicated jargon to simplify life. The book has heaps of examples of people who have overcome fear and failure to lead the life they dreamt of. The author borrows quite a bit from the Bible to help us shed our inner complexes and fears. But it's the delightful fables and anecdotes along the way that keep you hooked. Ziglar's nuggets of wisdom include how to keep passion alive; overcome criticism; alter perceptions; strategise intelligently; and—in a chapter that may be especially meaningful to silvers looking for a new purpose in their post-retirement years—change the world one act at a time. Though the paths mentioned in the book may not seem drastically different from those in other books of the same genre, the author's advice gains more credence when we acknowledge that he motivates by example. At 79, Ziglar is still finding new ways to tackle old problems.



— *Mother Teresa* (1910-1997)

slow medicine n. Medical care that focuses on the patient and giving comfort and palliative care rather than technology and aggressive treatments.

Example: Edie Gieg, 85, strides ahead of people half her age and plays a fast-paced game of tennis. But when it comes to healthcare, she is a champion of **slow medicine**, an approach that encourages less aggressive—and less costly—care at the end of life. Grounded in research at the Dartmouth Medical School, slow medicine encourages physicians to put on the brakes when considering care that may have high risks and limited rewards for the elderly, and it educates patients and families on how to push back against emergency room trips and hospitalisations designed for those with treatable illnesses, not the inevitable erosion of advanced age.

-Jane Gross, "For the elderly, being heard about life's end", The New York Times, 5 May 2008

POP-UP STORE n. A store that opens in an empty

retail location and then deliberately closes after a few weeks or months. **Example:** [A] growing number of merchants are opening shops and abruptly shutting them down soon after—on purpose. These quickie retail operations, known as pop-ups, are showing up throughout Southern California and around the nation, filling in the gaps at recession-battered shopping centres for a fraction of the regular rents. Once limited to seasonal shops and dusty liquidation centres, **pop-up stores** are now being opened by some of the nation's biggest retailers.

> —Andrea Chang, "Pop-up stores becoming an overnight sensation", Los Angeles Times, 17 October 2009

PEEP CULTURE

n. A culture in which many people write about or display—and other people take pleasure in reading or watching—the minutiae of their daily

Example: Mr Niedzviecki believes many people welcome surveillance because the collapse of community has left them feeling disconnected and alone. Surveillance, he says, is part of the shift from pop culture to what he calls peep culture. "We derive more and more of our entertainment from watching ourselves and others go about our lives," he says. "We're going to enter a point where we become quite addicted to being watched."

—Don Butler, "Are we addicted to being watched?" The Ottawa Citizen, 31 January 2009

peanut-buttering

pp. Spreading the resources of a company or person too thin.

-peanut-butter v.

Example: Still, a former Google executive observed, "Google could do fewer products and make fewer investments. They are doing too many and peanutbuttering everything."

-Ken Auletta, "Searching for trouble", The New Yorker, 12 October 2009



THE BARD ON THE WEB

Shakespeare lovers rejoice. You can now access the complete collection of rare pre-1642 editions of Hamlet at www.quartos.org, absolutely free. Initiated by the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, and the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, the Shakespeare Quartos Archive offers a variety of features, such as tutorials and the ability to search, annotate, download and print text and images from the works.



A NOTICE BOARD FOR THE SILVER COMMUNITY: REACH OUT AND GET CONNECTED

I am a 56 year-old HIV care worker. I would like to help the elderly in whatever capacity I can. You can contact me at:

Adil P Elavia
515-B, Ratan Mansion,
1st Floor,
R P Masani Road,
Matunga (CR),
Mumbai-400 019
Tel: 022-24180859/
65934441

I am 64 years old. My hobbies include travelling and going for long walks. I wake up at 3 am every day and walk to Aarey Colony in Goregaon. I am a member of the Aarey Walkers' Club. I am interested in getting in touch with silvers who share similar interests.

Vasant A Shinde
C 5/55, Satsang Bharati
Co-operative Housing
Society, Upper Govind
Nagar, Malad (East),
Mumbai-400 097
Tel: 022-28758850

I run a diagnostic service in Mumbai that offers health monitoring services for elders, diagnostic services for diabetes, hypertension record maintenance, home delivery of medicines, talk therapy, collection of pathological samples from home and a special counselling service to overcome loneliness. *Dr Kusum Doshi*At Home Medicare

Services,
1 Ankita Apts, Nehru
Road,
Vile Parle East,
Mumbai-400 057
Tel: 022-26141334
E-mail: kusumdoshi@
hotmail.com

I am 71 years old. I would like to bring it to the notice of senior citizens that you can avail mediclaim from a government insurance company, up to the age of 80, even if you are suffering from an ailment. Please contact me to know more about the procedure. Dinesh Bhachech Sthapatya Bungalows, Gayatri Krupa, Behind Taksh Bungalows, Vasna Road. Vadodara-390 015 E-mail: dinesh_bhach@ vahoo.com Tel: 0265-2251081. 9327211853

I am 55 years old and interested in collecting coins and currency of Indian and overseas origin. Anyone who has a collection and wants to part with it or knows someone interested in doing so can contact me at the following address. V S Narayana Swamy Building 8-B, 302, Neelam Nagar, Mulund East. Mumbai-400 081 E-mail: s.sivaiyer@ vahoo.co.in Tel: 022-21634236

I am 61 years old, married and have two children.

I am a member of Dignity
Foundation. After 38 years
in banking, I am now
retired, well settled and
eager to help lonely seniors
by offering companionship
and moral support.
Manohar R P Rao
C-15 Trupthi Apartment,
Mahatma Phule Road,
Mulund East,
Mumbai-400 081
Tel: 9969038909

I am a 75 year-old yoga teacher. I have been practicing yoga since the past 40 years. My hobbies include fitness and exploring nature.

Kanaiyalal Goradia
Zaveri House, 1st Floor, 293, Tardev Road, Nana Chowk, Mumbai-400 007

Tel: 9322220013, 022-23875213

I am 71 years old. I would like to inform all seniors that on vigorous and persistent follow up by the All India Non Pensioned cum Senior Citizen Retirees Association in Bengaluru, the 2nd Pay Revision Committee for Central Public Sector has recommended financial and health care benefits for retirees. For details, please contact Mr Das at 080-25227715 or Mr Abraham at 080-25455160. B S Das 19 (Old 511) Ist Cross 'B' Block, 4th Main, Vinayaknagar, Airport Road, Bengaluru-560 017 Tel: 080-25227715



I am 73 years old. I am looking for a travelling companion to accompany me on a tour all over India and abroad. I have already travelled all over the UK, New Zealand and Australia. I like collecting clippings on spiritual teachings and old coins, photography, listening to old songs and making new friends.

Rajinder Kumar Jayswal Sector C, Pocket-I, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi

WE GO 50 YEARS BACK IN TIME

TO BRING YOU PRODUCTS, PEOPLE, EVENTS AND FASHION THAT INFLUENCED THE WORLD...

Mark of LUXURY

Louis Vuitton handbag spells luxury, class, style—the intangibles every woman yearns to hold within her grasp. Established in 1854 in Paris by a small-time box maker who went on to work for French aristocracy, Louis Vuitton is considered one of the oldest fashion houses in the world. It was in 1959, though, that the company first unveiled its classic logo print—a design now synonymous with the brand. The print was first used on small handbags. Today, the world carries wallets, handbags, totes and even large luggage emblazoned with the LV monogram.





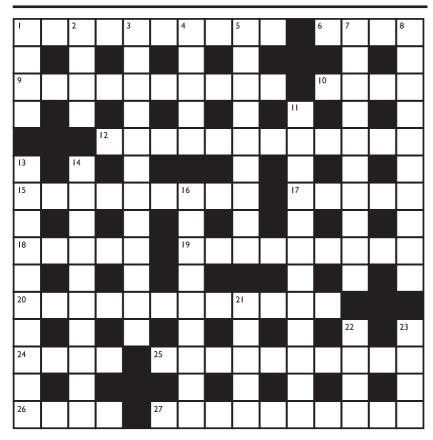
Golden Gaul

ring out the wild boar and the campfire—it's time for the traditional Gallic feast! This year marks the golden jubilee of the popular (and controversial) French comic series, The Adventures of Asterix. The diminutive and witty Gaul Asterix and his buddy Obelix, constantly in battle with the Romans, were first seen in 1959 in French magazine *Pilote*. Initially written by French humorist René Goscinny, the comic series was taken over by French scriptwriter Albert Uderzo. In 1961, the series began to appear as an independent publication—despite being criticised and banned in many countries for being politically incorrect, the 33 comics released since have been translated into more than 100 languages and made into several films. This year, diehard fans received a brand new treat, Asterix and Obelix's Birthday: The Golden Book (Rs 599) to commemorate the occasion.

THIS MONTH, THAT YEAR: DECEMBER 195

- On 1 December 1959, the Antarctic Treaty was signed, which set aside Antarctica as a scientific preserve and banned military activity on the continent.
- On 2 December 1959, Malpasset Dam in France collapsed, killing 412 people in the town of Frejus.
- On 13 December 1959, Archbishop Makarios became the first President of Cyprus.
- On 14 December 1959, the iconic Motown record label was established by professional boxer Berry Gordy Junior in Detroit, Michigan.

EXCLUSIVE HARMONY CROSSWORD 62



BY RAJU BHARATAN

ACROSS

- 1 Catch those of business being taken in by the charms of a mere glamour puss (3 3 4)
- 6 Third Eye of this kind does Tony Greig bring to the game (4)
- 9 More than so good in parts the better calibre of actor needs to be $(7\ 3)$
- 10 Just the brand name to look at for a Hindi soap (4)
- 12 Class of cricket commentators who

did the maximum harm to the game? (264)

- 15 Taj score 0 for sports reporter of standing (3 6)
- 17 Do as holder of zero-heavy ring in which sumo wrestling takes place (5)
- 18 The idea of getting down to sleep looks a long way away (3 2)
- 19 Our Man Farokh as 'The Card' behind the wicket? (6 3)
- 20 Philosophical way to view valetudinarianism? (3 4 2 3)
- 24 Body-charging? Not Down Under (4)

- 25 Playing Kapil Dev at his best was like passing through it (1 5 4)
- 26 Another name for V V S Laxman (4)
- 27 Conclusive enough in Radio Club tennis? (3-3 4)

DOWN

- 1 Robin Hood's idea of looking well fed (4)
- 2 To go after Jane (4)
- 3 What one Amitabh Bachchan film was of another? (6 6)
- 4 Benedict associate (5)
- **5** No loot gag, agree? (2 2 5)
- 7 The Tirupati-style monkey's whiplash tail could (4 2 4)
- 8 Dharmendra was Hema's (5 5)
- 11 The one chosen to carry the Olympic flame? (7 5)
- 13 Never in a Jadejam! (4 2 4)
- 14 Something Saeed Anwar, playing every shot in the one-day book (194 off 146 balls) for Pakistan vs India, was lucky to escape in his 21 May 1997 Chepauk quest for a doublehundred place in the Chennai sun (4-6)
- 16 Who but Vallabhbhai Patel could have, in keeping with The Cause, got our ruling princes to (3 6)
- **21** Alec and Eric? (4)
- 22 Talk no more about it! (4)
- 23 Put one's foot down (4)

For answers, see Page 79

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

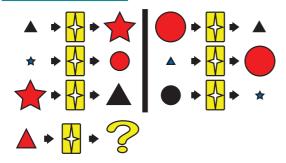
Tips for beginners: A whole variety of clues goes into framing a cryptic puzzle. For instance, the anagram. The clue here could be: Unresting opponent of authority (Unresting being the 9 letters of insurgent rearranged). Another variety of clue is the palindrome—DEIFIED, when viewed backward or when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

BRAIN GYM

PING PONG BALLS

You have eight ping pong balls. While one ball is lighter, the other seven weigh the same. How is it possible to tell which is the lightest ball by using a balance scale only twice?

THE TRANSFIGURATOR



Which of the three shapes below should replace the question mark above?



SPIDER DINER

Spider Diner owner Ms XYZ loves puzzles almost as much as she loves hot fried insects. When you ask her the daily lunch special, she simply gestures to a half-finished web at the front of the diner. Each strand of the web consists of three letters and some spaces. Can you mentally finish spinning the web, laying one strand on top of the other so that the letters and spaces are properly aligned, and figure out today's special?

 $T^{****}\bar{Y}^{****}Z$ PI**A T****Y**I L**P*Z BU***R U*T**F T*E*F

WORD MOSAIC

Fill in the appropriate squares in the grid using logic. The numbers at the beginning of each row and column tell you how many consecutive black squares are in that row or column. For example, 3, 5, 2 tells you there will be three groups containing, in order, 3, 5 and 2 consecutive black squares. There will be at least one empty square between each group. Can you find the word hidden in the

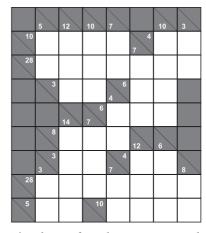
grid?	3	4	1	3	4	5	1	4	2	1	2
g		1	1	1		1	1		1	1	
		1		1		1	1				
2											
1											
3,2											
1,1,1,3											
3,2,1,1											
1											
3,1											
2,1,1											
1,1,1											
2,3,3											

SUDOKU FOR YOU

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

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

KOFFEE WITH KAKURO



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

SOLUTIONS TO EXCLUSIVE HARMONY CROSSWORD 62

ACROSS: 1 The fat cats; 6 Glad (Third Eye); 9 Curate's egg; 10 SNAN; 12 No damage done; 15 Joe Crasto (9 letters of Taj score 0 rearranged); 17 Dohyo (D/ohy/o: taking ohy as zero-heavy abbreviated, Dohyo is Do as holder of ohy: dohyo means ring in which sumo wrestling takes place); 18 Yet up; 19 Engine ace (reference to Farokh Engineer as 'The Card'); 20 Not take it ill; 24 Upon (means body-charging in football, upon is up/on: Not Down Under); 25 A swing door; 26 Eden; 27 One-set lead

DOWN: 1(Friar) Tuck; 2 (*Jane*) Eyre; 3 Action replay; 4 (Benedict) Costa; 5 To go along (*No loot gag*, 9 letters of *To go along* rearranged, *To go along* means *agree*); 7 Land on head; 8 Dance lover; 11 Leading light; 13 Ajay on tube (Ajay Jadeja); 14 Heat-stroke; 16 See reason; 21 (The Bedser) Twins (Alec and Eric); 22 Done; 23 Trod

SOLUTIONS TO BRAIN GYM

PING PONG BALLS

Place three balls on one side of the scale and three on the other. If the two sides balance, the light ball is among the remaining two and a second weighing will ascertain which one it is. If the first weighing shows a disparity, however, take the three balls weighing the least and place one on each side of the scale, putting one to the side. If the two balance, the third is the light one. If they don't balance, you know which one is light!

THE TRANSFIGURATOR



SPIDER DINER

T****Y****Z
PI**A
T****Y**I
L**P*Z
BU***R
U*T**F
T*E*F

Answer: Butterfly

WORD MOSAIC

	3	4	1	3	4	5	1	4	2	1	2
		1	1	1		1	1		1	1	
		1		1		1	1				
2											
1											
3,2											
1,1,1,3											
3,2,1,1											
1											
3,1											
2,1,1											
1,1,1											
2,3,3											

SOLUTIONS TO SUDOKU

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

SOLUTIONS TO KAKURO

	5	12	10	7		10	3
10	2	3	4	1	7 4	3	1
28	3	7	5	6	4	1	2
	3	2	1	6	2	4	
		14	6 7	3	1	2	
	8	5	2	1	12	6	
	3	2	1	7	1	3	8
28	2	3	4	6	7	1	5
5	1	4	10	1	4	2	3

"God has sent me to serve society; I think that's the biggest motivation one can have."

Dr Suhas Haldipurkar, 55, for offering the poor the gift of vision



n 1981, **Dr Suhas Haldipurkar**, an eye specialist, shifted from Karwar in Karnataka to Panvel on the outskirts of Mumbai. With a vision to make eye treatment affordable and accessible to people from all walks of life, he set up Laxmi Eye Hospital in 1985. The state-of-the-art hospital has 12 consultants and six interns who attend to about 150 patients daily. A fellow of Sir Vincentive Institute, Germany, Dr Haldipurkar always made sure he and his team were adept at the latest techniques in eye surgery. In 1995, he established Laxmi Eye Institute, a research wing of the hospital where he trains doctors from India and abroad in advanced ophthalmological techniques—the most recent being

phacoemulsification, a minimally invasive technique of cataract removal. Though he always treated poor patients free of charge, Haldipurkar was determined to do more. His dream of reaching out to the poor was finally achieved in 2002 when he set up the Laxmi Charitable Eye Hospital. To date, he and his team have performed 4,500 eye surgeries free of cost. The benevolent doctor also provides free post-operative care. Today people living in the area look up to him with the same reverence as they would a messiah. However, not one to rest on his laurels, Haldipurkar recently opened three more centres for the poor—including a hospital and two clinics in rural Maharashtra.

—Sanghita Roychoudhury



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